

Why Believe the Bible?

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PREFACE

This book really didn't begin life as a book at all, but as a series of messages that I taught in 2002 at Faithful Word Assembly in Kenner, LA. Almost ten years later, those messages were transcribed by Mrs. Anne Roe, of Little Switzerland, NC, at my request. I wanted to re-teach the subject, but all of my original notes and resources for the series were lost during Hurricane Katrina in 2005. I extend special thanks to Mrs. Anne Roe for her willingness and labor to undertake that request. What follows is that series of messages, retaught, expanded and edited. If it doesn't read quite like a book, that's why.

Numerous sources were used and quoted in this series of messages, some extensively. I cite some of those sources below. The ones I used most recently I credit, but there most certainly are others, not intentionally left out, but simply forgotten as all of my notes, books, resources and materials for the original series were destroyed in the floodwaters of the hurricane.

Resources and citations from (in no particular order):

The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible – Benjamin B. Warfield

Is All Scripture Inspired? – J.C. Ryle

Thy Word Is Truth – Edward J. Young

The Divine Inspiration of the Bible – Arthur W. Pink

How Do We Know The Bible Is True? – John Ankerberg, Dillon Burroughs

Verbal Inspiration of the Bible – John R. Rice

Science Speaks – Peter W. Stoner

Has God Spoken? – Hank Hanegraaff

I hope this effort will bolster your faith in the Holy Scriptures.

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” – Ps. 119:18

Russell Tardo

WHY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?

Dr. Russell K. Tardo

For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. (Ps. 119:89)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Christians believe the Bible is the Word of God. As such, we hold the Word of God to be as the character of God — constant, unchanging, enduring, faithful. A verse that brought comfort last week can be relied upon to bring comfort again this week, and next week and next year and year after year. The Word of God has brought millions of people comfort and assurance and direction for thousands of years, and it will continue to do so because it is not a human product; it is the Book of God. My intent is to show you why we believe that the Bible is the very Word of God. Every Christian encounters those who doubt the veracity of the Scriptures. A significant percentage of Americans were brought up to believe that the Bible is the Word of God, and while many still hold to that belief, others hold that while it was written by intelligent men; wise moralists, religious teachers, etc., it is just the product of men.

How do we know with certainty that the Bible is the very Word of God? How is it that we as believers can stand unshakably, resolutely and fearlessly on its promises? Why is it that some people have great faith while others who have been Christians for years still don't have much faith? Why is it that some people have strong convictions about the Word of God while others do not? Why is doctrine important and precious to some but not to others? It is because they are convinced the Bible is in fact the very Word of God. Once we have that assurance in our hearts, we cannot be indifferent toward it. To reject or neglect the Word would put our very souls in peril. If the Bible truly is the Word of the God of the universe, then we should give it careful attention.

The Holy Bible is unlike any other book in the world. It is unparalleled in the history of literature. There is nothing like it in any of the sacred literature of other world religions. The Hindu Vedas, the Analects of Confucius, the Buddhist Tripitaka, the Koran and Hadith, will all leave the reader confused, bemused, bored and wanting. In contrast, reading the Bible can powerfully and wonderfully affect the reader and dramatically change their life for good. No book on earth has that power. No book on earth is like the Bible. It can be compared to no other literature on earth because the Bible alone is the product of God. All other books in the world are simply the products of men.

My hope is that by reading this publication, faith will awaken in your heart and you will realize with absolute certainty that the Bible is 100 percent the Word of God and that all questions about its veracity will be settled in your mind once and for all. Christianity, sum and total, is the religion of a book. That's why the Bible is so important to us. We are men and women who live our lives, sum and substance, based on the teachings of a book. It determines our practices; it sets forth our beliefs. It is not an overstatement to say that all of Christianity stands on the foundation of this single book.

Doctrines, beliefs, and practices that govern our lives are all based upon the message of the Bible. As Christians we believe the Holy Bible is God's book. It is the product of His direct agency,

revealing His mind and His will. We believe in the **verbal, divine inspiration of Scripture**. (The word *plenary* meaning *entire* is sometimes added to that.) We believe that the Bible is divinely inspired; it is God's Word to man, not the words of men. When people tell me that men wrote the Bible, I like to respond by saying, "No, God wrote the Bible; men just wrote it down. While God used men to write His words, He is the author.

If the Bible is not inspired, then there is no ultimate standard and no supreme authority of any kind, anywhere on earth. That leads to each person doing what is right in his own eyes. The doctrine of divine inspiration cannot be over stated for it's the very heart and core of Christianity. If the Bible is not God's Word, then we might just as well all do our own thing — eat, drink and be merry! Science sometimes finds itself in conflict with the Bible. Science believes in a very old earth, evolution, etc. The Bible says just the opposite, i.e., the earth is young, perhaps 10,000 years old. Many times there is conflict even among religious men. Under the name of modern scholarship, religious men sometimes try to accommodate the Bible to science leading them to come up with all sorts of strange theories, i.e., the Gap Theory, the Creation Theory, etc. We don't have to try to reconcile science to the Bible. The Bible is true; it is God's Word and science will eventually discover that and come into line with it.

Archeology continues to discover that the Bible is true. For years, there were archaeologists who laughed at the Bible, assuming the references to ancient cultures and empires were myths and such places did not exist. Discoveries made in modern times however, have forced them to re-think their earlier assumptions. Many ruins of ancient sites and cultures have been unearthed, proving their existence. In the nineteenth century, archaeologists discovered the ancient Hittites which they had previously said did not exist. Belteshazzar, king of Babylon, was also said to be a mythical figure only to discover ancient tablets containing his name. Repeatedly, archeology has confirmed the accuracy of the Bible. Wise Archaeologists have learned not to dispute the Bible but now frequently use it as a reference point for locating ancient sites. Scientists will one day also stop arguing with the Bible.

What place do you give the Bible in your own heart and life? What importance do you place upon the Scriptures? What do you believe about the book that Jesus himself called, the Word of God? Was the Bible written merely by well intentioned men, i.e., religious leaders or moralists who saw the need for some high standard for living? Is the Bible, in fact, God's book? Is it just another of the world's books on religion or is the Bible unique in all of literature? Each of us must examine our view and how we consider the Scriptures? If we do believe that the Bible stands alone among the religious literature of the world and that it is divinely inspired, then how do we explain our negligence? Not only that, but how do we explain our indifference toward the things that the Bible teaches? How can we shrug our shoulders at the great doctrines of the Bible and think they're unimportant, if indeed it is the Book of God?

If, on the other hand, the Bible isn't the Word of God and divinely inspired, then it's basically worthless. Why? Because the Bible claims to be the Word of God. If it's not, then it's all a great hoax and of no value. If it's not God's word, then its claims are false and it cannot be relied upon. However, if its claims are true and divinely inspired; if it is inerrant and infallible, then we are

bound by its precepts. If it is the Word of God, then it transcends in value all the other books of the entire world because they are simply the products of men. And if it is the Word of God, how do we explain our apathy toward it? How can we say in our hearts that we know the Bible is God's Word and yet remain nonchalant about it? How can we guide and govern our lives independently of its instruction? Furthermore, if it is all God's word, how is it that we can pick and choose what we'll obey and what we won't obey?

LESSON 1 - IT IS REASONABLE

I. It is Reasonable That God Would Give Mankind a Revelation of Himself.

It is only logical that the God of the universe, the Creator of all things, would give mankind some revelation of who He is and what He desires from us.

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. (Ps. 19:1)

The Psalmist here declares that nature itself testifies to the existence of God. All of nature; sky and sea, field and stream, plant and animal life is seen as an artist's canvas; every aspect like the brush stroke of genius, and all revealing the brilliant artistry of God. He has created a world of splendor and majesty, full of color and texture. The precision of the heavenly bodies in the universe, the earth and planets revolving around the sun, the earth's rotation on its axis with such perfection all reflect His exactness in creation. If the earth were to be off by just a degree or two, everything would plunge into chaos; gravity would fail, the oceans would overflow, and the earth would spin out into space and be consumed by the sun.

Reasonable minds readily acknowledge that mankind and nature, the earth and all the universe has to have had a master designer; a maker, a creator, just as did a clock or wristwatch or any other fabricated thing. It'd be ridiculous to declare that the Empire State Building or the Statue of Liberty just gradually came into existence, without a designer, a builder or creator. Who would look at an automobile and say that it had no designer or manufacturer; that it just popped into existence from nowhere? Common sense tells us someone designed and built these things. How then, can we look at a tree which is far more intricate than any watch or automobile and say that it just happened? How can we look at the marvel of human life with all of its wondrous complexities and say that it just came from nowhere, or that it just evolved? How ludicrous!! All of nature testifies that God exists; that there is a brilliant and beneficent Creator out there, and all we have to do is look about us to see His handiwork. What has more grandeur than a mountain range? Or is more breathtaking than the Grand Canyon? Consider the thunderous majesty of Niagara Falls, and the spectacular beauty of all the great oceans and rivers, deserts and plains, all of which say that God is! Consider the marvel of the birth of the newborn; the anatomy and intricacy of human life and all our body parts, each one a miracle in engineering and design. All creation attests to the fact that God exists, that certainly there is a Master Designer and Creator!

However, even though nature itself is a revelation of God's existence, the testimony of nature is just not enough. We need more. If a painting says 'the artist is,' then in similar manner nature says "God is." But unlike a painting or sculpture, nature is not static. It's ever changing, and those changes can send us conflicting messages. While nature tells us that God exists, nature doesn't tell us anything about the character of God. It tells us that He appreciates beauty because this world is filled with the beauty of His handiwork. But when great catastrophes of nature occur; earthquakes,

tidal waves, tornadoes, hurricanes, etc., we are sometimes prone to wonder just what kind of God would do this? At such times men are apt to ask if God is truly good, merciful and beneficent. So, because nature sends conflicting messages, we need a greater revelation, a **written revelation** of just who God is. Men can view the beauty and wonder of nature and never know that there is a God who loves them, who cares about them personally and will pardon sinners. Unless we are given a greater, deeper, fuller revelation, we will never know those things. He gave us the Bible because we needed a direct written revelation of God.

¹⁹Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto them. ²⁰For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: ²¹Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (Rom. 1:19-21)

By knowing **that** He is, we can seek to find out **who** He is. God will reveal Himself to those who have a heart to want to know Him. Everyone in the world is therefore without excuse, including the heathen living in the deepest jungle that has never been penetrated by the gospel because nature testifies that God exists. If they truly want to know Him, God will reveal Himself to them and in some way, and get the gospel message to them.

The testimony of nature, as glorious as it is, is just not enough. Mankind needs a direct, written revelation of God. It therefore makes sense that God would give us such a revelation of Himself which He does with the Bible. Otherwise, we are ignorant of His character, His true nature and what He wants from us.

Creation is His canvas, the Bible is His signature! He didn't leave us to wonder; He signed his handiwork in the very first verse of the Bible!

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Gen.1:1)

What artist would pour his life and energy and time into a brilliant masterpiece of artistic wonder, and leave it unsigned? Everyone who saw it would want to know, who did this? Who painted with such brilliant strokes? Who sculpted or created this masterpiece? God has not left us wondering! His signature is the Bible!

We need a written revelation of God because a written revelation would answer all the great questions of life.

A written revelation would answer the questions that sages, wise men and philosophers have pondered for millennia. Questions such as: Where do I come from? Why am I here? Who am I? What am I? What is the purpose of life? Am I just another animal that dies and ceases to exist? If not, then what happens to me when I die? Do I have an immortal soul? Is there life after death? In all of earths literature, only the Bible satisfactorily answers all these questions. It gives us clear and legitimate answers that actually make sense, which is far different from the sacred books of other

world religions. Reading the books of other religions will leave you with nothing but more questions because they actually confuse rather than clarify, and they raise more questions than they answer. The Bible stands unique in all of world literature, and in all of religious literature in that it alone satisfactorily answers the great questions of life.

Our own experiences reveal that we need a written revelation of God!

We all face problems that our limited wisdom is incapable of solving. There are obstacles that we face that we are not capable of overcoming using our own reasoning and logic. There are enemies that, if faced merely in our own strength, we simply can't defeat. We need help, counsel, comfort, courage and conviction; we need a revelation. We all face trials, tribulations, heartaches, sorrows and bereavements that would literally crush us with grief and sorrow if there was no hope of a resurrection and immortality. Through the Bible, we have a revelation of God that answers and fills all those needs.

All of society has a need for a written revelation of God.

Without a guide such as the Bible, what is to regulate our dealings with one another? Are we just to be a law unto ourselves? Do we all individually set our own laws and standards? Do we simply all do as we please in society? Do we just do what is right in our own eyes as it was in the early days of Israel? Do we depend only on our own views of right and wrong, good and evil? Is society just a human jungle where only the fittest and strongest survive? Or is there some eternal law that should govern us; that should regulate our lives, and set forth a standard for all of society to live by? The answer, of course, is that there is such a standard, and the Bible is that standard. It's one thing that has made the nation of America unique in all the nations of the world.

A divine written revelation is needed because the revelation of nature is just not enough.

What kind of God is He that created this world, that gives us such conflicting messages? A world where nature is beautiful and tranquil one minute and the next minute nature explodes in thunderous fury into destructive lightning and hail, windstorms and tornados. What kind of God is He? We need to know who this God, this Creator, is. Is He beneficent, loving and caring?

God is Able to Provide the Revelation that We Need.

To answer the question, "Can God provide us with such a revelation?" Of course, He can and it makes sense that He would do so. In fact, He has done so. He would certainly not leave us to grope about in the dark without some intelligible communication from Himself. Certainly if there is a personal God (and only a fool would deny His existence), and if we are the work of His hands as the Bible says, then surely He would not leave us in doubt concerning all the questions and problems that have to do with our temporal and spiritual lives and our eternal wellbeing. If an earthly parent would try to counsel and guide his child, then it's reasonable for us to assume that our heavenly Father would do at least as much for us. So that God would give mankind a written revelation of Himself to govern our lives, to guide our paths, to reveal Himself makes perfect sense. That God would give us a Bible is totally logical.

LESSON 2 - IT'S INEXHAUSTIBLE RICHES

“I am a creature of a day passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit, coming from God and returning to God just hovering over the great gulf. A few months hence, I am no more seen, I drop into an unchanging eternity. I want to know one thing — the way to heaven. God Himself has condescended to teach us the way. He has written it down in a book. Oh, give me that book at any price! Give me the book of God!” - John Wesley -

II. The Inexhaustible Riches of the Bible Prove it is the Word of God.

The immeasurable riches of the Holy Scriptures prove that without a doubt, the Bible is the Word of God. It is always fresh, always new. It's inexhaustible and that is proof of its divine inspiration.

It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. (Lam. 3:22-23)

1. God's Grace, Mercies, Compassion and Forgiveness are Without Limit.

The grace, mercies, compassions and forgiveness of God are an inexhaustible well that never runs dry. It is because God is infinite that His mercies do not fail and such graces automatically flow from His nature. One of God's attributes is His infinity; He is transcendent. God is so far above everything that we know because all that we see is temporal. But God, who is eternal is by His very nature unlimited. And His Word, the revelation of Himself to man, is therefore absolutely inexhaustible.

2. The Miraculous Nature of the Bible is seen in that our Studies of it Never get Dull or Tedious.

The Bible continuously provides depth, insight, wisdom, instruction, revelation, learning, new delights, new joys, new treasures and gems of insight. No matter how much we read and study it, we never stop finding treasures. A gold mine can play out, an oil well can be pumped dry and a diamond field can be sifted through until nothing valuable is left to be found. But the Bible is inexhaustible, which proves it is not of human origin. If the Bible was of human origin, those who study it would eventually uncover all it had to offer. We'd eventually stop learning and growing because we'd tapped the well dry. Once all the avenues had been explored, all its mysteries pondered and clarified, nothing would be left to be discovered. If the Bible is, however, the very Word of God, then its message would be as transcendent and infinite as its author. For millennia's the Bible has never diminished in its power to help, comfort, aid and support all who come to it. Those who open its pages with sincerity never fail to find food for the hungry heart and water for the thirsty

soul. Think about it! The same verse that brought us comfort yesterday, last week, last month or ten years ago and has brought comfort for the ten years since, will still bring comfort today, tomorrow and absolutely will not run dry.

“The vigor of our Spiritual Life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts. I solemnly state this from experience of fifty-four years. The first three years after conversion I neglected the Word of God. Since I began to search it diligently the blessing has been wonderful. I have read the Bible through one hundred times and always with increasing delight. Each time it seems like a new book to me. Great has been the blessing from consecutive, diligent, daily study. I look upon it as a lost day when I have not had a good time over the Word of God.” – George Muller-

3. The Bible is Timeless.

The Bible transcends time, geography, nationality and will address the needs of every person from every nation, from every race and background in every generation and every dispensation. It's not a book that grows old or outdated.

Millions today are still trying to live by the teachings of the Koran. Just look what has happened to those nations because the Koran doesn't address modern life. Written in the sixth century AD, it is a book of the past, the product of humans, the product of men and the product of devils. It is totally unlike the Bible. The Holy Bible speaks to mankind in every generation, nationality and dispensation. The Bible is just as relevant today as it was twenty years ago, two hundred years ago or two thousand years ago. Its message is timeless because it is the book of God, and of divine origin.

There are Bible verses and passages that we have studied and committed to memory. We may have analyzed each word or phrase thinking we have made a complete and thorough study of all that the verse or phrase discloses only to return to that same verse or passage next week and find some new insight that it imparts to our hearts. It will speak in a new way that it never did before because it's inexhaustible, because it has an infinite author and is not the product of men's minds but comes directly from the mind of God. The Scriptures are inexhaustible and that proves it is not the product of men. Even the most familiar passage will refresh the soul when we go back to it again and again. It never runs dry; no human book will do that. The thousandth time we read it is just as fresh as it was the first time we read it. Someone once said that the Bible is like a fountain of living water. The fountain is ever the same, but the water is always fresh.

No book in the world is like the Bible. Even the religious books of world's religions will leave the reader dry and confused with their convoluted messages. Some are virtually tortuous to read because they are so difficult to understand. Yet the Bible stands alone in all of world literature, even in religious literature it is different. The Bible has been studied more closely and carefully than any

other book in history. The very letters of the Bible have been counted, numbered and registered. Entire libraries have been filled with commentaries on this relatively small book comprised of 66 smaller books and every day, new books about the Bible are being published. No book on earth has ever been scrutinized so microscopically. The point is — it's inexhaustible. It's an inexhaustible mine of wealth, a well that never runs dry. It brings forth water that never fails to refresh and delight those who come to drink of it. Even after innumerable visits to the well, every new visit to the pages of this living fountain of water will wash us afresh with comfort, strength and blessing.

“One of the first striking facts which arrests the attention of the student of God’s Word is that, like the widow’s oil and meal that nourished Elijah, the contents of the Bible are never exhausted. Unlike all other books, the Bible never acquires a sameness, and never diminishes in its power of response to the needy soul who comes to it. Just as a fresh supply of manna was given each day to the Israelites in the wilderness, so the Spirit of God ever breaks anew the Bread of Life to those who hunger after righteousness. Just as the loaves and fishes in the hands of our Lord were more than enough to feed the famished multitude—a surplus still remaining—so the honey and milk of the Word are more than sufficient to satisfy the hunger of every human soul—the supply still remaining undiminished for new generations.” - A.W. Pink

4. The Bible is a Miracle of Divine Origin.

The Bible is a book of incomparable character and perennial freshness. It is not the product of men for if men had produced it, even clever men, then clever men could have easily exhausted it. *“...what is finite is fathomable. What the mind of man has produced the mind of man can exhaust. If human mortals had written the Bible its contents would have been ‘mastered’ ages ago. In view of the fact that the contents of the Scriptures cannot be exhausted, that they never acquire sameness or staleness to the devout student, and that they always speak with fresh force to the quickened soul that comes to them, is it not apparent that none other than the infinite mind of God could have created such a wonderful Book as the Bible?”- A.W. Pink*

The very fact that the content of the Bible cannot be exhausted argues for the fact that it is a book of divine origin. The Bible never gets dull, boring or irrelevant because it's not the product of men.

5. The Bible is the Foundation for All of Christianity.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

This passage contains one of the classic verses teaching the doctrine of inspiration. From beginning to end, all scripture is given to us by the inspiration of God to mature us. Christianity either stands or fall upon the Bible. It makes perfect sense that God who created the world and revealed Himself in nature would give us a revelation of Himself that would teach us what He expects from us, how He wants us to live, how we're to worship, how we're to live in community among ourselves, how we're to govern our lives, what we should believe, and what we're to practice. It makes sense that God would give us the Bible. It is logical that the God who created it all didn't do it just to leave us

groping in the dark, that the Father God who created us, would leave His children without some instruction in how to live. Would God do less for us than we do for our own children? We who are parents, instruct our children how to live, and how to conduct themselves so that they are an asset to society and not a burden upon it. We try to set the pattern so that they can govern their lives and actions in such a way that they will be a blessing to themselves, to their family and to God who created them. If we do that, how much more would God, the infinitely perfect spiritual parent, do the same for us!

“The Bible is the chief moral cause of all that is good, and the best corrective of all that is evil, in human society; the best Book for regulating the temporal concerns of men, and the only Book that can serve as an infallible guide... the principles of genuine liberty, and of wise laws and administrations, are to be drawn from the Bible and sustained by its authority. The man therefore, who weakens or destroys the Divine authority of that Book may be accessory to all the public disorders which society is doomed to suffer.” – Noah Webster-

The inexhaustible riches of the scriptures stand as proof and testimony that it is the product of the mind of God and not of the mind of man. It truly is a fountain whose waters are ever fresh, life giving, and life changing.

LESSON 3 - THE ARGUMENT OF FULL DISCLOSURE

“There came a time in my life when I doubted the divinity of the Scriptures, and I resolved as a lawyer and a judge I would try the Book as I would try anything in the courtroom, taking evidence for and against. It was a long, serious and profound study and using the same principles of evidence in this religious matter as I always do in secular matters, I have come to the decision that the Bible is a supernatural Book, that has come from God, and that the only safety for the human race is to follow its teachings”-Salmon P. Chase (former U.S. Senator from Ohio, Ohio state Governor, U.S. Treasury Secretary under President Abraham Lincoln and 6th Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court)

The writers of the Bible have compiled a totally honest history, revealing that it is of divine origin. The Bible’s honesty reveals that it’s not the product of men but of God. Had the history recorded in the Bible been the product of uninspired men, then it would read far differently than it does. Why? The Bible is a compilation of sixty-six books having some forty different human authors. With the exception of Luke, who was a Greek and wrote the books of Luke and Acts, all the authors were Jews. These Jewish writers were nationalistic and patriotic men, writing the history of their own people. They rightly equated patriotism with godliness because theirs was the only nation on earth that was a genuine theocracy. Even today, Jews who may not practice their religion are usually strongly supportive of the nation of Israel. Though they may be religiously lukewarm, casual and indifferent; many Jews living in this nation and abroad send money to Israel.

If an Italian or German or Irishman were told to write a history of their people, do you think it would be biased to their point of view? It is the natural human tendency to extoll the virtues of one’s own people and gloss over their faults and imperfections.

Consider, in contrast:

A. The Authors of Scripture Attributed Israel’s Victories to God.

These authors were patriotic men who faithfully wrote of Israel’s victories and attributed them to Yahweh. Had the Bible not been inspired, would it read the way that it does? If these authors were not inspired men, don’t you think their writings would have been colored to look favorably upon all their heroes and leaders, in order to extol their virtues and cover their flaws? Somewhere within their writings you would read accounts of meritorious feats of great courage of Israel’s heroes, and the great wisdom, political savvy and military genius of their leaders. Had this Bible been written by uninspired men, that’s exactly what we would be reading because that’s what historians do. Boastings in the flesh and nationalistic pride would undoubtedly pepper every page, but all such things are glaringly absent in the pages of the Bible. Instead, we find just the opposite. All of Israel’s victories and successes; politically, militarily and spiritually, are attributed to the power and presence of Yahweh. That’s why they succeeded; that’s why they won victories. It’s always because Yahweh delivered them. God was always credited with their victories.

An example is found in the account of young David facing the giant Goliath (1 Samuel, chapter 17). Had it been a purely human account written by a Jewish historian, the writer would have made David to be such a magnificent hero, a man of courage, a budding military genius and a superlative tactician. The Bible, however, records the words of David:

Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hands. (1 Sam. 17:45-47)

There was no boasting in the flesh on David's part. No trash talking, no display of human pride or ethnic superiority. David rather points to Israel's God as the one who saves and delivers. God always got the glory for the successes and victories in Israel.

In some of the writings of those who practiced ancient pagan religions, some of their victories were occasionally attributed to their deities. Therefore, according to critics, it's not so remarkable that the Bible would say God was the cause of all of Israel's victories. However, there is really no comparison between the writings of the heathen religions and the writings of the Bible. The pagan gods were capricious, unreliable, lecherous, prideful and vain. The one consistency about them was their inconsistency. This stands in stark contrast to the God of the Bible, especially when you consider:

B. The Human Authors of Scripture Also Attributed Their Defeats to God.

The Bible writers attributed not only their victories to God but they also attributed their defeats to Him. If they were victorious, it was because God was on their side and they won a great victory. If they lost, it was because God was against them. Why? It certainly wasn't because they were defeated by some foreign god who was greater than Yahweh! It was always because Yahweh would not hear Israel's prayers because of their backslidings; their wickedness and sin.

And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Eben-ezer: and the Philistines pitched in Aphek. And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines: and they slew of the army in the field about four thousand men. And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us today before the Philistines? (1 Sam. 4:1-3)

Notice in this passage that the armies of Israel were defeated. (The word LORD appears in capital letters which is the Old Testament covenant name of God, the Hebrew Tetragrammaton, YHWH, probably pronounced Yahweh). The Jews did not attribute their defeat to the Philistine god or to the armies of the Philistines; they attributed their defeat to Yahweh their God. When the people trusted in the Lord and served Him, they won their battles. However, when they strayed from the truth and

fell into the sins and idolatry of the surrounding nations, they were defeated before their enemies even though the God of Israel is Almighty. Their God was Almighty and yet they were defeated before their enemies because they fell into rebellion against Him.

The point to remember is that these writers were chronicling their own history. They are writing the history of their own people and their own leaders, who were their ancestors, kings and heroes. Yet they faithfully and truthfully record their defeats as well as their victories. They make no attempt to camouflage or conceal their defeats, but truthfully and accurately record the accounts. The Jews don't lay blame for their defeats on some General's poor military tactics or bad timing or poor preparation; no, if they were defeated they clearly state that it was because Yahweh was against them. They always place the blame squarely on the people, that is, the people were in sin and rebellion. That's always the cause of their suffering and shame.

“These same Jewish writers record how again and again their ancestors (contrary to the universal leaning towards ancestral adoration and worship) and their contemporaries were guilty of this great wickedness. Not only so, but they have pointed out how some of their most famous heroes sinned in this very particular.” - A.W. Pink

On another occasion Israel suffered a terrible defeat at the hands of the enemy, and the Philistines even seized the Ark of the Covenant. The Jews were in a spiritually backslidden condition and the prophet Samuel came to them with a message of what they must do.

And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only. And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD. And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh. And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines. And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him. And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel. And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Beth-car. Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us. So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. (1 Sam. 7:3-13)

Samuel mentions nothing about building up the army, obtaining better weapons or appointing more cunning and courageous leaders so that they will be better equipped and more capable militarily.

The command from Samuel was for the people to repent and put away their idols and return to worshipping the Lord! They did what Samuel ordered, and when they went back out to battle against the Philistines, though they were terribly outnumbered and facing a superior army equipped with superior weapons, they overcame the enemy knowing that only God could give them victory.

An honest record of events

The Bible can be relied upon to present a totally honest and faithful record. When the Israelites won victories it was because of the Lord. When they were defeated, it was because of the Lord (because the people were in sin, backslidden, disobedient). When they were delivered, it was because God delivered them. God got all the credit each and every time. Even the moral and spiritual backsliding of the people is recorded with absolute faithfulness. If the people sinned, that too, was recorded in the pages of the Bible. If their priests, prophets or kings did wrong, they made no attempt to rewrite that history but faithfully recorded it.

Consider: Why would Jews write so honestly about the sins of their ancestors and their own nations faults and backslidings, and expose themselves to even more scorn, contempt and anti-Semitism in the eyes of the national public, unless their words were guided by an unseen hand. Dr. Michael Brown has accurately pointed out, that:

1). Anti-Semitism is the longest hatred of all time. Catholic scholar Edward Flannery wrote: ‘Anti-Semitism is the longest and deepest hatred in human history...what other hatred has endured some twenty-three centuries and survived a genocide of six million of its victims...’

2). Anti-Semitism is the most widespread hatred of all time. It can be traced from the Greco-Roman world to Christianity (yes, Christianity, including vicious comments from some of the Church’s greatest leaders); from Facism to Communism (intense anti-Semitism links Muslim terrorists, Adolph Hitler, and Joseph Stalin); from White Supremacists to Black Supremacists, from university campuses to the world press; from the philosopher Voltaire to the historian Arnold Toynbee; from the composer Richard Wagner to the car designer Henry Ford; from Japan to Russia to Iran...

3). Anti-Semitism is the most vicious hatred of all time. Both the incredible violence and the depth of animosity against the Jews defy rational explanation. The enormity and depravity of the Holocaust alone testifies to the viciousness of this hatred...

4). Anti-Semitism is the most irrational hatred of all time. The absurdity of the anti-Semitic libels defies rational explanation. When the Black Plague decimated Europe, Jews were accused of starting the plague by poisoning the wells with a mixture made of spiders, lizards and the hearts of Christians mixed together with the sacred elements of the Lord’s Supper. Outraged mobs slaughtered thousands of Jews as a result of this pernicious rumor...

Only God could have inspired such total and absolute honesty in the human authors. Otherwise, they would have written their own history to make themselves look good.

C. The Authors Always Penned their Writings with Truth.

The writers of the Bible did not falsify their history or color their ancestors only in glowing terms. They always told the truth. For example, what was the most central call and theme, the central truth proclaimed throughout the Old Testament?

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. [Deut. 6:4-5]

The Jews recited these verses repeatedly throughout each day. They marched under the banner of monotheism. They were the only monotheistic religion during that time. Even today, there are only three monotheistic religions in existence but at the time of these verses virtually the entire world was polytheistic, worshipping numerous gods. Even the small religious groups such as Zoroastrianism were dualistic in their beliefs. Israel alone was truly monotheistic, believing in one God. Idolatry was considered the greatest sin in the Old Testament and from beginning to end, the Bible condemns it. It was the chief sin that the prophets railed against so frequently and fervently. In fact, that's the theme of the first and second commandments and was the sin most strongly condemned by the prophets.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. (Ex. 20:3-6)

To show just how honest the record of the Bible is, the Jewish writers of the scriptures recorded again and again how their ancestors were repeatedly guilty of the sin of idolatry. Keep in mind, these writers are chronicling their own history. If this was an uninspired book, these writers would shade all their failures. They'd do like the historian Josephus, who wrote a tremendous history, *The Antiquity of the Jews*. Josephus' book is not inspired scripture and he colors over the entire historical account. The good accomplishments are extolled but no negatives about the Jews are to be found.

Such is the case in the accounts of the history of every nation, including our own. Do you remember the young schoolgirls skipping rope at recess, singing and hopping to such lyrics as, "George Washington never told a lie, etc.?" It's customary that one's forefathers are always viewed with increasing reverence. There's a tendency in the human heart to venerate one's ancestors. When we read of our forefathers, where can we read of the evils they did? It can hardly be found in any American history book. Where can we read about the idolatries, pagan superstitions, sorceries and other forms of occultism practiced by our early presidents? Or, the fact that many of them were slaveholders, adulterers, gross womanizers, etc? The point is that the history of our country (and indeed, every country) is colored with flesh; it was written by uninspired human writers. That's why we hear that George Washington never told a lie. That's why Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and Abraham Lincoln are depicted as saintly. Their humanity and their moral and spiritual failures are not divulged.

Our purpose is certainly not to denigrate the forefathers of our country but to make a plain and inescapable point: Mere human histories don't tell the entire truth. This Bible, on the other hand, tells the whole truth and these writers were Jews, the most nationalistic, fervent, patriotic people on the face of the earth and they didn't color their forefathers with the pen of falsehood. If their king was apostate, or if their prophets were backslidden, they said so. When some of the great leaders in

the Bible fell, the Bible tells of it. For example: Aaron made a golden calf (Exodus 32); Solomon, perhaps the greatest king Israel ever had insofar as glory, splendor, majesty, wealth, prestige, etc. was extolled on the one hand but was also condemned for his sin.

But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. (1 Ki. 11:1-8)

If the Bible was the product of human invention, these facts would have been colored over or omitted entirely. King Solomon was a great leader and hero yet the truth about his life is openly disclosed and condemned in the Bible. No nation's history books do this. Thus the Bible is unique in its truthfulness. The evils of any nation's heroes are always colored over or concealed. Solomon, Israel's most glorious king is shown to be a failure, morally and spiritually. He was guilty of the most heinous sin, the sin of idolatry. Even Solomon's father, David, is painted honestly with the color of truth. His moral and ethical failures are truthfully related in the pages of the Bible.

The entire Old Testament record is recorded truthfully, i.e., the sins of the people, the priests, the prophets and the kings. All is faithfully recorded in the scriptures. The writers wrote with absolute truth and candor about their own kinsmen, forefathers and heroes.

Fact: Most of the primary sources you come across when studying history are heavily biased. The ancient historians (non-inspired writers) were very opinionated, prejudiced, and often wrote to record an "officially sanctioned" version of their own history. All had their own viewpoints and cultural bias, and in that, the ancients weren't much different from their more modern counterparts.

Consider this report from George Mason University's History News Network:

"The U.S. textbook publishing industry is a \$4 billion-dollar-a-year business providing materials for over 45 million elementary, middle and secondary students in U.S. public and private schools. At the collegiate level, Congress has recently stepped in to create oversight on U.S. taxpayer funding in our universities of Middle East Studies centers. Influxes of Saudi and Palestinian money, frequently matched by U.S. taxpayer dollars, have financed teaching material that demonizes Israel and the United States. ...American students are now indoctrinated with falsehoods... Gilbert T. Sewell of the American Textbook Council... discovered that sections concerning Islam in books distributed by the main U.S. publishers/providers have been sanitized. In general, current or past events about

Islam are not reported accurately for the sake of political correctness. Arab and Palestinian political goals are also strongly promoted.”

This is precisely what you’d expect from biased and culturally prejudiced writers, ***unless they were inspired!***

“Furthermore, the TCI material turns Middle East history on its head. It does not present the history of Arab terrorism against Israel much less outline its extent over the last 55 years. The theme is constantly implied, stated and reiterated that Israel is a foreign entity that stole the Palestinians’ country. In fact, any Arab violence discussed at all is couched as being done in self-defense against Jewish persecution or terrorism against Arabs in the region.”

The article goes on to say, “...in the Arab world, PH.D’s even claim that Israel had no Jewish population before the modern Zionist movement began in the late 19th century. They simply ignore a Jewish presence of 3200 years – and considerable available archaeological evidence from the Biblical period, as well as the Bible itself.”

The point should be crystal clear: When uninspired men write their own history, they often distort the truth, twist it, stretch it, deny it and color it to suit their own viewpoints and biases. And quite often, they outright lie, as do these Arab PH.D’s.

The fact is, no nation on earth does what the inspired writers of the Bible did. Investigate any nation or religion or government or movement, and you’ll quickly find that they all deny, cover up, or in some way gloss over the unflattering aspects of their history. Consider the histories of Russia, China, Cuba, Islam, etc. Truly accurate histories of their great founders and leaders are scarce. Human history always venerates its ancestors. Some religions actually worship their ancestors. The Bible shows that Israel’s heroes were mere flesh and blood, men and women with beauty and grace as well as warts and flaws, whose faith and victories, as well as their doubts and failures are faithfully recorded.

And Scripture says, it was all recorded for our learning. We learn, both by their successes and by their failures.

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” Romans 15:4

“There is a big difference in the books that men make, and the Book that makes men”-anonymous

LESSON 4 - THE ARGUMENT FROM COHESION

“If the Bible is not the Word of God and inspired, the whole of Christendom for 1800 years has been under an immense delusion; half the human race has been cheated and deceived, and churches are monuments of folly. If the Bible is the Word of God and inspired, all who refuse to believe it are in fearful danger; they are living on the brink of eternal misery. No man, in his sober senses, can fail to see that the whole subject demands most serious attention.”-J.C. Ryle-1878

The Argument from Cohesion: The Bible is a Miracle of Unity.

The unity of the Bible shouts its divine origin. When all the facts are considered, everything about the Bible; its makeup, authors, background, composition, etc., should cause it to be the most convoluted, disjointed, fragmented and contradictory book in human literature.

However:

A. The Bible is a Book with One Message.

The unity of the Bible reveals its divine origin. The Bible is a marvel of unity, having one message, one rule of faith, one code of doctrine and one system of ethics. Contrary to what ignorant and foolish people say, the Bible does not contradict itself. If those people would examine what they believe to be contradictions, they would soon find that no such contradictions exist. All of the alleged contradictions can be explained by examining them in the light of the basic rules of Biblical interpretation and the simple application of common sense. In fact, the more one searches the scriptures, the more one realizes what a marvel of unity the Bible really is.

Skeptics and critics heap criticisms on the Book they’ve never really studied, and certainly don’t understand. Consider, for instance, one of the rants of noted atheist Richard Dawkins:

“To be fair, much of the Bible is not systematically evil but just plain weird, as you would expect of a chaotically cobbled-together anthology of disjointed documents, composed, revised, translated, distorted and ‘improved’ by hundreds of anonymous authors, editors and copyists, unknown to us and mostly unknown to each other, spanning nine centuries” - Richard Dawkins, The God Delusion

In his rabid attempt to discredit Scripture, Dawkins either displays an enormous ignorance of the Bible; its origin, human authors, preservation, integrity, unity, harmony and accuracy, or he intentionally and deceitfully distorts the message he so intensely dislikes. As E. Paul Hovey so eloquently stated,

“Men do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them!”

Any genuine study of the Holy Book by sincere hearts will be a life changing experience. So much so, that as John Newton put it; “*I will put down all apparent inconsistencies in the Bible to my own ignorance.*”

The Bible contains one message throughout its sixty-six books and each book complements the others. There is no dichotomy, no division or disharmony in the entire sixty-six books of the Bible and that, in and of itself is miraculous. Especially when you consider:

The Bible was not written like any other book in all of human history. It was written in three different languages — Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, and on three different continents, i.e., Asia, Europe and Africa. God designated forty different men as human writers for His sixty-six book Bible. They wrote from a large range of environments — from tents, caves and prisons to palaces. Some wrote while wandering in the desert and others wrote while under foreign captivity. To write presented grave personal danger to some, while others wrote experiencing times of great spiritual ecstasy. Their backgrounds were quite varied and diverse and most of the human authors never met one another as these books were written over a span of 1,600 years (1500 BC until the close of 100 AD). Among the writers were priests, judges, herdsmen, fishermen, vine dressers, scribes, soldiers, patriarchs, prophets, and kings; one was a prime minister and another was a doctor. And consider the various genres in Scripture: There is poetry, history, prophecy and narrative; genealogies, figures of speech, parables, etc. The Older Testament contains 39 book, composed of 929 chapters, 23,138 verses and 602,582 words. The New Testament contains 27 books, 260 chapters, 7,957 verses and 169,751 words! (King James Version). How could such vast diversity result in such singular unity, apart from one Divine mind, like one conductor, orchestrating the whole.

In spite of all of its diversity, the Bible is undeniably one book with one theme, one message, one plan of salvation, one predominant and all pervasive message and that is the message of Jesus Christ; from Old Testament to New. In all that diversity, everything about its background and composition should make this book the most convoluted, confusing, contradictory book in human history. But just the opposite is true! The Bible is a unit. It is no small matter that it is called, “The Book,” and not *the books*, because even though it is a collection of 66 different books, each one is so masterfully crafted that they all fit perfectly together as the pieces of one puzzle. Anyone who reads it has to wonder how that can be because the book reads the same from beginning to end, never really contradicting itself. Its message is one. Its theme is one. The unity of the Bible is nothing short of an absolute miracle.

How is this for a challenge: Take forty men from a variety of professions, i.e., lawyers, doctors, farmers, fishermen, ranchers, common laborers, politicians, preachers, soldiers, etc. Assemble these forty men and ask each one to write a chapter on theology. Compile their forty chapters and see how much unity is found in the composition. With forty people there would undoubtedly be forty different opinions. Talk about a contradictory book! What a hodgepodge of confusion we’d have! The Jews even today joke among themselves saying that putting two Jews together will produce three opinions. The Bible however, tells us:

For God is not the author of confusion.... (1 Cor. 14:33)

B. The Composition of the Bible is in Perfect Harmony and Agreement.

In spite of the background that brought the sixty-six books together, it is one book with one message. Imagine trying to assemble a Bible today from a group of ancient books. Try taking something written from each century, dating back to the dawn of creation. Then compile what you collect into one concise book with one to-the-point message. The fact is, it couldn't be done! What harmony would be found in such a collection? Human writers all reflect the spirit of their day and that, unfortunately, is just the way it is. The compositions of men living under such diverse conditions, influences and circumstances separated by centuries of time have little or nothing in common. But the Bible, even though it spans some 1,600 years in its composition, is in perfect harmony. All of the authors throughout the centuries on all points — moral, religious, doctrinal and ethical — are in agreement. That is nothing short of supernatural! The more we read it, the more we realize the continuity of thought. It is harmonious and only one mind could have authored the Bible and that is the mind of God. The more we read and study it, even though we read the words penned by forty different writers, we recognize there is one overruling and overriding mind behind it all. There is no other possible rationale for the unity of the Bible except that this is not the product of the human mind. The subject of the Bible is Jesus Christ from beginning to end. The Old Testament points to Him; the New Testament testifies of Him and declares from beginning to end that Jesus Christ is Lord! The fact that there are no real contradictions in the Bible is a miracle we cannot take lightly or dismiss. In reading the uninspired literature of the religious world, we will find it rife with contradictions and error. There is no comparison of those religious works with the Bible; no book on earth is like the Bible. Nothing compares to it.

Consider such theologians as Charles H. Spurgeon whose early writings contained some very strong doctrinal positions. His later writings toward the end of his life however, were much more moderated. People change with the experiences of life and time. If you would hear a sermon that I preached in the early years of ministry and compare it to what you hear today, you might think that it's not the same preacher. The position or impetus of the individual's message changes with increased knowledge, growth, maturity and experience. All those things bring changes into our lives. Not so with the Bible however; there's no change throughout 1,600 years. The writers of the Scriptures are in perfect harmony because they didn't write out of their own experience, views or theories. They wrote under divine inspiration just as the Bible says:

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (2 Pe. 1:21)

With such perfect agreement in their teachings, such perfect harmony in their doctrines, such perfect unity in the compositions of forty men from varied backgrounds over a span of 1,600 years, it leads to one conclusion — men did not write the Bible. There was a divine master-mind behind its production; inspiring the authors, preserving their messages, and superintending the work. The unity of the Bible shouts that it is the work of God and a miracle.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets. (Heb. 1:1)

God spake and that's what the Bible is; it is God speaking. The more we study this book, the more we come to the inescapable conclusion that it is the book of God. With that assurance also comes a great and awesome responsibility which we cannot dismiss or take lightly. Knowing we are accountable, we can't neglect or treat it with indifference. It must be our life, our love, our passion. It must be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. We must embrace it and let its eternal wisdom guide and govern our lives. It is without question the Book of God.

“Finally, we should carefully note the elegant tapestry that serves as an internal evidence for the divine authorship of the biblical text. The tapestry of Scripture is a divine composite of surpassing brilliance and beauty. It is simply incredible that this exquisite masterpiece is fashioned from sixty-six books, written by forty different human authors in three different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek), over a period of fifteen hundred years, on thousands of different subjects, and yet is unified and consistent throughout. How is that possible? The individual writers had no idea that their messages would eventually be assembled into one Book, yet each work fits perfectly into place with a unique purpose as a synergistic component of an elegant masterpiece.

The synergistic harmony of the Bible is a powerful testimony and an enduring reminder that God has spoken-that these are His very words. Clearly, the elegant tapestry of the text added to the eyewitness testimony of its authors is surpassingly powerful internal evidence to its absolute and irrevocable trustworthiness.”-Hank Hanegraaff

C. What about All of the Contradictions?

People often say the Bible is full of contradictions, but very few of them are able to give specific examples. I have often heard this argument against the Scriptures and occasionally I challenge them to cite specific examples. In every case of alleged contradictions, the application of the basic principles of Bible interpretation and some plain old common sense quickly clears them up. But, I repeat again what E. Paul Hovey said, “Men *do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them!*

Critics argue against the unity of the Bible by citing a seeming disparity between the God of the Old Covenant and that of the New. Some actually suggest that the differences are so vast that they are two different Gods!

According to atheist Richard Dawkins, “*The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.*” ? Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*.

Dawkins ignorance of the Bible is as appalling as his mischaracterization of God.

Is there a contradiction between the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New? Is there a wrathful God in the Old Testament and a loving one in the New?

The simple and straightforward answer is NO! There is one God, infinite and unchanging, who has dealt with mankind in two great covenants. One of law and one of grace. One of works and one of faith. One that tells of a coming Messiah, and one that tells of the Messiah who came. Both Testaments speak of God's love for mankind and His wrath towards sin. And both declare His plan of redemption. This is basic Christianity, taught in grade school level Sunday school classes. One would think that writers such as Dawkins would at least know that much about the God and Bible they so love to criticize.

Old and New Testaments consistently agree! Both teach that:

God is Holy – Lev.11:45; Rev. 4:8

God is Just – Deut. 32:4; 2 Thess. 1:6

God is Loving – Deut.7:9; 1 Jo.4:16

The Old Testament often speaks of God's matchless love and tender mercies:

He is "...the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin..." - Ex. 34:6-7

"Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations." -Deut.7:9

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." -Ps.84:11

"But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth." -Ps.86:15

Wouldn't that be out of character for the Old Testament ogre that Dawkins says God is?

And not just the Old, but the **New Testament** also declares that God is a God of judgment and wrath:

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." – John3:36

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." – Rom. 1:18

"So shall it be at the end of the world; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." – Matt. 13:49-50

Any reading of the Bible by the sincere seeker will reveal that God is loving and forgiving, merciful and gracious; and at the same time, absolutely just, in both Testaments.

In the book, *How Do We Know The Bible is True?* By John Ankerberg and Dillon Burroughs, the authors give several helpful tips for dealing with alleged Bible contradictions.

1. Define the Issue: What exactly do you (or the other person) see as the alleged contradiction? Example: Who carried the cross of Jesus? Matthew, Mark and Luke report that Simon from Cyrene was told by a Roman soldier to carry the cross for him. But John seems to suggest that Jesus carried it the whole way himself: *“And he, bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha.”* – Jo.19:17
2. Determine the options: What are the potential options that could explain the situation? Example: In this case, either: **1)**. Jesus carried his cross the entire trip, **2)**. Simon carried the cross the entire trip, or **3)**. Jesus carried it part of the way and Simon carried it after Jesus fell with the cross.
3. Develop each option’s strengths and weaknesses: Which option or options make the most sense? Example: Choice 1 would imply that Simon didn’t carry the cross at all and that there is an apparent contradiction between the gospel accounts. However, it is possible Simon indeed carried the cross, since John mentions this. Therefore, both possibilities could be correct if Jesus began carrying the cross, fell down under its weight along the way to Golgotha, and then the Roman soldier commanded Simon to carry it the rest of the way.
4. Decide on a most likely scenario: Where does all of the evidence lead? Example: Choice 3, suggesting that Jesus carried His cross, fell under its weight, and then Simon carried it the rest of the way, seems the most likely scenario. In this case, there is no reason to suggest a contradiction, and this scenario accounts for all of the evidence. To be a contradiction, John would have had to say, “Jesus carried his cross all the way to the place of the skull,” But John didn’t say this. The claim that this is a contradiction does not stand up under close scrutiny of the verses involved.

The simple application of common sense goes a long way to clear up most so called contradictions. And the application of basic principles of Bible interpretation clear up the rest. Whenever you answer those who allege a contradiction, read the passage entirely, in its context. Consider that book of the Bible and its message as a whole. Consider who is speaking? Who is being spoken to? Is the passage applicable to a single person in a particular moment in time, or to all? Is this a figure of speech, such as a metaphor, simile, hyperbole, or personification? Is the alleged contradiction seen in its context? Is it from a singular point of view that is to be compared to other eyewitnesses of the same account? Are you taking into consideration that multiple eyewitnesses of the same account (as in the Gospels) each add complementary details to the record, not contradictory ones? What else does the Bible say on the same subject?

Consider, for example, the accusation that the Gospels contradict themselves in several particulars. Some allege that the number of women who first went to Jesus' tomb after His resurrection contradict each other.

- Matthew says two women – Mary Magdalene and the other Mary – Matt.28:1-7
- Mark mentions three women – Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome - Mk.16:1-8
- Luke does not state a specific number but simply mentions “the women” – Lu.24:1-12
- John mentions one woman, Mary Magdalene – Jo.20:1-18

Common sense answers all such nonsensical allegations of contradiction. None of the Gospels state that only one woman, or only two women went to the tomb. Each writer mentions those he chose to recognize as there, but none of them give contradictory information. If I saw an automobile accident and mentioned a red car parked on the street, it wouldn't contradict another eyewitness who also mentioned a blue car parked there as well. The accounts complement, not contradict, each other. I could cite other alleged contradictions, but these simple principles will apply to all such allegations.

The truth is, there are many devious and ungodly people who intentionally seek to find problems or contradictions in the Bible. But all of their efforts are bound for failure. Given just a few minutes of time to apply the simple principles we've cited in this chapter, and the application of some common sense, all their alleged contradictions can be refuted.

“Let God be true, but every man a liar.” Romans 3:4

LESSON 5 - FULFILLED PROPHECY

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the Power and Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His Majesty. ⁷For He received from God the Father Honor and Glory, when there came such a Voice to Him from the excellent Glory, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the Holy Mount. We have also a more sure Word of Prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the Day Star arise in your hearts: ⁰Knowing this first, that no Prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (2 Pe. 1:16-21)

I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

These verses declare that the Word of God came to holy men in just this way. No one made it up, no one reasoned it from their own minds, and no one attempted to “prophesy” something out of their own heart. 2 Peter 1:21 says the Prophecy (the Scriptures) is the product of God. Prophecy, particularly the predictive aspect, is a peculiar thing, and most of us are fascinated by it. Every year in December, many psychics, prognosticators and astrologers try to predict what’s ahead for the New Year. One such example was “Nikki, Psychic to the Stars, who predicted that in 2010: There would be trouble on the surface of the moon; the Lost City of Atlantis would be found; there would be a worldwide power blackout; giant bats would attack a city in South America and two cruise ships would collide in the Caribbean. Well, 2010 came and went and Nikki’s predictions were 100% wrong! She is just one example of the many I could cite, of the results when mere humans try to divine the future. Even the “superstar psychics;” such occult luminaries as Jeanne Dixon, Edgar Cayce and others, had an abysmal failure rate in predicting the future. All you have to do is save the newspaper or magazine article for a year and then check their success rate. In virtually every case, they fail 90 to 95 % of the time! I laugh at the so called predictions of famed French seer, Nostradamus, who wrote about 1000 four-line rhyming stanzas full of obscurities, confusion and vagueness. He cites no actual names, locations or dates, and wrote in broad generalities that could describe any generation; wars, revolts, tyrants, famines, plaques, assassinations, etc. Nostradamus hinted that his predictions came while in a trance or through astrological computations, but modern research reveals that he, in fact, heavily plagiarized various collections of earlier prognostications. Then there were those bogus Nostradamus predictions that made their rounds on the web after the 911 attacks on the Twin Towers. Modern seers do the same thing; making vague predictions that have a high rate of probability, and when something like it occurs, they re-write and reinterpret their prediction to fit the event. For example, it’s pretty safe to predict that a “celebrity couple will split up this year.” Or that “a famous star or musician will suffer a drug overdose.” Then, when it happens (and it invariably will), you can boast that you predicted that!

Consider some of the widely publicized predictions of Edgar Cayce, the “Sleeping Prophet: “Earth’s polar axis will begin to tip catastrophically in 1936 (WRONG!); 1958 will be the most critical year of the 20th century and perhaps of all time (WRONG! Unless you think he meant the Edsel!); Communist China will be Christian and democratic by the year 1968 (WRONG!); During 1960-1970 the whole west coast of the U.S. will be broken apart (WRONG!); Japan will sink almost entirely into the sea..(WRONG, WRONG. WRONG!). Jeanne Dixon has a similar track record. She predicted that Red China will go to war with the U.S., beginning WWII in 1958 (WRONG!) She also wrongly predicted the death of Fidel Castro in 1966, and that Russians would be the first to walk on the moon.

Before you buy into the alleged prophecies of psychics and seers, ask a few pertinent questions:

1. Is there real evidence their prediction was made BEFORE the event occurred? Or has a very vague and ambiguous prediction been swiftly rewritten to fit the event?
2. What is the probability of the predicted event occurring? Did they simply predict a plane crash next year, an assassination attempt, crime wave, tornado in Oklahoma, etc.? Anybody can do that.
3. What is their rate of success/error? If you let them keep their own score they’ll boast a 90-95% success rate. The truth is more like 1 to 5%.
4. How does the seer earn his living? Shouldn’t someone who claims to accurately predict the future make their fortune in the stock market? Instead of giving personal psychic readings for \$100 bucks a pop?

Psychics, fortunetellers, diviners, astrologers and occult prognosticators get into trouble when they get specific with their predictions. As long as their predictions are vague, with a high rate of probability, and they don’t mention names, places or dates, they are safe.

The Bible also predicts some events with broad generalities, such as earthquakes in diverse places, and wars and rumours of wars. But the Bible also makes startling specific predictions. So specific, in fact, that they cannot be misunderstood or misinterpreted. And it does so repeatedly! Which makes the Bible unique in all of human literature. Some have accused the Bible of being obscure and mysterious and full of strange and frightening things. It was Mark Twain who said, “It’s not the things that I can’t understand in the Bible that scare me; it’s the things that I do understand in the Bible that scare me.”

WHY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?

Fulfilled Prophecy Proves the Bible is True!

Fulfilled prophecies prove beyond a shadow of doubt that the Bible is the Word of God and not merely the product of men. It didn’t come from the minds or imaginations of men. The writers *spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*. The Bible cannot be the product of mere men because it speaks of things which mere men do not know and cannot know anything about- the future! The Bible speaks predictively of the future and not in broad generalities or in such vague or uncertain terms that it could be interpreted any way one chooses, such as with the writing of Nostradamus.

The Bible, in contrast, speaks with clarity, precision and in specifics. The Bible has repeatedly predicted the future accurately, in fact, infallibly, and has thus shown its origin to be other-worldly. That means it's the product of an omniscient author who knows the beginning from the end. No mere human knows the future. Some can watch trends and see potential occurrences, but all mortals stand before an impenetrable wall of darkness, unable to predict what will happen within the next twenty-four hours! Only the Bible reveals events that will occur in the future. The fulfilled prophecies in the Bible prove that it's a miracle book and the product of an omniscient author.

Mathematical Probability that Jesus is the Christ

In a message from the InterNET by mathematician David Williams, Computer Systems Manager for the Mathematics Faculty at the University of Newcastle, responded to a Jewish user from Melbourne on the subject of Jesus and Prophecy. Consider his answer:

“In a recent follow-up to a posting by Leslie Brown I said I'd make a post detailing the probability of Jesus fulfilling Old Testament prophecy by chance. Here it is!

The reason why prophecy is an indication of the divine authorship of the Scriptures, and hence a testimony to the trustworthiness of the Message of the Scriptures, is because of the minute probability of fulfillment. Anyone can make predictions. Having those prophecies fulfilled is vastly different. In fact, the more statements made about the future, and the more the detail, then the less likely the precise fulfillment will be. For example, what's the likelihood of a person predicting today the exact city in which the birth of a future leader would take place, well into the 21st century? This is indeed what the prophet Micah did 700 years before the Messiah. Further, what is the likelihood of predicting the precise manner of death that a new, unknown religious leader would experience, a thousand years from now - a manner of death presently unknown, and to remain unknown for hundreds of years? Yet, this is what David did in 1000 B.C.

Again, what is the likelihood of predicting the specific date of the appearance of some great future leader, hundreds of years in advance? This is what Daniel did, 530 years before Christ. If one were to conceive 50 specific prophecies about a person in the future, whom one would never meet, just what's the likelihood that this person will fulfill all 50 of the predictions? How much less would this likelihood be if 25 of these predictions were about what other people would do to him, and were completely beyond his control?

For example, how does someone “arrange” to be born in a specific family? How does one “arrange” to be born in a specified city, in which their parents don't actually live? How does one “arrange” their own death - and specifically by crucifixion, with two others, and then “arrange” to have their executioners gamble for His clothing (John 16:19; Psalms 22:18)? How does one “arrange” to be betrayed in advance? How does one “arrange” to have the executioners carry out the regular practice of breaking the legs of the two victims on either side, but not their own? Finally, how does one “arrange” to be God? How does one escape from a grave and appear to people after having been killed?

Indeed, it may be possible for someone to fake one or two of the Messianic prophecies, but it would be impossible for any one person to arrange and fulfill all of these prophecies.

John Ankerberg relates the true story of how governments use prearranged identification signs to identify correct agents:

David Greenglass was an American citizen who betrayed his country during World War II. His name was commonly heard in the news in the 1950's though he never really attained the notoriety of his more famous sister, Ethyl, who was married to Julius Rosenberg. Both Julius and Ethyl were executed in 1953 after being convicted of espionage against their own government. Their crime? The Rosenbergs sold atomic weapons secrets to the Soviet Union! The couple recruited Greenglass to steal secrets. He was a soldier assigned to the *Manhattan Project*, the code name for U.S. atomic weapons development. For two years Greenglass smuggled secret information to the Rosenbergs, who passed it on to the Soviet Union. But in 1950 their treachery was discovered and scores of people were quickly arrested and charged with espionage. Just before his arrest, Julius Rosenberg gave his brother-in-law, Greenglass, \$5000. to flee from the U.S. to Mexico and they devised an elaborate code to connect Greenglass to the Secretary of the Russian Ambassador to Mexico. They couldn't take the risk of Greenglass identifying himself to the wrong person so an elaborate scheme was devised. Greenglass was to identify himself with six prearranged signs. These instructions had been given to both the secretary and Greenglass so there would be no possibility of making a mistake. They were: (1) Once in Mexico City, Greenglass was to write a note to the secretary, signing his name as "I. JACKSON." This would let them know he was in town and ready to meet. (2) After three days he was to go to the Plaza de Colon in Mexico City and (3) stand before the statue of Columbus, (4) with his middle finger placed in a guide book. In addition, (5) when he was approached, he was to say it was a magnificent statue and that he was from Oklahoma. (6) The secretary was to then give him a passport for his escape to the Soviet Union.

By fulfilling these six prearranged signs there could be no mistake in identifying Greenglass as the proper contact. If one person met all these identifying signs, it'd be impossible for it not to be him (John Ankerberg, John Weldon and Walter Kaiser, "The Case for Jesus The Messiah", Melbourne: Pacific College Study Series, 1994, 17-18). Note: Greenglass was arrested before he could flee the country to Mexico

The Point: If six signs are proof positive of someone's identity; if six specific signs left no room for error, coincidence or misidentification, what are 324 signs? Or 456 signs by Eidersheims count? How much more proof could God give that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah?

In fact, what does the science of probability make of this?

The science of probability attempts to determine the chance that a given event will occur. The value and accuracy of the science of probability has been well established beyond doubt - for example, insurance rates are fixed according to statistical probabilities.

Professor Emeritus of Science at Westmont College, Peter Stoner, has calculated the probability of one man fulfilling the major prophecies made concerning the Messiah. The estimates were worked out by twelve different classes representing some 600 university students.

The students carefully weighed all the factors, discussed each prophecy at length, and examined the various circumstances which might indicate that men had conspired together to fulfill a particular

prophecy. They made their estimates conservative enough so that there was finally unanimous agreement even among the most skeptical students.

However Professor Stoner then took their estimates, and made them even more conservative. He also encouraged other skeptics or scientists to make their own estimates to see if his conclusions were more than fair. Finally, he submitted his figures for review to a committee of the American Scientific Affiliation. Upon examination, they verified that his calculations were dependable and accurate in regard to the scientific material presented (Peter Stoner, *Science Speaks*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1969, 4).

For example, concerning Micah 5:2, where it states the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem Ephrathah; Stoner and his students determined the average population of BETHLEHEM from the time of Micah to the present; then they divided it by the average population of the earth during the same period. They concluded that the chance of one man being born in Bethlehem was one in 300,000, (or one in 2.8×10^5 - rounded),

After examining only eight different prophecies (Idem, 106), they conservatively estimated that the chance of one man fulfilling all eight prophecies was one in 10^{17} .

To illustrate how large the number 10^{17} IS (a figure with 17 zeros), Stoner gave this illustration: If you mark one of ten tickets, and place all the tickets in a hat, and thoroughly stir them, and then ask a blindfolded man to draw one, his chance of getting the right ticket is one in ten. Suppose that we take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They'll cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would've had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote them in their own wisdom (Idem, 106-107).

In financial terms, is there anyone who would not invest in a financial venture if the chance of failure were only one in 10^{17} ? This is the kind of sure investment we're offered by god for faith in His Messiah.

From these figures, Professor Stoner, concludes the fulfillment of these eight prophecies alone proves that God inspired the writing of the prophecies (Idem, 107) - the likelihood of mere chance is only one in 10^{17} ! Another way of saying this is that any person who minimizes or ignores the significance of the biblical identifying signs concerning the Messiah would be foolish.

But, of course, there are many more than eight prophecies. In another calculation, Stoner used 48 prophecies (Idem, 109) (even though he could have used Edersheim's 456), and arrived at the extremely conservative estimate that the probability of 48 prophecies being fulfilled in one person is the incredible number 10^{157} . How large is the number one in 10^{157} ? 10^{157} contains 157 zeros! Stoner gives an illustration of this number using electrons. Electrons are very small objects. They're smaller than atoms. It would take 2.5 TIMES 10^{15} of them, laid side by side, to make one

inch. Even if we counted 250 of these electrons each minute, and counted day and night, it would still take 19 million years just to count a line of electrons one-inch long (Stoner, op. cit, 109).

More Examples:

Daniel

The Prophet Daniel predicted a succession of nations with specific accuracy, something that no astrologer or soothsayer or prognosticator could do. The details of Daniels prophecy are so precise, that anti-supernaturalists had no choice but to deny that Daniel wrote the book at all, and they concocted some flimsy charade of an argument that claims Daniel was written by an unknown author after the fact. But all of history and the Bible records prove that Daniel was a contemporary of Babylon's king Nebuchadnezzar (as also recorded in Josephus) and the Jews hold the book of Daniel to be inspired Scripture. Jesus himself cited one of Daniels prophecies in Matthew 24:15, specifically stating it was spoken by Daniel the prophet, which put the Lord's stamp of approval on the book, its author and authority (cf. Dan.9:27;11:31;12:11).

Daniel predicted that Babylon (at the time, the greatest empire on earth) would fall (7:5; 8:20). *"It is thou, o king, that art grown and become strong; for thy greatness is grown and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth."* (Dan.4:22)

Nebuchadnezzar reigned for 40 years. His successor, Evil-Merodach reigned for two years and was assassinated. After a rapid succession of several other short-lived kings (Neriglissar, Nabonidus and Belshazzar, the once mighty kingdom of Babylon, the "head of gold" fell to invading Medes in 539BC, just as the Bible had foretold, *"...The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it..."* (Jer.51:11).

That empire was quickly forged into a merger with the Persian empire by Cyrus the Great (the silver breasts and arms of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel Chapter 2). Under Cyrus, the Medo-Persian empire expanded until it encompassed almost the entire Near East, with the exception of Egypt. The Cyrus Cylinder (a clay cylinder written in Akkadian cuneiform script discovered in the ruins of ancient Babylon in 1879, dating back to the 6th century, BC), aptly sums up the extent of his rule: *"I am Cyrus, king of the world, great king, powerful king, king of Babylon, king of the country of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four corners of the earth."*

Daniel also prophesied the demise of the Medo-Persian empire and the ascension of Greece as a world power (cf. Dan.2:32, 39; 7:6; 8:21; 11:3), which was fulfilled to the letter by Alexander the Great, even to the incredible detail that the Greek empire, at the zenith of its power, would be broken off and parceled out into four parts (Dan.11:4; 8:8), which is exactly what transpired. After Alexanders death, four Generals gained control of the Grecian empire; Cassander over the western portion of the empire, Lysimachus over the northern, Selucus the eastern and Ptolemy the southern. Daniel also he prophesied the rise and reign of ancient Rome (Dan 7:7-8), depicted as a monster that would crush and devour its enemies,

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it..." (Dan. 7:7).

Daniel even glimpsed the coming of the future Messianic Kingdom (Dan.2:44-45).

“In sum, one of the most significant demonstrations that the Bible is divine rather than merely human in origin is the undeniable reality that Daniel, writing six centuries before the advent of Christ, was empowered by the almighty God to do what no soothsayer or astrologer could. With awe-inspiring precision, he predicted a succession of nations from Babylon through the Median and Persian empires, to the persecution and suffering of the Jews under the second-century Greco-Syrian beast Antiochus IV Epiphanes, including the despots’ desecration of the Jerusalem Temple, his untimely death, and freedom for the Jews under Judas Maccabaeus.”-Hank Hanegraaff

Isaiah

Some of the prophecies of Isaiah are the clearest and most precise in the entire Bible. Isaiah records something in chapter 41 that is profound. It’s a test whereby one can determine the true from the false. It’s a challenge issued by God Himself to all the gods of world religions for them to foretell the future. He challenges the false gods, i.e., the idols, to tell the future and thereby prove that they really are gods and worthy of the worship of His people. At that time in Israel’s history they had fallen into spiritual poverty; they were backslidden. The Northern Kingdom had already been captured by Assyria and enemies were now threatening the Southern Kingdom. Trouble surrounded Israel on every side but instead of turning to God for help and comfort, they turned to Egypt, to men and their idols. Because the people were looking to false gods, to false religions of the world, God responded by challenging these false gods that if they are gods, then they should prove it by predicting the future.

Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together. Behold, you are of nothing, and your work of nought: an abomination is he who chooses you. (Isa. 41:21-24)

When this passage of scripture was written many of the world’s religions were already in existence. Judaism was well established as were some of the Eastern religions. God challenges the false religions of the world to prove that their idols are divine and worthy of worship. How are they to prove it? By telling of things to come; predict the future. The point is that only God knows the future.

The religion of Islam, founded by Mohammed in the 6th century AD and having over a billion followers contains no predictive prophecies in its holy book, the Koran. Islam’s prophet Mohammed performed no miracles whatsoever. Yet in the Bible we read of miracles performed by some of the Old Testament prophets plus many, many miracles performed by Jesus. If Mohammed had tried to predict the future, he would have exposed his ignorance of the future and falsehood because the future was unknown to him. Sadly, he was inspired by the devil, and while the enemy of man’s soul does know some of the future, he can only provide his psychic servants with very little. He does

know more of the future than men do and he's the inspiration behind all of occultism's fortune tellers, prognosticators, star-gazers, psychics, etc., with their nonsensical riddles and vague predictions.

The Bible contains many prophecies that are quite specific. Many of these prophecies have been fulfilled while others remain to be accomplished in the end times. The prophecies that have already come to pass were prophesied hundreds of years in advance of their actual fulfillment. Obviously, only God can do that and those prophecies are recorded in His Book, the Bible. It's an interesting point to note that there are no prophecies in the Analects of Confucius, the Hindu Vedas, the Buddhist Tripitaka, etc. They don't predict the future because they're not inspired; they don't have a divine author. The Bible is unparalleled in the field of religious literature because it does predict the future and it does so with 100 percent accuracy. Only God knows the future with absolute certainty because He is omniscient.

1. The Coming of Cyrus.

²⁸Who says of Cyrus, He is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, You shall be built; and to the Temple, Your foundation shall be laid. (Isa. 44:28)

¹Thus saith the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut. (Isa. 45:1)

At the time of this prophecy, Babylon was just beginning to emerge as a power. Later Babylon would come onto the scene as a mighty empire and conquer the southern kingdom of Edom. Isaiah predicted this event hundreds of years before it occurred. Here he is predicting the return of Israel from Babylonian captivity.

The miracle of this passage is that it was predicted 150 years before a man named Cyrus walked the earth. He was the king who caused the Persian Empire to rise in prominence in 539 BC until it finally defeated mighty Babylon, the most powerful kingdom of the earth at the time. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was the head of gold and the kingdom that would be the strongest in the earth. Cyrus conquered Babylon and 150 years before it happened, Isaiah called him by name. Isaiah also prophesied that through Cyrus, Jerusalem would be rebuilt. At the time of the above prophecies, Jerusalem had not even been captured! Jerusalem would be captured years later by Babylon and held for seventy years in Babylonian captivity. Later Babylon would be crushed by Cyrus and in 538 BC he issued an edict allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild their temple. The fulfillment of that prophecy is recorded in the Bible.

¹Now 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, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, ²Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of Heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the

Earth; and He has charged me to build Him an House at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.
(Ezra 1:1-2)

This occurred 150 years after this very event was prophesied by the prophet Isaiah. Could that be a coincidence? No, absolutely not! The author of the Bible knows the end from the beginning. This is an amazing passage of an event specifically predicted, in great detail, right down to the name of Cyrus, 150 years in advance!

In the 19th century an important archeological find called *The Cylinder of Cyrus* was unearthed and it relates in remarkable detail the same account as is written in the Bible. The cylinder says that Cyrus reversed the policies of the Assyrians and Babylonians. It was the practice of these two groups to disperse and scatter the population of conquered nations. That was done with both Judah and Israel; the people were carried into captivity. Cyrus reversed that policy proving he was much more humane in allowing the people to return to their homeland.

In *The Antiquity of the Jews*, Book 11, chapters 1 and 2, by the Jewish historian Josephus, he writes:

One hundred fifty years following Isaiah's prophecy, Cyrus conquered Babylon and someone gave him a copy of the scroll of Isaiah. Cyrus read the book which contained his own name about how he was God's man who would allow Israel to return to their homeland and rebuild their temple. Cyrus was so moved by what he read that he had a mission in his life to send those Jews home to rebuild their temple. He was shaken to the very foundations of his being by this 150 year old prophetic prediction.

In further studies we have planned for the book of Isaiah, we will study more in depth about Cyrus. Even though Cyrus said that this prediction had to be God, he was not a believer but was a self-proclaimed follower of Marduk and a heathen to the core.

The book of Isaiah contains many, many prophecies, i.e., the overthrow of Tyre, the overthrow of Moab, the rise and fall of Assyria, the conquest and destruction of Babylon, the Babylonian captivity of Judah and the eventual return of the people from captivity, etc., all of which came to pass. These events were all predicted years and sometimes hundreds of years in advance.

The point is that the Bible is a book of prophecy that foretells the future with 100 percent accuracy. Unlike any other books predictions, the Bible's predictions are not vague generalities but quite specific. Also, the Bible's record insofar as accuracy of prophecies is 100 percent. Publications such as *The National Inquirer* annually list top predictions for the year, giving as many as 50 to 100 predictions, and their latest percentage of accuracy was **zero**. All of their predictions were 100 percent incorrect. Not one single one came to pass as predicted in the year 1995. That's certainly not a very good record whereas the Bible boasts a record of 100 percent accuracy. Don't be fooled by the scoffers and doubters; the Bible has proved itself to be of divine authorship.

2. Further Considerations of the Coming of Messiah.

Among the many events the Bible predicts will come to pass are the predictions of the coming of Christ, the Messiah. Every Bible critic has to admit that the Old Testament was written long before the birth of Christ. Yet, the Old Testament predicts the life of Christ, His birth and birthplace, His crucifixion, His death, etc. Some of these predictions were made thousands of years prior to their occurrence.

And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.... (The seed is the Lord Jesus Christ.) (Gen. 22:18)

¹²And when your days be fulfilled, and you shall sleep with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, which shall proceed out of your bowels, and I will establish His Kingdom.

¹³He shall build an house for My Name, and I will establish the Throne of His Kingdom for ever. (This passage speaks of King David and his lineage.) (2 Sam. 7:12-13)

Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His Name Immanuel. (Isaiah prophesied the virgin birth of Christ 700 years before it happened.) (Isaiah 7:14)

But you, Bethlehem Ephratah, though you be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall He come forth unto Me Who is to be Ruler in Israel; Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. (He who is from eternity will be born in Bethlehem. Bethlehem was a common name for villages and there were many by that name but the Bible specifically says which Bethlehem it will be — Bethlehem in Judah.) (Micah 5:2)

3. The Last Days.

The Old Testament prophet Daniel while in captivity in Babylon predicted the very time that the Messiah would come. At the time of this prophecy, Judah had been displaced and carried off to Babylon. Daniel was considered to be the prophet of the dispersion and God tells him something about the last days.

²⁴Seventy weeks are determined upon your people and upon your holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the Vision and Prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. ²⁵Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the Commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. ²⁶And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince who shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. ²⁷And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading

of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. (Dan. 9:24-27)

Those seventy weeks are not weeks of days but weeks of years. Literally, it reads seventy sevens or 70 times 7 or 490 years. God is saying that it will be 490 years until the establishment of Messiah's kingdom.

Daniel goes on to say even more. A score is twenty so we have seven weeks (7), sixty weeks (60) and two weeks (2) for a total of sixty-nine weeks. There will be seventy weeks but after sixty-nine weeks, Messiah will be cut off. In 538 BC Cyrus issued his decree but it was just to rebuild the temple. The decree to rebuild the city itself wasn't given until the time of Ezra in about 457 BC. Sixty-nine weeks from that date Messiah would be cut off which He was at His crucifixion. The city was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

This prophecy actually has a further meaning in that it also has reference to the Antichrist. Calculating the seventy weeks with sixty-nine having come to pass, what happened to the missing week? Most Bible scholars believe that from the time Messiah died, we entered a period similar to a pause. All this has to do with the history of Israel. God is giving a prophecy for Israel, i.e., when it will come to an end, etc. Sixty-nine weeks have been dealt with, Messiah has been rejected by His people, crucified and at that point, the time of the Gentiles is ushered in. Israel is on pause and it's now time for the Gentiles to repent and come to Christ.

One week of years remains and that is the seven years of Great Tribulation. At that time God will again turn His attention to Israel to purge, purify and ready them for His coming. We are now in that indefinite period between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks where God is dealing with the Gentiles. Everything that the Bible has heretofore prophesied has come to pass and these events will also come to pass just as the Bible predicts.

4. The Rejection, Betrayal & Death of Messiah.

Not only did the Bible predict that Messiah would come, but it also predicted that He would be despised and rejected by His own people.

²For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: He has no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. ³He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. (Isa. 53:2-3)

This has to be one of the most amazing prophecies in the Bible. From the very beginning, Israel was taught to look for the Messiah; it was the greatest expectation of the Jewish people. This fact was ingrained in the Jewish populace from birth upward. Messiah would free them from oppression; He would rule and reign. Yet, Isaiah prophesied that when Messiah did come, He would be rejected by the very people who for centuries longed to see

Him. Let's remember that Isaiah prophesied these events exactly as they occurred and 700 years before all came to pass.

The betrayal of Messiah was also foretold by the Old Testament prophet Zechariah.

And I said unto them, If you think good, give Me My price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for My price thirty pieces of silver. (Zech. 11:12)

In the New Testament we are given the account of the confirmation of the accuracy of this prediction.

³Then Judas, which had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned and repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the Chief Priests and Elders, ⁴Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. ⁵And he cast down the pieces of silver in the Temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. ⁶And the Chief Priests took the silver pieces and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. ⁷And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field to bury strangers in. ⁸Wherefore the field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. ⁹Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the Prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, Whom they of the Children of Israel did value; ¹⁰And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed Me. (Mat. 27:3-10)

⁷He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His Mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opens not His Mouth. ⁸He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation? for the transgression of My people was He stricken. ⁹And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. ¹⁰Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief: when You shall make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. ¹¹He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities. ¹²Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He has poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isa. 53:7-12)

Isaiah says that Messiah will be accused, oppressed, afflicted and when brought to trial, will offer no defense. Did that come to pass?

¹²And when He was accused of the Chief Priests and Elders, He answered nothing. ¹³Then said Pilate unto Him, Do you not hear how many things they witness against You? ¹⁴And He answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly. (Mat. 27:12-14)

³And the Chief Priests accused Him of many things: but He answered nothing. ⁴And Pilate asked Him again, saying, Answerest Thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against You. ⁵But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled. (Mark 15:3-5)

Isaiah had even more predictions concerning Jesus' trial, i.e., the public shame, mockery and humiliation:

I gave my back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them who plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting. (Isa. 50:6)

Were these actions as prophesied in the Old Testament later confirmed in the New Testament?

²⁹And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! ³⁰And they spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head. ³¹And after that they had mocked Him, they took the robe off from Him, and put His own raiment on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him. (Mat. 27:29-31)

And some began to spit on Him, and to cover His face, and to buffet Him to say unto Him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike Him with the palms of their hands. (Mark 14:65)

And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged Him, to be crucified. (Mark 15:15)

There's also the fact that His accusers gambled for His clothing.

They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture. (Ps. 22:18)

And they crucified Him, and parted His garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet, They parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture did they cast lots. (Mat. 27:35)

Even Jesus' form of death, i.e., crucifixion, was predicted.

¹⁶For dogs have compassed Me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed Me: they pierced My hands and My feet. ¹⁷I may tell all My bones: they look and stare upon Me. (Ps. 22:16-17)

At the time David prophesied this, the usual form of execution was by stoning. Death by crucifixion was yet unknown.

What human foresight could have foretold all these events about Messiah? How could all these things be predicted by any mere human being? The Bible is not the product of men. No honest person can deny that the Old Testament was written hundreds and in some cases, thousands of years before the gospel period, before Christ came. Weigh the details that we've already considered.

They gave me also gall for My meat; and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink. (Ps. 69:21)

They gave Him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when He had tasted thereof, He would not drink. (Mat. 27:33)

Even the challenges to come off the cross and prove Himself were prophesied.

⁷All they who see Me laugh Me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, ⁸He trusted on the LORD that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him. (Ps. 22:7-8)

⁴¹Likewise also the Chief Priests mocking Him, with the Scribes and Elders, said, ⁴²He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe Him. ⁴³He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him: for He said, I am the Son of God. ⁴⁴The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth. (Mat. 27:41-44)

How can we account for the accuracy of all these predictions? The only correct answer is that God moved upon the men who wrote the Bible; God is the author. There are literally hundreds of such prophecies as these in the Bible, all of which proves beyond the shadow of doubt that the Bible is **the** Word of God. Only God knows the future and only He can say with 100 percent accuracy what will come to pass. The Bible predicts many things that have yet to occur and will be fulfilled in the very last days, i.e., the time of the Great Tribulation, the time when men and women will be judged for their sins and will stand before Holy God and give account for their lives. We will all answer to Holy God who gave us a handbook by which we're to govern our lives. We're told how to live, what we're to value and not much time remains to get our lives in order, to repent of sin and walk humbly with Him. I do believe there is an urgency to get our lives in order because the predictions about Messiah coming again will come to pass.

NOTE: See Appendix page _____ for a list of Messianic Prophecies.

LESSON 6 - FULFILLED PROPHECY (PART 2)

“The best evidence of the Bible’s being the Word of God is found between its covers.”

-Charles Hodge

Introductory Remarks: In Lesson #5 we looked at several Messianic prophecies that were fulfilled in the birth, ministry, person and death of Jesus Christ. We saw that the odds of one person fulfilling so many exact predictions are so astronomical that it enters into the realm of impossible. That is, it is impossible that Jesus Christ was not the prophesied Messiah and Savior.

What are the odds? Consider these statistics:

What are the odds

Of bowling a 300 game: 11,500 to 1

Of getting a hole-in-one: 5000 to 1

Of being an astronaut: 13,200,000 to 1

Of injury from mowing the lawn: 3,623 to 1

Of fatally slipping in the bath or shower: 2,232 to 1

Of being killed next year in some kind of transportation accident: 77 to 1

Of being struck by lightning: 576,000 to 1

Of being murdered: 18,000 to 1

That a first marriage will survive at least 15 years without a separation or divorce: 1.3 to 1

Of being on a plane with a drunken pilot: 117 to 1

Of being audited by the IRS: 175 to 1

Of being dealt a royal flush in the first five cards: 649,740 to 1

Of winning the Powerball jackpot: 146,000,000 to 1

Of a meteor landing on your house: 182,138,880,000,000 to 1

Peter Stoner's Calculations Regarding Messianic Prophecy

In his book, *Science Speaks*, Peter Stoner calculated the probability of just 8 Messianic prophecies being fulfilled in the life of Jesus. As you read through these prophecies, you will see that all estimates were calculated as conservatively as possible.

1). The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

The average population of Bethlehem from the time of Micah to the present (1958) divided by the average population of the earth during the same period = $7,150/2,000,000,000$ or 2.8×10^{-5} .

2). A messenger will prepare the way for the Messiah (Malachi 3:1).

One man in how many, the world over, has had a forerunner (in this case, John the Baptist) to prepare his way?

Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^{-3} .

3). The Messiah will enter Jerusalem as a king riding on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9).

One man in how many, who has entered Jerusalem as a ruler, has entered riding on a donkey?

Estimate: 1 in 100 or 1×10^{-2} .

4). The Messiah will be betrayed by a friend and suffer wounds in His hands (Zechariah 13:6).

One man in how many, the world over, has been betrayed by a friend, resulting in wounds in his hands?

Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^{-3} .

5). The Messiah will be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12).

Of the people who have been betrayed, one in how many has been betrayed for exactly 30 pieces of silver?

Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^{-3} .

6). The betrayal money will be used to purchase a potter's field (Zechariah 11:13).

One man in how many, after receiving a bribe for the betrayal of a friend, has returned the money, had it refused, and then experienced it being used to buy a potter's field?

Estimate: 1 in 100,000 or 1×10^{-5} .

7). The Messiah will remain silent while He is afflicted (Isaiah 53:7).

One man in how many, when he is oppressed and afflicted, though innocent, will make no defense of himself?

Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^3 .

8). The Messiah will die by having His hands and feet pierced (Psalm 22:16).

One man in how many, since the time of David, has been crucified?

Estimate: 1 in 10,000 or 1×10^4 .

Multiplying all these probabilities together produces a number (rounded off) of 1×10^{28} . Dividing this number by an estimate of the number of people who have lived since the time of these prophecies (88 billion) produces a probability of all 8 prophecies being fulfilled accidentally in the life of one person. That probability is $1 \text{ in } 10^{17}$ or 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. **That's one in one hundred quadrillion!**

Part Two: The Accuracy of Prophecy

The second section of Stoner's book, is entitled "Prophetic Accuracy." This is where the book becomes absolutely fascinating. One by one, he takes major Bible prophecies concerning cities and nations and calculates the odds of their being fulfilled. The first is a prophecy in Ezekiel 26 concerning the city of Tyre. Seven prophecies are contained in this chapter which was written in 590 BC:

- 1). Nebuchadnezzar shall conquer the city (vs. 7-11).
- 2). Other nations will assist Nebuchadnezzar (v. 3).
- 3). The city will be made like a bare rock (vs. 4 & 14).
- 4). It will become a place for the spreading of fishing nets (vs. 5 & 14).
- 5). Its stones and timbers will be thrown into the sea (v. 12).
- 6). Other cities will fear greatly at the fall of Tyre (v. 16).
- 7). The old city of Tyre will never be rebuilt (v. 14).

Four years after this prophecy was given, Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Tyre. The siege lasted 13 years. When the city finally fell in 573 BC, it was discovered that everything of value had been moved to a nearby island.

Two hundred and forty-one years later Alexander the Great arrived on the scene. Fearing that the fleet of Tyre might be used against his homeland, he decided to take the island where the city had

been moved to. He accomplished this goal by building a causeway from the mainland to the island, and he did that by using all the building materials from the ruins of the old city. Neighboring cities were so frightened by Alexander's conquest that they immediately opened their gates to him. Ever since that time, Tyre has remained in ruins and is a place where fishermen spread their nets.

Thus, every detail of the prophecy was fulfilled exactly as predicted. Stoner calculated the odds of such a prophecy being fulfilled by chance as being 1 in 75,000,000, or 1 in 7.5×10^7 . (The exponent 7 indicates that the decimal is to be moved to the right seven places.)

Stoner proceeds to calculate the probabilities of the prophecies concerning Samaria, Gaza and Ashkelon, Jericho, Palestine, Moab and Ammon, Edom, and Babylon. He also calculates the odds of prophecies being fulfilled that predicted the closing of the Eastern Gate (Ezekiel 44:1-3), the plowing of Mount Zion (Micah 3:12), and the enlargement of Jerusalem according to a prescribed pattern (Jeremiah 31:38-40).

Combining all these prophecies, he concludes that **“the probability of these 11 prophecies coming true, if written in human wisdom, is... 1 in 5.76×10^{59} . Needless to say, this is a number beyond the realm of possibility.**

Part Three: Messianic Prophecy

The third and most famous section of Stoner's book concerns Messianic prophecy. His theme verse for this section is John 5:39 — *“Search the Scriptures because... it is these that bear witness of Me.”*

Stoner proceeds to select eight of the best known prophecies about the Messiah and calculates the odds of their accidental fulfillment in one person as being 1 in 1017.

I love the way Stoner illustrated the meaning of this number. He asked the reader to imagine filling the State of Texas knee deep in silver dollars. Include in this huge number one silver dollar with a black check mark on it. Then, turn a blindfolded person loose in this sea of silver dollars. The odds that the first coin he would pick up would be the one with the black check mark are the same as 8 prophecies being fulfilled accidentally in the life of Jesus.

The point, of course, is that when people say that the fulfillment of prophecy in the life of Jesus was accidental, they do not know what they are talking about. Keep in mind that Jesus did not just fulfill 8 prophecies, He fulfilled hundreds! Accidental fulfillment of these prophecies is simply beyond the realm of possibility.

When confronted with these statistics, skeptics will often fall back on the argument that Jesus purposefully fulfilled the prophecies. There is no doubt that Jesus was aware of the prophecies and His fulfillment of them. For example, when He got ready to enter Jerusalem the last time, He told His disciples to find Him a donkey to ride so that the prophecy of Zechariah could be fulfilled which said, “Behold, your King is coming to you, gentle, and mounted on a donkey” (Matthew 21:1-5 and Zechariah 9:9).

But many of the prophecies concerning the Messiah could not be purposefully fulfilled — such as the town of His birth (Micah 5:2) or the nature of His betrayal (Psalm 41:9), or the manner of His death (Zechariah 13:6 and Psalm 22:16).

One of the most remarkable Messianic prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures is the one that precisely states that the Messiah will die by crucifixion. It is found in Psalm 22 where David prophesied the Messiah would die by having His hands and feet pierced (Psalm 22:16). That prophecy was written 1,000 years before Jesus was born. When it was written, the Jewish method of execution was by stoning. The prophecy was also written many years before the Romans perfected crucifixion as a method of execution.

Even when Jesus was killed, the Jews still relied on stoning as their method of execution, but they had lost the power to implement the death penalty due to Roman occupation. That is why they were forced to take Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor, and that's how Jesus ended up being crucified, in fulfillment of David's prophecy.

The bottom line is that the fulfillment of Bible prophecy in the life of Jesus proves conclusively that He truly was God in the flesh. It also proves that the Bible is supernatural in origin.

It is the very Word of God, for who but God so perfectly knows the future?

Isaiah 46:10 *“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”*

“From the beginning I revealed the end. From long ago I told you things that had not yet happened, saying, “My plan will stand, and I’ll do everything I intended to do.” (God’s Word Translation)

God, and God alone knows the future! So only He could inspire the Bible, that made hundreds of very specific Messianic prophecies, hundreds of years in advance! All fulfilled to the letter by Jesus Christ.

The Bible is full of other very specific predictions that no mere human could possibly know.

Consider:

Daniel

The Prophet Daniel predicted a succession of nations with specific accuracy, something that no astrologer or soothsayer or prognosticator could do. The details of Daniels prophecy are so precise, that critics of the Bible have resorted to desperate claims of fraud and denial to counter its effect. Some deny that Daniel wrote the book at all, concocting some flimsy charade of an argument that claims Daniel was written by an unknown author after the fact. But all of history tramples their arguments and reveals them to be the ignorant and devious work of God's enemies. The facts undeniably prove that Daniel was a contemporary of Babylon's king Nebuchadnezzar (as also recorded in Josephus), and the Jews hold the book of Daniel to be inspired Scripture. Jesus himself

cited one of Daniels prophecies in Matthew 24:15, specifically stating it was spoken by Daniel the prophet, which also puts the Lord's stamp of approval on the book, its author and absolute authority (cf. Dan.9:27;11:31;12:11).

In Daniel 2:1-13, the Bible records that King Nebuchadnezzar had a terrifying dream, a horrible nightmare that shook him to the very core of his being! The dream was so real, so profound and so powerful that he knew it was supernatural, and it held a powerful message. He had to know what the dream meant and he could not rest until he did! So he called for all the wise men, diviners, fortune tellers, mystics, psychics, dream interpreters, astrologers, sorcerers, magicians and occultists in the region to come and interpret his terrifying dream! (Dan.2:1-3). They stood ready to attach some meaning to his dream; no doubt a meaning that would edify and exalt the king and procure their favor in his eyes! But there was a huge problem; a big missing element! In order for them to proceed with their interpretation, they needed to know what the king dreamt! But the king couldn't remember! (Dan.2:5). He needed to know more than the interpretation, he wanted to remember what he dreamt! And if they couldn't tell him, then what good were they! He'd have them all slaughtered and dismembered! (Dan.2:5b). What a dilemma! The king promised honor and fame and great financial reward to anyone who could tell him both the dream and the interpretation (Dan.2:6), and all of them desperately wanted all the king offered! But even more desperately, they wanted to save their lives, so they pleaded with the king to tell them the dream and they'd quickly provide a satisfying interpretation,

"Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation of it" (Dan.2:7).

The king considered their words a delay tactic and an attempt to gain the time to concoct a scheme. He said, *"If you will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for you have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me..."* (Dan.2:9).

The kings diviners and prognosticators had no answers! If they concocted a dream and interpretation, even in unison, there was the distinct possibility the king would realize their deceit and order them executed! But at the same time, they faced execution if they didn't come up with an answer!

"The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." (Dan.2:10-11)

The occultists declared that only "the gods" could reveal such a thing! The kings response was outrage, and in his anger he ordered all the worthless diviners executed! (Dan.2:12)

Daniel, however, hearing of the kings edict, offered to show and interpret the kings dream;

"Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation. Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah,

Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter.” (Dan.2:16-23).

Daniel declared to the king, *“But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass.” (Dan.2:29-30)*

Daniel then told the king precisely what he dreamed, and exactly what it meant:

“Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.” (Dan.2:31-45).

That Daniel was absolutely right is clearly seen in the king's response: *"Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him. The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret."* (Dan.2:46-47).

There was no doubt in the powerful king's mind, that only one far more powerful than he could reveal secrets such as this!

And the fulfillment of Daniel's prophetic vision came to pass exactly as he said it would. Daniel said the king saw a huge statue of a man, made up with various metals. It had:

A head of gold; chest and arms of silver; belly and thighs of brass; legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay. The statue was then smashed into powder by a stone cut out without hands, that is, not chiseled or formed or made/fashioned by any human hand. That stone then grew until it filled the entire earth (Dan.2:31-35).

He then interpreted the dream and told the king what it all meant:

The statue represented 4 Gentile world powers: 1). The golden head was Babylon 2). The silver chest and arms were Persia 3). The brass belly and thighs were Greece 4). The iron legs and iron and clay feet were Rome. And in the days of the final world power the God of Heaven would crush all earthly kingdoms through His Christ, the Rock made without hands (of no human origin), and He would establish His kingdom over all the earth (Dan.2:44-45). That final Gentile power, Rome, will be revived/resurrected in the last days and take the form of ten nations (the ten toes), which Christ will smite at His second coming, since the latter part of this prediction wasn't fulfilled at His first advent.

Daniel then saw in another vision those same world powers appear as vicious, predatory beasts (Dan.7:1-27). In that vision, Babylon was depicted as a winged lion, Persia as a bear, Greece as a winged leopard and Rome as a horrible and brutal beast defying description. Men may speak of great empires in glowing and complimentary terms, but God sees them for what they are; beasts, predatory, devouring, vicious, ruthless, cunning and cruel.

Daniel predicted that Babylon (at the time, the greatest empire on earth) would fall (2:39; 7:5; 8:20).

"It is thou, o king, that art grown and become strong; for thy greatness is grown and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth." (Dan.4:22)

Nebuchadnezzar reigned for 40 years. His successor, Evil-Merodach reigned for two years and was assassinated. After a rapid succession of several other short-lived kings (Neriglissar, Nabonidus and Belshazzar, the once mighty kingdom of Babylon, the "head of gold" fell to invading Medes in 539BC, just as the Bible had foretold, "...The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it..." (Jer.51:11).

That empire was quickly forged into a merger with the Persian empire by Cyrus the Great (the silver breasts and arms of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel Chapter 2). Under Cyrus, the Medo-Persian empire expanded until it encompassed almost the entire Near East, with the exception of Egypt. The Cyrus Cylinder (a clay cylinder written in Akkadian cuneiform script discovered in the ruins of ancient Babylon in 1879, dating back to the 6th century, BC), aptly sums up the extent of his rule: "I am Cyrus, king of the world, great king, powerful king, king of Babylon, king of the country of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four corners of the earth."

Daniel also prophesied the demise of the Medo-Persian empire and the ascension of Greece as a world power (cf. Dan.2:32, 39; 7:6; 8:21; 11:3), which was fulfilled to the letter by Alexander the Great, even to the incredible detail that the Greek empire, at the zenith of its power, would be broken off and parceled out into four parts (Dan.11:4; 8:8), which is exactly what transpired. After Alexander's death, four Generals gained control of the Grecian empire; Cassander over the western portion of the empire, Lysimachus over the northern, Seleucus the eastern and Ptolemy the southern. Daniel also prophesied the rise and reign of ancient Rome (Dan 7:7-8), depicted as a monster that would crush and devour its enemies,

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it..." (Dan. 7:7).

Daniel also predicted the coming of the future Messianic Kingdom (Dan.2:44-45), soon to be fulfilled.

"In sum, one of the most significant demonstrations that the Bible is divine rather than merely human in origin is the undeniable reality that Daniel, writing six centuries before the advent of Christ, was empowered by the almighty God to do what no soothsayer or astrologer could. With awe-inspiring precision, he predicted a succession of nations from Babylon through the Median and Persian empires, to the persecution and suffering of the Jews under the second-century Greco-Syrian beast Antiochus IV Epiphanes, including the despots' desecration of the Jerusalem Temple, his untimely death, and freedom for the Jews under Judas Maccabaeus."-Hank Hanegraaff

No astrologer, magician, seer, fortune-teller, diviner, tea-leaf reader, palm reader, witch, sorcerer, psychic or occultist of any kind could do what Daniel did. He told the future of the world! He predicted four successive world empires, hundreds of years in advance! He wrote history in advance! And history unfolded precisely as Daniel said it would.

Point: Who but God knows the future? Who but God could inspire those words? Conclusion: The Bible you hold in your hand, is inspired by God!

Daniel Chapter 9- Daniel's 70 Weeks

Daniel Chapter 9 is one of the most profound prophetic chapters in all the Bible. Daniel was now in his old age (over 80 years old), and in deep prayer and intercession for his people (Dan.9:1-19), when his prayer is interrupted by an angelic visit who then proceeds to give him what is sometimes considered the most astounding prediction in Scripture. He told Daniel the date of the coming

Messiah! This is the only Old Testament passage that actually refers to the Messiah as “Messiah.” Elsewhere He is called “Shiloh” (Genesis 49:10), the “Root of Jesse” (Isaiah 11:10), the “Righteous Branch” (Jeremiah 23:5), the “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6), etc. But the name by which He is known best, “Messiah,” appears in only one Old Testament passage: Daniel 9:24-27. Here in our New Testament dispensation, we often remind people that no one knows the day or the hour of the Lord’s return. But Daniel was given specific and precise dates for the first advent of our Lord right here in Daniel 9:

“Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.” (Dan.9:24-25-NKJV)

The key is to understand what exactly what is meant by “seventy weeks.” The word is literally, “seventy sevens,” and represents weeks of years instead of days. Thus a “week” in this reference is 7 years. (Remember Laban’s deceit towards Jacob in substituting his daughter Leah for Rachael? When the treachery was discovered, Laban said, *“Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years... and Jacob did so and fulfilled her week...and served with him yet seven other years.”* (Genesis29:27-30).

Clearly we see that a “week” can be a week of days or a week of years. Context determines the meaning. Here the meaning is clear. Daniel’s prayer in verses 3-19 of the chapter refers to the fulfillment of a specific seventy-year period, the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity (as prophesied by Jeremiah). Daniel received the seventy sevens prophecy in response to his prayer. The prophecy foretold a period of seven times seventy yet to come, or seventy seven-year periods. Seventy seven-year periods equals 490 years. The prophecy goes on to say that *“And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.”* (Dan.9:26)

So from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven sevens (49) and sixty-two sevens (434). . . . Then after the sixty-two sevens the Messiah will be cut off ...”

Nebuchadnezzar had Jerusalem dismantled around 587 BC after having to put down two rebellions there in less than 10 years. At the time this prophecy was given, Jerusalem still lay in ruins. According to the prophecy, from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem there would be seven seven-year periods and sixty-two more seven-year periods—or 483 years—until the Messiah would show up. After the culmination of the 62 seven-year periods, or after 483rd year, the Messiah would be cut off.

Both the ancient Hebrews to whom Daniel was writing and the ancient Babylonians to whom he was subservient (Daniel supposedly having been written in Babylon during the latter half of the 6th century BC) used a 360-day year. So, 483 years x 360 days = 173,880 days. This is the equivalent of 476 years and 25 days using our modern Gregorian calendar’s 365.24219879-day year. As for our

starting point, the Persian Emperor Artaxerxes Longimanus (who ruled Persia from 464-424 BC) issued the edict to rebuild Jerusalem sometime during the Hebrew month of Nisan in the 20th year of his reign, or 444 BC (Nehemiah 2:1-8). The month of Nisan fell between February 27 (Nisan 1) and March 28 (Nisan 30) of that year according to our modern Gregorian calendar. Now, 173,880 days from February 27 - March 28, 444 BC, lands us at March 24 - April 22, AD 33.

According to this prophecy, the Messiah would show up, present Himself as Messiah to the nation and then be “cut off” some time between March 24 and April 22, AD 33. Jesus Christ presented Himself to the nation of Israel on Palm Sunday, March 27, was crucified four days later on April 1, or “Preparation Day” (the annual day on which the Passover Lamb was slain), and rose from the dead on Sunday, April 3, AD 33, all within the 30-day range of dates.

The prophecy then goes on to say that subsequent to the Messiah being “cut off,” “the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.” Within one generation of Christ’s crucifixion, the Roman General Titus razed Jerusalem and destroyed the temple.

There is some debate about the exact date of the decree that began the 483 years. There is also debate as to whether the days should be counted on our modern 365-day calendars, or the 360-day lunar calendar that was normally used in ancient times. Whichever the case, Daniel’s prophecy concludes very close to the time Jesus Christ was being crucified in Jerusalem. If we knew all the exact dates of Daniel’s prophecy and timing, we would find it would land exactly on the very day of Christ’s death. Through God revealing it to him, **the Prophet Daniel predicted the very day of Christ’s death—over 400 years before it occurred!**

He also predicts a remaining week - the 70th Week – a seven year period of great tribulation at the end of the ages, in the very middle of which Israel will be betrayed (Dan.9:27). There is therefore an undetermined interval of time between the 69th and 70th week, which many interpret to be the church age, the age we are in now.

Isaiah

Some of the prophecies of Isaiah are the clearest and most precise in the entire Bible. Isaiah records something in chapter 41 that is profound. It’s a test whereby one can determine the true from the false. It’s a challenge issued by God Himself to all the gods of world religions for them to foretell the future. He challenges the false gods (i.e., the idols), to tell the future and thereby prove that they really are gods and worthy of the worship of His people. At that time in Israel’s history they had fallen into spiritual poverty and were backslidden. The Northern Kingdom had already been captured by Assyria and enemies were now threatening the Southern Kingdom. Trouble surrounded Israel on every side but instead of turning to God for help and comfort, they turned to Egypt, to men and their idols. Because the people were looking to the false gods and false religions of the world, God responded by challenging these false gods that if they are gods, then **they should prove it by predicting the future.**

Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they

be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together. Behold, you are of nothing, and your work of nought: an abomination is he who chooses you. (Isa. 41:21-24).

When this passage of scripture was written many of the world's religions were already in existence. Judaism was well established as were some of the Eastern religions. God challenges the false religions of the world to prove that their idols are divine and worthy of worship. How are they to prove it? By telling of things to come; predict the future. Obviously they couldn't because only God knows the future.

The Bible contains many prophecies that are quite specific. Many of these prophecies have been fulfilled while others remain to be fulfilled in the end times. The prophecies that have already come to pass were prophesied hundreds of years in advance of their actual fulfillment. It's an interesting point to note that there are no predictive prophecies in the Analects of Confucius, the Hindu Vedas, the Buddhist Tripitaka, the Book of Mormon or the Muslim Koran. Their authors knew better than to even attempt to predict the future because their failed predictions would reveal their inspiration wasn't Divine. The Bible is unparalleled in the field of religious literature because it does predict the future and it does so with 100 percent accuracy. Only God knows the future with absolute certainty because He is omniscient.

The Coming of Cyrus.

“Who says of Cyrus, He is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, You shall be built; and to the Temple, Your foundation shall be laid.” [Isa. 44:28]

“Thus saith the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut.” (Isa. 45:1)

At the time of this prophecy, Babylon was just beginning to emerge as a power. Later Babylon would come onto the scene as a mighty empire and conquer the southern kingdom of Judah. Isaiah predicted this event hundreds of years before it occurred. Here he is predicting the return of Israel from Babylonian captivity.

The miracle of this passage is that it was predicted 150 years before a man named Cyrus walked the earth! He was the king who caused the Persian Empire to rise in prominence in 539 BC until it finally defeated mighty Babylon, the most powerful kingdom of the earth at the time. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was the head of gold and the kingdom that would be the strongest in the earth. Cyrus conquered Babylon and 150 years before it happened, Isaiah called him by name! Isaiah also prophesied that through Cyrus, Jerusalem would be rebuilt. At the time of the above prophecies, Jerusalem had not even been captured! Jerusalem would be captured years later by Babylon and held for seventy years in Babylonian captivity. Later Babylon would be crushed by Cyrus and in 538 BC he issued an edict allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild their temple. The fulfillment of that prophecy is recorded in the Bible.

“Now 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, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of Heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the Earth; and He has charged me to build Him an House at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.” (Ezra 1:1-2)

This occurred 150 years after this very event was prophesied by the prophet Isaiah. Could that be a coincidence? No, absolutely not! The author of the Bible knows the end from the beginning. This is an amazing passage of an event specifically predicted, in great detail, right down to the name of Cyrus, 150 years in advance!

In the 19th century an important archeological find called *The Cylinder of Cyrus* was unearthed and it relates in remarkable detail the same account as is written in the Bible. The cylinder says that Cyrus reversed the policies of the Assyrians and Babylonians. It was the practice of these two groups to disperse and scatter the population of conquered nations. That was done with both Judah and Israel; the people were carried into captivity. Cyrus reversed that policy proving he was much more humane in allowing the people to return to their homeland.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, In *The Antiquity of the Jews*, Book 11, chapters 1 and 2, writes:

“One hundred fifty years following Isaiah’s prophecy, Cyrus conquered Babylon and someone gave him a copy of the scroll of Isaiah. Cyrus read the book which contained his own name about how he was God’s man who would allow Israel to return to their homeland and rebuild their temple. Cyrus was so moved by what he read that he had a mission in his life to send those Jews home to rebuild their temple. He was shaken to the very foundations of his being by this 150 year old prophetic prediction.”

The book of Isaiah contains many, many prophecies, i.e., the overthrow of Tyre, the overthrow of Moab, the rise and fall of Assyria, the conquest and destruction of Babylon, the Babylonian captivity of Judah and the eventual return of the people from captivity, etc., **all of which came to pass!** These events were all predicted years and sometimes hundreds of years in advance.

The point is that the Bible is a book of prophecy that foretells the future with 100 percent accuracy. Unlike any other books predictions, the Bible’s predictions are not vague generalities but quite specific. Also, the Bible’s record insofar as accuracy of prophecies is 100 percent. Publications such as *The National Inquirer* annually list top predictions for the year, giving as many as 50 to 100 predictions, and their latest percentage of accuracy was zero. All of their predictions were 100 percent incorrect. Not one single one came to pass as predicted in the year 1995. That’s certainly not a very good record whereas the Bible boasts a record of 100 percent accuracy. Don’t be fooled by the scoffers and doubters; the Bible has repeatedly proved itself to be of divine authorship.

“There are things in the old Book which I may not be able to explain, but I fully accept it as the infallible Word of God, and receive its teachings as inspired by the Holy Spirit”- Robert E. Lee

LESSON 7 - THE POWER AND INFLUENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES

Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail.... (Isa. 34:16)

In the past two lessons we looked at the fulfilled prophecies of the Bible, and how they demonstrate the other-worldly origin of the Scriptures. Men can't predict what will happen in the next hour, let alone the next months, years or centuries. Even the most renowned psychics, astrologers and prognosticators have abysmal records of failed predictions. None of them could make a living in the stock market or at the race track, and as someone once pointed out, "you never hear of a psychic hitting the lottery." On the other hand, the Bible has a record of 100% accuracy. There are literally hundreds of predictions in the Bible, and all have come to pass already or are in the process of being fulfilled. Just as Isaiah said,

Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail.... (Isa. 34:16).

Jesus said,

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. (Matthew 5:17-18 NKJV)

Jesus declares that all of the Bible's future prophecies, some of which are thousands of years old, will be fulfilled, and we can know with assurance that all will be realized just as Scripture has declared.

All of Jesus' teachings about the end of the world (Matthew chapter 24; Luke chapter 21) will occur. There will be a resurrection of the dead in Christ just as the apostle Paul predicted (1 Cor.15); it is a Bible promise and it will surely happen. And all of the predictions in the Book of Revelation will come to pass, perhaps much sooner than we expect. There will be seven years of Great Tribulation judgment that is coming upon this earth. All will come to pass just as the Bible has said.

The point is, those predictions that have not all been fulfilled will be, soon! There will soon arise a literal Antichrist, the embodiment of evil. This man of sin will rise to world power and dominion and will essentially be Satan incarnate. There will be judgments on this earth, the like of which this world has never before witnessed. There will be a day of Armageddon when the armies of the earth will be gathered against Israel. There will be a time when Christ will return from heaven with His saints just as the Bible says. He will destroy the armies of Antichrist; He will cast Antichrist and the false prophet into the lake of fire. Jesus will bind the devil for a thousand years and He will establish His kingdom on the earth. There will be a literal reign and rule of Jesus Christ on the earth and a restoration of Israel.

All these things will occur and I don't believe those events are very far away. It could be five years or a hundred years, but what's a hundred years to God? Time means nothing to God. What He has said in His Word will most assuredly come to pass. And one day soon, all those who died in rebellion or unbelief will face their Creator"

¹²And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before GOD; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. ¹³And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. ¹⁴And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:12-15)

This will happen! All of those who stand before God in this Great White Throne Judgment will be consigned to hell for all eternity. According to our infallible Bible, there is an eternal hell just as there is an eternal heaven. There is an eternal glory for the righteous and an eternal shame and destitution for the unrighteous. That destitution does not mean cessation of being, but eternal punishment for the unbelieving and the wicked. All these things will come to pass just as the Bible says.

The Power and Influence of the Scriptures.

The power and influence of the scriptures prove they are inspired.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. (Isa. 55:10-11)

The Bible will accomplish all that God says it will accomplish. Just as the rain and snow perform God's purposes, then how much more will His eternal Word achieve His purposes.

"Here is a book written by a succession of Jews, in a little corner of the world, which positively stands alone. ...these men have given the world a volume which for depth, unity, sublimity, accuracy, suitableness to the wants of man, and power of influencing its readers, is perfectly unrivalled. How can this be explained? How can it be accounted for? To my mind there is only one answer. The writers of the Bible were divinely helped and qualified for the work which they did. The book which they have given to us was written by inspiration of God." -J.C. Ryle

And what of the skeptics? The Bible's critics and enemies who cast doubts upon its inspiration?

Ryle answers:

"I believe we ought to... press home on the adversaries of inspiration the enormous difficulties of their own position. We have a right to ask them how they can possibly explain the origin and

nature of the Bible, if they will not allow that it is of Divine authority. We have a right to say, 'Here is a book which not only courts inquiry but demands investigation. We challenge you to tell us how that book was written.' How can they account for this Book standing so entirely alone, and for nothing having ever been written equal to it, like it, near it, or fit to be compared with it for a minute? I defy them to give any rational reply on their own principles. On our principles we can. To tell us that man's unassisted mind could have written the Bible is simply ridiculous. It is worse than ridiculous: it is the height of credulity. In short, the difficulties of unbelief are far greater than the difficulties of faith. No doubt there are things 'hard to be understood' if we accept the Scriptures as God's Word. But, after all, they are nothing compared to the hard things which rise up in our way, and demand solution if we once deny inspiration. There is no alternative. Men must either believe things which are grossly improbable, or else they must accept the great general truth that the Bible is the inspired Word of God." - J.C. Ryle

The Precious Bible

*Though the cover is worn and the pages are torn and though places bear traces of tears,
Yet more precious than gold in this book worn and old that can shatter and scatter my fears.*

*When I prayerfully look in this precious old book many pleasures and treasures I see,
Many tokens of love from the Father above who is nearest and dearest to me.*

*This old book is my guide, it's a friend by my side, it will lighten and brighten my way
And each promise I find soothes and gladdens my mind as I read it and read it each day.*

- anonymous -

1. God's Word Bestows Peace, Comfort and Security.

"The Bible gives me a deep, comforting sense that 'things seen are temporal, and things unseen are eternal'" - Helen Keller

What power and influence the Bible has in our lives! There's no other book in all of literature in which one can find such peace and meaning. This is no ordinary book for only the Word of God can bring comfort in the fiercest storm. The Word of God can minister peace when battles rage in our hearts and minds. Only the Word of God can bring the needed and longed for peace, security and knowledge of God's very real presence with us, unwilling that we should perish. No book authored by a mere man can offer that degree of reassurance. The Bible has held a profound influence over mankind wherever it's been preached.

2. God's Word Revolutionizes Character.

Only the Bible can enable men to see things from the light of eternity, from the perspective of the author, the Heavenly Father. What other book can turn men from the path of evil and transform their character? It's the only book that can literally turn a sinful individual into a good person. Only the Bible has the kind of supernatural power that can change a person's

lifestyle and philosophy. Goals and values of people are altered by the Bible's influence, changing them to such degree that they are virtually no longer the same.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Cor. 5:17)

The Bible revolutionizes people, changing them from the inside out. So drastically are they changed that a cruel man can become a man of mercy. An angry, aggressive person can be changed into a peaceful, calm individual. Now what other book can reach down into the very soul of man and grip his heart and so completely transform it? There is no heart so hard that the Word of God can't rend and soften it.

Perhaps there are those that we think will never change, but don't buy that lie! Not only will all the prophecies contained in the Word be fulfilled but all the promises will also be fulfilled. We can stand on absolutely secure ground confident that what God has said in His Word He will bring to pass. Our loved ones will be saved and we can stand on that Word. There will be deliverance; there will be joy, peace, rest and security. The Word of God is infallible and will change lives. While some secular books can offer suggestions regarding external changes, only the Bible offers hope for the changes to the inner core of man. Only the Lord Jesus Christ can change the wicked heart. Only God's Word will radically revolutionize men.

Illustration: I once read an account of a 19th century preacher who operated a mission in a poor section of London. He was a simple preacher, not very well educated, but his ministry reached out to addicts, alcoholics, the homeless and the hungry, and he was well known for his ministry to the down-and-out. A pompous, educated, well known atheist once challenged this preacher to a debate. He said he'd pay to rent a theater so all could come, and they'd debate the subject of the Bible and religion. The preacher accepted the challenge, under one condition: that he could bring along 100 people, men and women, former addicts, prostitutes, winos, etc., whose lives were dramatically changed by the Gospel. Each one must be allowed to testify, and then the atheist could question them if he wished. And the atheist was to bring 100 people with him to the debate, whose lives were dramatically bettered by their unbelief. On the day of the debate the preacher showed up with his 100 converts, all ready to testify. The atheist was a no-show.

Paul declared,

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. (Rom. 1:16)

Consider the radical transformation of the Lord's own Apostles: As a direct result of His resurrection, they were radically transformed from a rag-tag crew hiding from the authorities, to a steeled band of holy spiritual warriors. In the space of only a few hundred years that band of men was responsible for turning the whole known empire upside down. Peter, who had formerly cowered and denied his faith and Lord to a mere servant girl, now boldly proclaimed his faith and Christ in the very face of hostile mobs. Paul was transformed from chief prosecutor

of Christianity to its chief proponent! And not just those two, but all of the Apostles and disciples were transformed so completely by their faith in Christ's resurrection, that they abandoned the deeply held and "sacred" traditions of the Jews! Consider:

The Christians abandoned the Jewish "Sabbath" and worshipped on Sunday, the first day of the week, the day of the Lord's resurrection, the day of Pentecost's outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the day of his subsequent appearances (Matt.28:1-10; Jo.20:26ff; Acts 2:1;20:7; 1 Cor.16:2). Consider also, after the resurrection appearances of Christ: the followers of Christ suddenly stopped sacrificing! They stopped practicing the very heart and core of Judaism because they knew that the blood of Christ was better than the blood of animals and that Jesus Christ was the ultimate and final sacrifice for sin (Heb.10:4, 10-18). They exchanged the rites of Jewish baptism and Passover after the resurrection for The Lord's Supper and Baptism in Jesus name (Acts 2:38;10:48;19:5).

"In place of the Passover meal, believers celebrated the Lord's Supper. Jesus had just been slaughtered in grotesque and humiliating fashion, yet the disciples remembered the broken body and shed blood of Christ with joy. Only the resurrection can account for that. In like fashion, baptism was radically transformed. Prior to the resurrection, Gentile converts to Judaism were baptized in the name of the God of Israel. After the resurrection, converts to Christianity were baptized in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38;10:48;19:5). In doing so, Christians equated Jesus with Israel's God."-Hank Hanegraaff

3. God's Word Imparts Inspiration.

The Bible is unlike any other book; it doesn't just challenge the imagination, it reaches down into the very soul. What other book has effected what the Bible has accomplished? What book has been of more inspiration to people? Who among the great writers of literature and poetry have been influenced by this marvelous book? Consider the number of biblically inspired artists, sculptors and musicians that have created timeless masterpieces of art and music.

More books have been written about the Bible, i.e., books explaining, expounding, word studies, etc. than any other book in history. This has been true for millennia with entire libraries being filled with books about the Bible. That cannot be said of any other book. Innumerable hymns and poetry have been written about the great themes, stories and doctrines of the Bible.

*Years I spent in vanity and pride, caring not my Lord was crucified,
Caring not it was for me He died, at Calvary!
Mercy there was great and grace was free,
Pardon there was multiplied to me.
There my burdened soul found liberty,
At Calvary!*

It was A. W. Tozer who said, "If you don't have a theology book, buy a hymn book." There's tremendous theology in the old hymns. It grieves me to hear some modern preachers say that there is a lot of bad theology in the old hymnals. The problem with the modern preachers is that they don't like the old paths. They've got new Christianity, new evangelicalism and they

don't like the old doctrine. Pick up an old hymnal and just go through it reading the old hymns of the faith. What an inspiration they are! They are so moving in the way that they touch even the hardest heart.

4. God's Word Leads to Conviction and Repentance.

"The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me"- Professor M. Monticro

What book can we read that can grip our hearts to the place that it convicts of sin, brings us to our knees and causes us to repent? Only the Bible will have that effect. It will cleanse and cause the hardened heart to repent and straighten up if we will but let it.

I heard of a man who was attempting to memorize the Bible. He said that he kept reading and reading but couldn't commit it to memory remarking that he didn't know what was wrong with his mind. His pastor advised him to continue reading. It's rather like pouring water into a sieve where the water is not retained but one thing is sure — the sieve will be clean if the process is continued for a long enough period. The same thing is true with us; keep reading the Word because it's going to wash and cleanse us, setting us free.

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. (John 15:3)

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (John 8:32)

D.L.Moody said, *"Sin will keep you from this book. This book will keep you from sin."*

5. God's Word Brings About Growth and Maturity. (1 Pet. 2:2)

No other book on earth has the influence to bring growth and maturity. Wherever the Bible is preached and proclaimed it has this very same influence on the lives of men and women of every nationality, from every walk of life. It's done so through the centuries and is nothing short of miraculous.

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. (1 Thess. 2:13)

The Bible is the work of God and not of men. God imparted His Word through the letters and preaching of the apostle Paul and they now comprise many of the books of the New Testament. That Word will accomplish its purposes in each of us if we will but allow it.

6. God's Word Effects Advancement to Civilization and Society.

What book has done more to advance civilization and society than the Bible? There have been advances in civilizations and societies that no empire, king or army on earth could have

accomplished. It couldn't have been done by the strength of some human effort but the Word of God has come into an area and accomplished miracles.

What happens when a Christian missionary comes into an idolatrous pagan land where there has been no gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ preached before? Klaus Kluger recently related to us just what happens and what a tremendous testimony that was. Did Klaus have weapons to conquer those fierce warlike tribes? Did he have some philosophy that he could teach them and cause them to change their practices of murder and cannibalism? Could he change their barbarism and cruelty? No, he came in with the Word of God and preached the gospel. Consequently, the lives of those savages were changed; their lives were transformed. They literally laid down their weapons and learned the meaning of words that were not even in their vocabulary. They learned to love one another, to lay aside their superstitions and taboos. What power caused them to do that? The Word of God! As the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, came into their lives and hearts, they were changed. In the photographs that Klaus shared with us, the very countenance of these people was profoundly altered after they began to receive the Lord. Upon receiving the gospel, radical changes in behavior occurred. What a difference the gospel makes in the lives of men!

What a contrast that is to what is occurring here in America! In the jungle the people are ceasing to murder their fellow men; they're putting on clothes while here in the USA, murder rates are increasing and clothing is becoming scantier if not tossed aside altogether. Modern society has taken a total reversal in direction.

What power could have gone into that jungle and conquered those native people in such manner? Could an army have done that? Only the Word of God through a missionary who shared with them the gospel message of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The power of this book is able to influence and change men's lives, proving that it is of divine origin.

Even today there are civilizations that did not have the Bible to help them lay their civil and moral foundation insofar as government, society, etc. Just consider how barbaric some of them remain. In comparison, where the Bible has been preached, society is profoundly different.

"No nation is better than its sacred book. In that book are expressed its highest ideals of life, and no nation rises above those ideals. No nation has a sacred book to be compared with ours. This American nation from its first settlement at Jamestown to the present hour is based upon and permeated by the principles of the Bible. The more this Bible enters into our national life the grander and purer and better will that life become" - David Josh Brewer

While I no longer believe that America can be termed "a Christian nation," our forefathers wisely based this nation's moral and civil laws on biblical principles and precepts. I believe that's what has kept this nation from total degeneration.

Throughout this nation's history, its high regard for human life has set it apart from other nations on earth. The histories of other nations reflect their barbarity and disregard for the sanctity of human life. That's been true for millennia. America is also a strong proponent of

law, respect for authority and regard for government officials. Among this nation's other attributes, all of which have their foundation in the Bible are the respect for personal property and the property of others; the sanctity of marriage; a powerful work ethic; a high regard for character, honesty, truthfulness and industry. All these served in forming the foundation that has made America great; the scriptures were their basis. It's what has preserved America from the moral chaos, sheer barbarism and anarchy that characterized most other nations throughout history. Sadly, I have to lament the fact that America is rapidly moving away from her biblical underpinnings, her biblical groundwork and foundation leading us into the condition in which we presently find ourselves. Today there is little or no regard for human life or the personal property of others. Few still have a work ethic or regard and respect for the marriage covenant. This trend began around the time of World War II as America's focus turned toward materialism. The Bible and its teachings no longer held a high priority in the average home. Many rejected the Bible and devious and demonically inspired men shrewdly enacted laws removing the Bible and its standards from all government, schools, courts, public organizations and offices. The result is clear to see. Ours is a society in decline.

7. God's Word is Supernatural and Perpetually Relevant.

Proof of the Bible's divine origin lies in the fact that it still exists. The first books written by Moses date to 1400 - 1500 BC making the Bible at least 3,400 or 3,500 years old. Despite its age, it continues to exert its influence and power over the lives of those who will embrace and believe it. That's quite remarkable.

No other book is like the Bible; it's unparalleled in all the annals of human literature and that's because it does not have a human author. Most books are the uninspired products of the minds of men and have a rather short life span, rapidly passing into obscurity. Only those books deemed to be "classics" can still be found in the bookstores after a period of five or ten years. The Bible however has the ability to speak to a wide range of people doing so today just as relevantly and clearly as it did 3,500 years ago. It's a supernatural wonder that the Bible has not become outdated in all that time. The great philosopher Voltaire predicted that in fifty years the Bible would no longer be found except by antiquarians who would look for it on museum shelves. Fifty years after he made that statement Voltaire was dead and the Bible was being printed by the Geneva Bible Society in the very house where Voltaire had resided. Who among us could say what Voltaire wrote but we know what the Bible says. The point is that this book never becomes outdated. It's perpetually fresh, perennially young and there's only one explanation for that. The written Word is like the living Word; it's the same yesterday, today and forever. It doesn't change.

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever. (Isa. 40:8)

Jesus said that His Word is life. It never gets old, outdated or irrelevant. It exerts the same power and influence in every country and delivers the same life giving effect among every nationality. Wherever the Word is preached, it reaches the hearers right where they are. It's

relevant in every society, every people group and in every generation. It's amazing! Wherever it goes, the effect is the same. Why? Because the Bible is the same Divine Light as its author.

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. ⁴For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away ⁵But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. (1 Peter 1:23-25)

There's no other accounting for the miraculous influence and power that the Word of God has except for the fact that it has a supernatural author. How else can its supernatural influence through the centuries be accounted for? Its author is God.

LESSON 8 - THE MIRACULOUS PRESERVATION

The Miraculous Preservation and Indestructibility of the Bible Proves its Supernatural Origin

“For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away, but the Word of the Lord endures forever” (1 Pet.1:24-25)

“The Bible – banned, burned, beloved. More widely read, more frequently attacked than any other book in history. Generations of intellectuals have attempted to discredit it, dictators of every age have outlawed it and execute those who read it. Yet soldiers carry it into battle believing it more powerful than their weapons. Fragments of it smuggled into solitary prison cells have transformed ruthless killers into gentle saints”-Charles Colson

A rather profound inscription appears on a monument to the memory of the persecuted Huguenots in Paris, France. It reads:

Hammer away ye hostile hands. Your hammers break; God’s anvil stands.

The Bible has always had its enemies. Kings have burned it; rulers and emperor’s have despised it and popes have outlawed it and murdered those who possessed copies of it, yet the Bible remains. *“Forever O lord, thy Word is settled in heaven.”(Ps.119:89); “And His truth endureth to all generations” (Ps.100:4);*

*“The survival of the Bible through the ages is very difficult to explain if it is not in truth the Word of God. **Books are like men – dying creatures.** A very small percentage of books survive more than twenty years, a yet smaller percentage last a hundred years and only a very insignificant fraction represent those that have lived a thousand years. Amid the wreck and ruin of ancient literature the Holy Scriptures stand out like the last survivor of an otherwise extinct race. The very fact of the Bible’s continued existence is an indication that, like its author, it is indestructible. When we bear in mind the fact that the Bible has been the special object of never ending persecution, the **wonder** of the Bible’s survival is changed into a **miracle.**”-A.W. Pink*

1. Absolute Accuracy in Translations and Duplications.

The passage of time has not lessened the attacks against sacred Scripture nor silenced its opponents. It seems that when one outspoken skeptic dies, another rises up to take his place. One of the more vocal critics to arise of late is Bart Ehrman, Chair of the Religious Studies Dept. at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Ehrman takes almost fiendish delight in undermining the faith of new

freshmen students who unwarily step into any of his classes. He knows that to carry out his mission of destroying Christianity, he must first, foremost and utterly destroy all credibility of the Bible. He has written a number of books to discredit the Bible and its authors, and statements like, *“the Bible is full of errors,”* and *“full of mistakes”* litter his pages. He goes so far as to call the Bible a *dishonest book, littered with deceptions, errors and downright lies.*

Ehrman points out that there are no original manuscripts of the Bible extant, so all we have are copies of a copy of a copy, and he says fresh errors are thus introduced with each successive generation of the copying process. He also claims that some scribes inserted fables and falsehoods into manuscripts, passing them off as historical facts, and that many other gospels were written but not included in the canon of Scripture because of an anti-Jewish bias. Unfortunately, pseudo-scholars and rabid atheists like Ehrman are gaining popularity and their books are scooped up by the spiritually dim-witted who swallow the cool-aid without discernment.

Is there any truth in Ehrman’s accusations? Is the Bible flawed? Is it full of mistakes and myths and errors and therefore not only unreliable but uninspired? Fortunately, you have the ability to search the real truth out for yourself. All of us have the duty to ourselves and to God to find out if Bart Ehrman is telling the truth, or is Jesus Christ telling the truth when he said of God’s Bible, *“Thy Word is Truth.”*(John 17:17)

No original, extant manuscripts.

Ehrman says, “It’s hard to know what the words of the Bible mean if we don’t even know what the words are.” He says if God didn’t even bother to preserve the original autographs (manuscripts), why should we believe He inspired them?

Thousands of scribes and copyists labored intensely to hand copy the first translations of the Bible. It survived all the thousands of duplications because the Scriptures were held in such high regard that every letter on every page was counted, numbered and graphed. That each and every copy was exact was critical. Any copy that contained the slightest error was immediately withdrawn from circulation or destroyed. Entire orders of scribes of whom it was their trade and calling in life were enlisted to make the copies. These copyists had such an exalted view of the Scripture text that they considered even the slightest mistake, the missing a mere jot or tittle, to be an affront to the very Holiness of God! Absolute accuracy was the criteria insuring that only the pure and perfect Word of God was passed down from one generation to another.

It is a fact that there are no original NT manuscripts. The originals perished long ago. What manuscripts we have are copies; painstakingly copied from the originals, some of which date back as early as the 2nd century AD. There are, in fact, thousands of ancient NT Manuscripts or portions, almost 25,000 to be exact. Certainly God could have chosen to preserve the originals, but in His infinite wisdom He chose not to. We can reason as to why:

1. Knowing that we humans are inherently idolatrous at heart, we no doubt would have made idols of them. This is, I believe, the main reason we have no physical description of what Jesus looked like. Nowhere in the entire Bible are we given an actual physical description

- (except for Isaiah's prophecy that he'd look ordinary-Ch.53:2); Did he stand 5'6? 5'10? 6'1? We don't know! Was he thin of statue? Stocky? Muscular? We don't know! Was his hair straight or wavy or curly? Long or short? Brown or black? Again, we don't know! And what of his facial features? Were his features fine, and his skin fair, as in many artists depictions? With smooth complexion, blue eyes, proportionate nose? Or, otherwise? The fact is, if we knew any of these things, how easily we could make drawings and statues in direct violation of the Second Commandment (Ex.20:4-6), and fall headlong into idolatry!
2. How would the originals be determined to actually be the originals? How would we know with certainty? The Roman Catholic church today possesses many wooden fragments they claim came from the cross of Christ, but such claims cannot be authenticated. They claim to have the bones, fingernails, hair, teeth, etc., of many saints, but none of their claims can possibly be substantiated. It would be likewise with any claim for original autographs.
 3. If there were originals, who would control them? Jews? Jesuits? Muslims? Would they be more a source of war than worship? Of faction rather than faith?

Dr. James White cites the wisdom of God in the way He protected the text from the one thing we, centuries and millenia later, could never detect: *"wholesale change of doctrine or theology by one particular man or group of men who had full control over the text at any one point in its history. Instead, because the NT books were written at various times and were quickly copied and distributed as soon as they were written, there was never a time when anyone or any group could gather up all the manuscripts and make extensive changes in the text itself, such as cutting out the deity of Christ or inserting some foreign concept or doctrine."*

In His perfect ability to see the end from the beginning, and to absolutely insure the accurate preservation of His Word God gave us something far better than an original autograph; He gave us a treasure trove of thousands of manuscripts, some on papyrus, some on parchment; all conveying His Word to us, completely, inerrantly and authoritatively. And while critics like to magnify the so-called discrepancies between manuscripts, the fact is virtually all of the discrepancies are in regard to misspellings, differences in spelling, or differences in a number. There is not a single discrepancy that has anything to do with any doctrinal matter.

Who chose the Books of the Bible?

The Bible consists of two main sections: The Older Testament, and the New one. The Older contains 39 books in the English Bible, 22 in the Hebrew Bible due to the way some of the books are combines in the Hebrew. But the content of both the Hebrew and English Bible is the same. The last book of the O.T. was completed around 400BC but many of the books were considered God's Word long before then. The earliest known list of authoritative OT books was the collection described at Jamnia in 90AD.

The Dead Sea Scrolls are an outstanding example of just how accurately the ancient scribes copied the texts. Consider the following quote from *"A General Introduction to the Bible"* concerning the Isaiah Scroll, uncovered in 1947 and dating back to 100AD.

"Of the 166 words in Isaiah 53, there are only 17 letters in question. Ten of these letters are simply a matter of spelling, which does not affect the sense. Four more letters are minor stylistic changes,

such as conjunctions. The three remaining letters comprise the word LIGHT, which is added in verse 11 and which does not affect the meaning greatly. Furthermore, this word is supported by the Septuagint (LXX). 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.” (Norman Geisler & William Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, Moody Press, Page 263).

This means that the Book of Isaiah you read in your Bible, is unchanged from the Book of Isaiah that Jesus and the Apostles read 2000 years ago! And the contention that the Bible has been altered or changed by copyists down through the centuries is patently false!

Keep in mind, Jesus Himself puts the stamp of Divine Inspiration and infallibly on the Scriptures: *“Thy word is truth,”* and *“The Scriptures cannot be broken”* (John 17:17: 10:35)!

New Testament Books

Paul considered Luke’s writings to be as authoritative as the Old Testament (1 Timothy 5:18; see also Deuteronomy 25:4 and Luke 10:7). Peter recognized Paul’s writings as Scripture (2 Peter 3:15-16). Some of the books of the New Testament were being circulated among the churches (Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27). Clement of Rome mentioned at least eight New Testament books (A.D. 95). Ignatius of Antioch acknowledged about seven books (A.D. 115). Polycarp, a disciple of John the apostle, acknowledged 15 books (A.D. 108). Later, Irenaeus mentioned 23 books (A.D. 170). Hippolytus recognized 22 books (A.D. 170-235). The New Testament books receiving the most controversy were Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2 John, and 3 John.

The first “canon” was the Muratorian Canon, which was compiled in A.D. 170. The Muratorian Canon included all of the New Testament books except Hebrews, James, and 3 John. In A.D. 363, the Council of Laodicea stated that only the Old Testament (along with the Apocrypha) and the 27 books of the New Testament were to be read in the churches. The Council of Hippo (A.D. 393) and the Council of Carthage (A.D. 397) also affirmed the same 27 books as authoritative.

It is crucial to remember that the church did not determine the canon. No early church council decided on the canon. It was God, and God alone, who determined which books belonged in the Bible. It was simply a matter of God’s imparting to His followers what He had already decided. The human process of collecting the books of the Bible was flawed, but God, in His sovereignty, and despite our ignorance and stubbornness, brought the early church to the recognition of the books He had inspired.

Thirty-two percent of the New Testament verses include material used in the OT. The New Testament consists of 27 Books, all written between 40 to 96 AD, and were immediately and widely circulated among the churches. Before the end of the First Century church fathers were quoting the New Testament in their own writings, showing their belief that the NT Books were authoritative. Irenaeus (170AD) quoted 23 of the 27 NT books less than 100 years after they were written, meaning he had access to this many books within a generation of the Apostles. Origin quotes the New Testament over 18,000 times! Church historians have declared that even if all 24,970 New Testament

manuscripts disappeared, we could still reconstruct all but 11 verses of the NT by using the quotes found in the writings of the early church fathers. How is that possible? Because the church fathers included over 36,000 New Testament quotes within the first 300 years of Christianity. Point: They were fully persuaded that the New Testament books in our Bible were authoritative and inspired

Many copies of these books remain, dating back to the 2nd Century AD, and the earliest complete New Testaments dates to the 4th Century AD. The earliest list of books considered authoritative was written by Athanasius in 367 AD.

Keep in mind, the church did not create the canon (the New Testament); it recognized the canon that had been created.

How Did we Get the New Testament Text

How did the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles end up in our English translations two-thousand years later?

1. First, Jesus taught his apostles until about 30AD
2. Second, His apostles publicly taught his message beginning just 50 days after Jesus' death at the celebration of Pentecost in Jerusalem
3. Third, people from many nations who had gathered at Jerusalem for Pentecost heard that message, believed it, were baptized, and then returned to their homes to spread the Gospel throughout the Roman empire.
4. Fourth, the apostles continued to lead the early church, teaching and preaching and correcting error and refuting heresy until between 65-95 AD
5. Fifth, the writings of the apostles began to circulate through the churches between 40-96 AD, and were universally accepted by the early churches. Therefore, there were no contradictions or differences in teaching throughout that time period. The 27 books that comprise our NT were manually copied and later were officially recognized as the NT canon.

What books were considered authoritative by the early church? Why isn't *the Gospel of Judas*, or *the Gospel of Thomas*, or the *Aquarian Gospel*, etc., considered a part of the NT canon?

These are the questions and considerations that guided in the recognition of which books were from God, and which ones weren't.

1. Was the book written or supported by a prophet or Apostle of God? This was the single most essential factor. They believed that the Word of God was inspired by the Spirit of God for the people of God must of necessity be communicated through a prophet or apostle of God (cf. 2 Pet.1:20-21).
2. Is the book authoritative? Does the book resonate with the sense of "thus saith the Lord?"
3. Does the book contradict or correspond to all previous revelation? The noble Bereans searched the scriptures to see if Paul's teachings were true (Acts 17:11). They knew that if Paul's message conflicted with the OT scripture, it couldn't be from God. *God is not the author of confusion* (1 Cor.14:33).

4. Does the book give evidence of having the power of God? Any book that does not produce a transforming power in the life of those who read it couldn't be inspired by God. *The Word of God is quick and powerful* (Alive with power)-Heb.4:12. 2 Tim.3:16-17 also clearly declares that God's Word will change and transform the very life of all who embrace it. Therefore if a book does not contain that power, it isn't from God.
5. Was the book accepted by the people of God? In the Old Testament times, Moses' scrolls were immediately placed into the Ark of the Covenant (Deut. 31:24-26) alongside the tablets written by the very finger of God. Joshua's scrolls were also added (Josh.24:26). In the New Testament, Paul thanked the Thessalonian Christians for receiving his message as the Word of God (1 Thess.2:13). Paul's writings were widely circulated among the churches (Col.4:16, 1 Thess.5:27; and Peter refers to Paul's writings as "*scripture*" (2 Pet.3:15-16).

Is the bible a book of myths and legends? A talking snake? A talking donkey? Jonah and the giant fish? Should the Bible be relegated to the fairy tale section on the book shelf?

Skeptics and critics often cite numerous Biblical accounts as fiction. Such as: The Genesis account of creation, the long lives of some early humans, Noah and the Ark, the Ten Plagues upon Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea, The Walls of Jerico falling down, the sun standing still, Samson killing hundreds of people at a time, singlehandedly, David and Goliath, Jonah and the giant fish, Daniel in the Lions den, Jesus born of a virgin, Jesus casting out demons and healing the sick, Jesus' death/burial/resurrection; etc.

Are we to believe that some things in the Bible are mythological, as critics declare? Or do we say with Paul that "*all scripture is God-breathed...*" (2 Tim.3:16).

Over 200 stories of a world-wide flood

Worldwide, there are over 200 stories of a world-wide flood that destroyed the majority of people and animals. One of the more famous is the *Gilgamesh Epic*; an epic poem from Babylonia from the 7th century BC, that speaks of a man who built a large boat to escape a great flood. In the Gilgamesh version (which differs vastly from the Bible account), the ship was a huge cube that could roll atop the waves. Interestingly, it speaks of 1). A massive flood, 2). A man who built a ship ahead of time to escape the flood, 3). A family that escaped with him, 4). A mass destruction of human and animal life, and 5). A new start from humanity through the surviving family. While certainly there are many myths and legends in the world, isn't it interesting that hundreds of flood stories exist in the history of many cultures. Naturally, Christians believe the Bible account as recorded in Genesis Chapters 6-9 to be entirely accurate.

Lost books of the Bible? Books left out for political or other reasons ?

Most of the so called "lost books of the Bible" that pseudo-scholars refer to are actually portions of a collection of documents called the *Nag Hammadi* texts, discovered in Egypt in 1945. They are a collection of writings from a pseudo-Christian religious sect called Gnostics, which arose sometime in the late first century. The *Nag Hammadi* texts were written much later than the New Testament books, from the second to the fourth century AD, and unlike the NT, they were written in the Coptic

language. They include; *The Gospel of Thomas*, the *Gospel of Philip*, *The Acts of Peter*, and others. All of the books are gnostic in character and were found in a library of Gnostic work. Several books of the NT were actually written to combat this rising Gnostic heresy (Col.;1 John) and the claim that these are secret gospels is preposterous, even for those whose scholarship is as shoddy and dishonest as Ehrman's. The early church fathers were aware of these books and both Iraneaus (130-200 AD) and Tertullian (160-225 AD) refuted them and dismissed them as spurious. None of the *Nag Hammadi* books were ever considered by Christians to be inspired.

2. The Attacks of Potentates, Governments and the Church.

The fact that the Bible is indestructible is evidence of its divine authorship. It has withstood the tests of time, not only surviving but also thriving. Anyone who has studied the history of the Bible realizes what a miracle that is. No other book has been so persecuted, so intensely sought out for destruction. The devil has been on a mission to destroy God's Word right from the beginning. It is also obvious that Satan is still marshaling his forces toward that one intent: to seek out the Bible and destroy it.

Governmental edicts and entire kingdoms have arrayed themselves against the Bible. Emperors, kings and popes have taken a stand against the Word, all intent on its destruction. The order was to destroy every copy because they didn't want it to get into the hands of the populace. Down through the centuries these attacks have been quite vicious and barbaric. It's only by the hand of God that this book has been preserved.

Throughout the millennia of time thousands of wars have been fought, plagues have ravaged the earth, natural disasters have rocked the planet but despite everything, the Bible has been preserved. During that time however, the Bible has also been the object of unending persecution. I believe that if I said that the Bible is the most beloved book in all the earth we'd all agree, but throughout history, it's been the most hated and bitterly opposed book of all time. Determined efforts to exterminate every known copy of the Bible have been instigated by kings, emperors and even religious men. Some of the wicked kings of Israel and Judah went to extreme measures in attempting to destroy the scriptures. The Old Testament prophet Jeremiah wrote a prophecy and one of the kings cut it up and threw it into the fire. From the very beginning intense warfare has been waged against the scriptures. Antiochus Epiphanes during the inter-testament period sent the entire Syrian force to destroy every known copy of the Jewish scriptures. Any Jew caught with a copy of the scriptures was killed on the spot. Synagogues and scrolls were burned and everything destroyed. Still the Bible could not be eradicated; God preserved it.

Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. (Mark 13:31)

God has kept His hand of preservation on His Word. The Roman emperors waged wars against the Bible that were unprecedented. The Emperor Diocletian in the third century ordered the burning of all Christian churches and the confiscation of all Christian literature. Once again, anyone caught with a copy of the scriptures was charged with treason and killed. Diocletian is dead and gone but the Bible remains. The entire weight of the Roman Emperors was marshalled against the Word of

God with the intent of its destruction but the Bible is still here and the Roman Empire is long gone. Empires have risen and fallen; kingdoms have come and gone, but the Word of God stands.

“The empire of Caesar is gone; the legions of Rome are smouldering in the dust; the avalanches of Napoleon hurled upon Europe have melted away, the prince of the pharaohs is fallen; the pyramids they raised to be their tombs are sinking every day in the desert sands; Tyre is a rock for bleaching fishermen’s nets; Sidon has scarcely left a wreck behind; but the Word of God still survives; All things that threatened to extinguish it have only aided it; and proves every day how transient is the noblest monument that men can build, how enduring is the least Word that God has spoken”-Albert Baird Cummins

When the Roman army couldn’t destroy the Bible, the war was later taken up by the Roman popes. The record of their persecutions is a ghastly history to read. The popes were merciless in their oppression. Historians have written that the inhuman tortures and persecutions ordered by the pope(s) especially during the Medieval period of the Great Inquisition, were so brutal that the tortures, beatings and imprisonments of Diocletian and the Roman soldiers appeared pale in comparison. It’s a sordid and horrible historical record of what believers endured for the Word of God.

Here in America we have become soft and spoiled. Bibles are so plentiful that we tend to be careless and neglect it. What a contrast to those times when to possess a copy of the scriptures was considered heretical and blasphemous and could mean death. Those who translated the scriptures into the language of the people were arrested, imprisoned, tortured and killed. What was the fate of John Huss? William Tyndale and others? These men were martyred because those in positions of authority did not want the Bible disseminated into the hands of the public. They did not want the people to read the Bible for themselves. All of those popes and persecutors have come and gone, as have all those who ordered the savage inhuman inquisitions but God’s Word still stands. Terrible atrocities have been committed in the name of religion, even in the name of Christianity.

3. The Enemy’s Change in Tactics.

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (John 8:32)

Try as he might the devil couldn’t destroy the Bible so in one more attempt he changed his tactics and began to attack the integrity of the Bible, the inspiration and relevance of the scriptures. He has used the tools of human philosophy and human science to ridicule and discredit the Bible. Satirists mock the Bible and even so-called religious scholars have launched attacks against the Bible. In fact, many of the seminaries today no longer believe in an inerrant Bible as the infallible Word of God. When the devil couldn’t destroy the Bible by out-and-out persecution, he just changed his stratagem. He now tries to destroy the credibility of the Bible by casting his aspersions at the inspiration of the scriptures, etc.

4. The Bible’s Survival in Spite of Persecution.

With so much opposition and persecution for so many centuries one would think that the Bible would have perished, but no so. It is an eternal book, an inspired book that has the autograph of the

Divine Author in every verse, chapter and page. Men couldn't destroy it though many have tried. What men make, men can destroy; what God makes, men cannot destroy.

Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?
(Jer. 23:29)

Attacks continue to come against the Word of God but no matter how many rocks are thrown at it, the Word is like a great hammer or anvil and whatever hits it shatters. All the enemies of the Word of God have been smashed, crushed and pulverized; they've gone into oblivion and to their eternal reward. The Word of God however, is the immovable hammer that endures.

All the forces of earth and hell have been arrayed against the Bible and it remains steadfast and indestructible. That's how we know that it is in fact the Word of God. Its preservation is a miracle in itself.

LESSON 9 - HISTORY AND ARCHEOLOGY ATTEST TO VALIDITY

“All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths contained in the Sacred Scriptures” – Sir William Herschel

Mormons declare that their most sacred volume, the Book of Mormon, is the most correct of any book on earth. Their whole religion is based on the tale it tells of two great civilizations; the Jaredites, who left the Tower of Babel and migrated to the Americas over two thousand years before Christ; and a second group who left Jerusalem around 600 BC and made the same trek, then divided into two nations, the Nephites and the Lamanites. The Lamanites (who were the principal ancestors of the American Indians according to Mormonism) and Nephites warred almost continually until by 421 AD, only a single Nephite soldier remained; a Military Commander named Moroni, who, along with his father, Mormon, inscribed a book on golden plates in reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics and then hid it in the hill Cumorah. Fourteen hundred years later, Moroni, now a resurrected angel, appeared to Joseph Smith, directed him to the long buried book and instructed him towards its translation. Smith found a pair of magical glasses that enabled him to translate the golden plates into English and the result: the Book of Mormon, the guiding light of Mormonism. The book claims to chronicle the life and personal ministry of Jesus Christ among the Nephites after his resurrection, and sets forth the Mormon plan of salvation.

There are, however, some very serious problems with the Mormon claim, not the least of which is the total lack of archaeological evidence to support it. Wherever civilizations live, whether they be great and advanced or small and primitive, evidence is left behind. Archaeological digs in the Holy lands continually unearth remnants of the past civilizations that lived there. Even here in Louisiana there are “Indian Mounds,” huge piles of oysters in the remote marshlands that still exist, giving mute testimony to the native American Indians who formerly resided here and existed off the abundant seafood. In Mexico, Central and South America there are ruins of ancient civilizations; Mayan, Aztec, etc. But with Mormonism, there is absolutely no trace of the civilization it describes. There is no evidence for the lands it describes, no anthropological evidence linking Native Americans to ancient Jews (DNA research has repeatedly proven that the Mormon claim of Israelite descent is 100% false), and not a single shard of archaeological evidence to support its claims. In short, the Book of Mormon is a piece of fiction!

Critics have also accused the Bible of being a work of fiction down through the years. Some say the Bible’s human authors invented imaginary nations and heroes and empires and kings and kingdoms and cities and wars. But there is a vast difference between the Book of Mormon and the Bible: Archaeology has continually unearthed the very civilizations the Bible says existed there!

1. Why Believe the Bible? History and Archeology Attest to the Validity of the Scriptures.

³⁵And they brought him [the colt] to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. ³⁶And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. ³⁷And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; ³⁸Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. ³⁹And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. ⁴⁰And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. (Lk. 19: 35-40)

Jesus was saying to the Pharisees that if His disciples didn't praise and exalt Him as King and Lord, and acknowledge Him as Messiah, then the very stones would cry out saying, "Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Messiah!"

Using that passage as an illustration, I declare to you that **the stones are crying out!** The stones that are being uncovered in archeological digs in the lands of the Middle East are crying out and have been for centuries, and they universally declare that the Bible is true and Jesus Christ is Lord! It has only been within the last 200 years that archeology has become the science of discovery. Vast archeological digs are occurring throughout the lands of the Bible, and many astounding discoveries are being made. In the process of unearthing ancient cities and empires, the various obelisks, tablets and papyri have all confirmed that the Bible is an absolutely accurate record of history. For years skeptics denied that certain events mentioned in the Bible actually occurred, i.e., the fall of Jericho, the existence of Edom, etc. Archeological expeditions have since unearthed the ruins of Jericho and verified the reality of the Edomites, proving that the records mentioned in the Bible are true.

While we don't really need archeology to prove to us that the Bible is true, the fact is, archaeology should confirm the validity of the Holy Scriptures, and it does! In spades!.

A few of the discoveries that prove the reliability of the Bible:

1. The Code of Hammurabi.

For years Bible critics said that Moses did not write the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament). Conservative Christians have always believed in the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Liberal critics have objected, declaring that it was impossible because Moses lived almost 3500 years ago and no one knew what writing was at that time in history. They further said that even if men of that time did know how to write they could never have put together the complex code of civil, moral and religious laws that were attributed to Moses' authorship.

But when people fail to acknowledge the Bible as true and Jesus as Lord, then **the stones will cry out!** In 1901 a French archeologist unearthed an eight-foot, black diorite stele (an inscribed stone, like a monument) near the site of ancient Susa, now termed "The Code of Hammurabi."

The stone predates Moses by hundreds of years and contains a complex system of legal codes, laws and regulations concerning government, taxation, etc. The discovery shattered the skeptics' false assertions that ancient cultures were primitive and illiterate.

As more archeological discoveries are made, the realization has finally dawned that ancient cultures were quite advanced. The ancient peoples were not savage aborigines but possessed advanced civilizations and high levels of learning. Contrary to popular belief, the history of man was not one of evolution from primates. There are elevated levels of skills that were known to the ancients that modern men are unable to duplicate yet today. The Egyptian method of mummifying the dead has not yet been duplicated. The technology of the erection of their pyramids is still not fully understood. Bodies of ancients have been examined and found to have had brain surgery and other complicated surgical procedures. The archeological record reveals that these people were not ignorant.

2. The Ras Shamra Tablets.

Critics said that the Bible was actually written much later than it purports to having been written. They claimed that the books of Moses didn't date to 1400 BC but were probably written about 500 BC. Skeptics went to great lengths to castigate the Bible's authorship. One particular attempt was made to cast dispersions on an account found in Exodus, chapter 15. The setting is that Israel had just come out of Egypt. God miraculously delivered them through the waters of the Red Sea and the mighty Pharaoh's army was crushed. In celebration, Moses and the children of Israel began to lift their voices in praise to God for their deliverance. The song is sometimes referred to as the "Song of Moses" or the "Song of Miriam." The song contains one small phrase that skeptics have pointed out as justification for their assertion that the account could not have been written at the time of Moses.

Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.

(Ex. 15:17)

Critics have seized upon the phrase, *in the mountain of thine inheritance*, asserting that it is a reference to the Temple Mount where Solomon's Temple stood. Since the time of Moses was around 1300 BC and the temple was not built until around 900 BC they conclude this is a discrepancy, an error. Moses therefore could not have been the author of the Pentateuch.

Once again, **the rocks cried out**. With the discovery of the Ras Shamra Tablets off the coast of Syria in 1929, which were found to date back to the time of Moses (1400 BC), and one tablet contains an interesting phrase: *in the mountain of thine inheritance*. This simply goes to prove that the phrase was not unknown in Moses' time.

Skeptics have continued to mock and ridicule the Bible and have made every attempt to discredit its authorship. Archeological discoveries and not just the artifacts of Israel but also

those of Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, etc. confirm that the historical accounts recorded in the Bible are absolutely true.

Archeological finds have also served to shed light on other biblical passages. A somewhat strange command was given to Israel by God and is mentioned several times in both Exodus and Deuteronomy. In the Old Testament laws regarding, unleavened bread, feasts and Sabbath keeping, etc.; God tells the Jews through Moses:

The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk. (Ex. 23:19)

Why are the people commanded to not cook a kid in goat's milk or a calf in cow's milk? In the discovery of the Ras Shamra Tablets, an interesting rite was mentioned that had to do with honoring the pagan deities. If a Canaanite desired to gain favor with his deity and to insure that his prayer was heard, he was to slay a kid in its own mother's milk. It was done in order to make certain that the deity heard the prayer and would grant the request. Prior to the discovery of the Ras Shamra Tablets Bible scholars had no knowledge regarding why God would issue such prohibitions. Years before the Jews entered Canaan, God was forewarning His people not to adopt the rites and customs of the pagans.

²Thus saith the LORD, learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. ³For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. ⁴They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.... ¹⁴Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. (Jer. 10:2-4, 14)

3. The Hittite Kingdom.

As the people of Israel prepare to enter the Land of Promise, God says to them:

From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast. (Joshua 1:4)

In this passage God is describing the land that He has promised to Joshua, the extent of the borders, etc. Reference is made to the land of the Hittites. In some other forty plus scripture passages, reference is made to the kingdom of the Hittites. In Genesis 23, Abraham bought the parcel of ground containing the cave, Machpelah, to bury his wife, Sarah in, from Ephron, a Hittite. They are described as a very independent, industrious and wealthy people, who presided in Biblical times over a vast area of modern Turkey and stretching far beyond; but warlike and powerful. The problem was that no mention of the nation of the Hittites could be found anywhere except in the pages of the Bible. If they were a great nation, with an empire rivaling the size and scope of Egypt in the time of the Pharaoh's, where was the evidence? Why

was there no record of their existence nor any archeological discoveries made relating to them?

The critics seized upon the absence of evidence and declared that the Bible is a book of mythology and legendary peoples and kingdoms and could not be expected to be found factual. But then **the stones cried out** and archeological discoveries in the late 19th and early 20th centuries have unearthed the ancient capital of the Hittite nation! The more extensively the site was explored, the more evidence was found. An entire empire has now been unearthed. This empire was so large, so great and powerful that it was no less powerful than the Egyptian or Assyrian empires. The Hittite kingdom was found complete with its entire vocabulary and scholars now even have the ability to translate their language! Much today is known about the Hittite people and what the Bible has to say about them has been confirmed to be true and factual based on archeological discoveries. As one archaeologist said, "Absence of evidence does not mean evidence of absence." In other words, archaeologists will continue to uncover even further evidence of the peoples and nations and cities so faithfully and accurately recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

The stones continue to cry out and they continue to proclaim that the Bible is true! It is an accurate record; it is God's Word. Contrary to what the critics assert, it is not a book of legends and myths. History and archeology affirm the truths of the Bible.

4. **Ur of the Chaldees.**

The Bible records this as the boyhood home of Abraham but the skeptics once declared no such place existed. Here again, **the stones cried out** and the ancient city of Ur was unearthed in the 1920's and 1930's by British archaeologists. Today we know that it was a bustling city with two ports, welcoming ships from as far away as India, situated exactly where the Bible said it stood on a former channel of the Euphrates River. Located in modern Iraq, roads linked it directly to present day Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Syria, Egypt and Israel. Remains were also found of a ziggurat, an ancient tower like that of Babel, that once stood 65 feet high, dedicated to *Sin*, the moon goddess.

5. **King Belshazzar of Babylon.**

Bible critics once asserted that no king by the name of Belshazzar (cf. Daniel 5) ever ruled over Babylon. They claimed that a search of the list of Babylonian kings revealed that his name did not appear anywhere among the group. The Bible however records that he ruled over Babylon at the time that it fell to the Medo-Persian Empire. Archeology again proved their assertions to be wrong. Ancient Babylonian tablets were unearthed that mentioned that not only was there a king named Belshazzar but he was also a powerful king who reigned as co-regent with his father, ruling over Babylon at the very time of its fall.

6. **The Merneptah Stele.**

Up until recently, certain "scholars" doubted that the events detailed in the Book of Exodus ever happened. They claimed Semitic peoples didn't live in Egypt at the time described in

Scripture, that no such slavery took place as described in the Bible and the whole Exodus account “never happened.” Then, the stones cried out!

Archaeologists uncovered a tomb schematic showing Semitic slaves making mud bricks at the Egyptian city of Thebes on the Nile. And a well-known inscription at the private tomb of Rekhmire, the highest ranking official under pharaohs Tuthmosis III and Amenophis II, depicts slaves making mud bricks during the construction of the Karnak Temple Complex, of which Egyptian-born professor of Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern history and archaeology James Hoffmeier said, “The practice of using forced labor for building projects is only documented for the period 1450 to 1200, the very time most biblical historians place the Israelites in Egypt.” However, of all the evidence for the Exodus, none compares to the Merneptah Stele in significance. The stele is a 7 ½ foot tall black granite stone slab inscribed in Egyptian hieroglyphics, boasting of the conquests of Pharaoh Merneptah, son of Ramses II. He is hailed as “The Victorious Ruler” “Exalted” “King among the gods!” The stele says “Merneptah has subdued all”.... “Ashkelon....Gezer...Yanoam... Israel is wasted bare of seed...” A clear declaration that Israel’s store of grain was destroyed and they no longer were a military threat. The significance of this stele is huge! It is the earliest reference to Israel in extra-biblical sources yet discovered and proves the Biblical account is true.

7. Tel Dan Stele.

A Harper’s Magazine article once quoted so called “scholar” Daniel Lazare, who said King David was not a great potentate whose power stretched from the Nile to the Euphrates, but he was, rather, a “freebooter who at most carved out a small duchy in the southern highlands around Jerusalem and Hebron.” He went on to say that “modern scholars disagree on whether David was a petty hilltop chieftain whose writ extended no more than a few miles in any direction, or...whether he ever existed at all.” Thomas Thompson, professor of theology at the University of Copenhagen said the Biblical accounts of King David are no more factual than the tales of King Arthur. Then, the stones cried out! In 1993 an Israeli archaeologist discovered a fragment of a stone monument with inscriptions bearing the first known extra-biblical reference to King David and the ruling dynasty he founded, the House of David. The discovery was so significant that even Time Magazine said, “The skeptic’s claim that King David never existed is now hard to defend.”(Time, June 24, 2001). Since then more fragments have been unearthed adding to the testimony that the Biblical account of King David and the extent of his kingdom are true.

8. The Moabite Stone

Discovered in 1868, in Dhiban, Jordan, twenty miles east of the Dead Sea, the Moabite Stone, a stone slab three feet high by two feet wide, is one of the most significant artifacts ever unearthed in the sands of the Middle East. It is a victory monument, memorializing the repression of the Moabites under the rule of King Omri of Israel, and their revolt under Mesha, King of Moab. It references the House of David, the Moabite deity, Chemosh; mentions King Omri, one of the most powerful kings of Israel’s Northern empire and founder of that empire’s capitol city, Samaria; the wars at Mount Nebo, etc.; in direct confirmation of the Biblical narrative. It

also makes specific reference to Israel's God, Yahweh. Thus, **the stones cry out**, declaring that the Biblical account is correct, accurate in exacting detail and absolutely trustworthy.

9. The Pilate Stone

A two-by-three foot limestone block was uncovered by Italian archaeologists excavating the theater at Maritma, bearing a Latin inscription mentioning Pontius Pilate as Prefect of Judea. This confirms the Gospel accounts which state Pilate was Prefect (governor), in Judea, under the authority of Tiberias Caesar when Heron was Tetrarch in Galilee. There can be no denying that the events surrounding the Lord's life, his arrest, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection, occurred exactly as the Bible said they did. Never in two-thousand years of history, excavations, research and scrutiny has even one single detail mentioned in the Scripture been found false. The stones cry out! They declare that Jesus Christ is LORD!

10. Extra-Biblical References to Jesus Christ/Christianity

Extra-biblical references to Jesus and Christianity. Incredibly, there have been critics and skeptics who've gone so far as to openly declare that Jesus Christ was a fictional character, the stuff of legends, like King Arthur and Hercules. These critics have largely been silenced by the incredible amount of testimony to the Lord's life and ministry and resurrection from extra-Biblical historical sources.

The following are early extra-biblical references to Jesus and/or Christians by non-Christian writers (in some cases, Christian writers are quoting non-Christian writers' references to Jesus).

Josephus (A.D. 37 - c. A.D. 100)

Josephus' Antiquities (early 2nd century A.D.) refers to Jesus in two separate passages. The common translation of the first passage, Book 18, Ch. 3, part 3, is disputed and is most likely from an altered source. F. F. Bruce has provided a more likely translation:

Now there arose at this time a source of further trouble in one Jesus, a wise man who performed surprising works, a teacher of men who gladly welcome strange things. He led away many Jews, and also many of the Gentiles. He was the so-called Christ. When Pilate, acting on information supplied by the chief men around us, condemned him to the cross, those who had attached themselves to him at first did not cease to cause trouble, and the tribe of Christians, which has taken this name from him is not extinct even today. The translations of this passage are discussed in Josephus: Testimonium Flavianum from Jesus.com.au.

The second passage is from Book 20, Ch. 9, part 1:
...so he assembled the sanhedrim of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others, [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned...

(Note: The Antiquities can be found at several different sites, including the Christian Classics Ethereal Library, Perseus Digital Library and Crosswalk.com)

Tacitus (c. A.D. 55 - c. A.D. 117)

Annals, book XV:

Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular.

Suetonius (c. A.D. 69 - c. A.D. 140)

Lives of the Caesars - Claudius, sec. 25:

He banished from Rome all the Jews, who were continually making disturbances at the instigation of one Chrestus.

Lives of the Caesars - Nero, sec. 16

Punishment was inflicted on the Christians, a class of men given to a new and mischievous superstition.

Julius Africanus (c. 160 - c. 240)

Chronography, XVIII refers to writings by Thallus and Phlegon concerning the darkness during the Crucifixion:

On the whole world there pressed a most fearful darkness; and the rocks were rent by an earthquake, and many places in Judea and other districts were thrown down. This darkness Thallus, in the third book of his History, calls, as appears to me without reason, an eclipse of the sun...Phlegon records that, in the time of Tiberius Caesar, at full moon, there was a full eclipse of the sun from the sixth hour to the ninth - manifestly that one of which we speak.

Origen (c. 185 - c. 254)

In Against Celsus, Origen quotes Celsus, a second-century skeptic, on Jesus. Celsus' view of Christians and Christianity, an article from Bluffton College, contains relevant excerpts.

Pliny the Younger (c. 62 - c. 113)

Letters, 10.96-97 records Pliny's dealings with Christians

Conclusion

Thousands of details in the Bible; references to people, places, wars, events, cities, political rulers, priests, etc., have been and continue to be verified by both historians and archaeologists. Some archaeologists began their work as skeptics and wound up believers in the Bible's authority because of the incredible accuracy of even the most minute details that archaeology continues to uncover and verify, such as that of Sir William Ramsay of Oxford University, one of the

greatest archaeologists of the last century. Ramsay thought Luke's Gospel was "foolish," because it included so many specific details that could be checked out and proven false. CF. Lu.1:5; 2:1-3; 3:1-3; Acts 5:36; 11:28; 18:2,12; 25:1, etc. Ramsay assumed they were false, believed the Gospel to be a work of fiction (like so many skeptics of our day) and examined the evidence for verification. But in his 30 years of research into Luke's writings, he found Luke's Gospel and the Book of Acts to be absolutely accurate in the events and details they reported. He later said that Luke should be named among the very greatest of ancient historians. "Luke is a first class ancient historian... He is not careless, nor is he a fabricator of events. His statements of fact are trustworthy; he is possessed of the true historic sense." Luke's accounts have now become widely recognized among historians and archaeologists as first-class historical writings. "This means Luke is fully trustworthy as a historian of the Life of Christ. Therefore to read the third Gospel is to encounter the authentic, historical Jesus," – C. Marvin Pate.

Along with Luke, the other Gospels have also proven to be historically verifiable. Another heralded archaeologist, Nelson Glueck, who was once featured on the cover of Time Magazine because of his extraordinary work, said after years of research, "No archaeological discovery has ever controverted a single Biblical reference." And, we might add, it never will!

Outstanding Article by Mark Eastman on the Historical Evidence for Jesus of Nazareth

As a first year college student, at the age of eighteen, I was told by a Jewish friend of mine that Jesus of Nazareth was a non-historical figure, a hoax, contrived by a group of crafty co-conspirators in the first or second century. This effort to explain away the historical existence of Jesus of Nazareth has actually been seriously promoted by scholars for centuries. In fact, this is a common answer given in modern Jewish homes when a child asks, "Who was Jesus?"

For years this explanation for the Jesus question seemed reasonable. However, my comfort level was eventually disturbed by some nagging questions.

Why would the Roman government brutally persecute peaceful followers of a non-historical figure? Why were tens of thousands of first century Christians (almost exclusively Jewish believers in Jesus) who lived within forty years of the "mythical events," willingly suffer the loss of all possessions and status, and be murdered for a myth? Why would Saul of Tarsus, a Jewish Pharisee, a leader of the Jews, be willing to give up everything and join the crowd that he had admittedly been persecuting? These are some of the questions that the myth theory doesn't satisfactorily explain.

Obviously, if Jesus of Nazareth was a true historical figure, and if he truly was who his disciples claimed he was, then there should be historical references to his existence other than the New Testament documents.

As we search for "extra biblical" (i.e. non-Christian) sources for the existence of Jesus, we will discover that the skeptic hasn't a leg to stand on, when he argues that Jesus was a non historical figure.[1] There are numerous historical references to Jesus, from both neutral and antagonistic sources, as early as the mid first century.

Secular Historical References to Jesus of Nazareth

When a historian sets out to prove the historical existence of an individual there are a number of sources that are sought. Perhaps the most reliable sources of historical evidence are from those who were not sympathetic to the person or his cause. A source that is either indifferent or antagonistic to Jesus or the church, could not be accused of bias and therefore part of the “evil plot” to create a mythical figure. As we look at historical references we will try to focus mainly on such historic sources.

Flavius Josephus

Joseph ben Matthias, was born in the year 37 C.E., and died around 100 C.E. As the son of a Jewish priest, he eventually became a priest himself and a member of the Pharisee sect of Judaism. In 64 C.E. He went to Rome to secure the release of certain priests and became convinced that Rome could not be defeated by the Jewish revolt which began in 66 C.E. (The Jewish revolt ended in 70 C.E. When Jerusalem was sacked by the Romans).

In July, 67 C.E. He was captured by Rome and was eventually hired as a scribe and an interpreter by the Roman government. He was given the name Flavius Josephus by his Roman associates and wrote under that name.

In 70 C.E., he rode into Jerusalem with the Roman general Titus and observed the annihilation of Jerusalem. Josephus recorded incredibly graphic details about the destruction of Jerusalem, as well as the crucifixion, and death of millions of Jews.

There are three passages in his writings that are pertinent to Christianity. In his book, *Antiquities of the Jews*, book eighteen, chapter three, in the third paragraph, he makes a comment about Jesus of Nazareth.

“Now, there was about this time, Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works—a teacher of such men as received the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the gentiles. He was [the] Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.”[2]

Josephus verifies that Jesus was an historical figure who was crucified by Pontius Pilate that he had a great following, did miracles and rose from the dead on the third day. Josephus does not attempt to explain away the historicity of Jesus of Nazareth nor does he try to explain away the miracles or his resurrection from the dead. Consequently, this is an incredibly valuable historical reference to Jesus of Nazareth.

Needless to say, because of its testimony of Jesus, this passage, commonly called the *Testimonium Flavianum*, a very controversial passage. Critics have claimed that this passage was a Christian insertion. However, there is strong evidence from the ancient manuscripts that

this passage was in the original.[3] It is present in all of the extant ancient manuscripts and was quoted by early church fathers, such as Eusebius, as early as 325 C.E.

The main points of contention are the statements, “He was the Messiah,” “if it be lawful to call him a man,” and “He appeared to them alive again the third day.” Josephus, described as an Orthodox Jew by some scholars, was apparently never converted to Christianity. Origen, a third century Christian, states twice that Josephus “did not believe in Jesus as the Christ.”[4] Therefore, opponents argue that it is very unlikely that he would ever say these things of Jesus. Most historians do, however, believe that the reference to Jesus of Nazareth being “a wise man,” “a doer of wonderful works”, and being crucified under Pontius Pilate, are valid portions of Josephus’ original work.

A complete fourth century Arabic version of Josephus’ Antiquities of the Jews, which contains the Testimonium, includes basically the same content as above text, with a couple of very slight variations. Instead of saying “He was the Christ,” it says “He was so-called the Christ.”

“At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct was good, and he was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after his crucifixion and that he was alive; accordingly, he was perhaps the Messiah concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders.” [Pines, Shlomo. An Arabic Version of the Testamonium Flavianum and its Implications, Jerusalem Academic Press, 1971.]

This very ancient copy of Antiquities increases significantly the reliability that Josephus did, in fact, make historical reference to Jesus of Nazareth. Although there are significant stylistic differences in this Arabic version, the basic elements of the Greek version are preserved in this text. Jesus is described as an historical figure who was crucified under Pontius Pilate. Regarding the Messiahship of Jesus, he is described in more neutral terms, stating, “He was perhaps the Messiah.” Finally, this version confirms that Jesus was of excellent character, that he gathered many disciples to himself and that Christians were still in existence at that time.

This version can hardly be criticized as a Christian fabrication. It is very unlikely that a Christian in the second or third century would describe Jesus as “perhaps the Messiah.” Christians at that time were routinely tortured and murdered for believing in Jesus, therefore, it is very unlikely that a person under such a threat would describe Jesus in such equivocal terms.”

The next passage is also in Antiquities of the Jews, book eighteen, chapter five, paragraph two. Josephus states:

“Now some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod’s army came from God, and that very justly, as a punishment of what he did against John, that was called the Baptist; for Herod slew him, who was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism; for that the washing [with water] would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it, not in order to the putting away,[or the remission] of some sins [only,] but for the purification of the body; supposing

still that the soul was thoroughly purified beforehand by righteousness. Now, when many others came to crowd about him, for they were greatly moved by hearing his words, Herod, who feared lest the great influence of John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion, (for they seemed ready to do anything he should advise,) thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not to bring himself into difficulties, by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it should be too late.”

Although Jesus is not specifically mentioned in this passage, the portrayal of his forerunner, John the Baptist, is in complete agreement with the record of John in the New Testament. Therefore, the historical reliability of the New Testament overall is further established. To Josephus, John the Baptist was an historical figure. Josephus validates what the Christian New Testament says about John. He was a righteous man who had great popularity among the people and he baptized people for the remission of sins. Almost all historians believe that this is a passage from the original text. It is also in the Arabic version.

The third reference is in Antiquities of the Jews, book twenty, chapter nine, paragraph one. This is in reference to the Jewish high priest, Ananius, and the brother of Jesus.

“After the death of the procurator Festus, when Albinus was about to succeed him , the high-priest Ananius considered it a favorable opportunity to assemble the Sanhedrin. He therefore caused James the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, and several others, to appear before this hastily assembled council, and pronounced upon them the sentence of death by stoning. All the wise men and strict observers of the law who were at Jerusalem expressed their disapprobation of this act...Some even went to Albinus himself, who had departed to Alexandria, to bring this breach of the law under his observation, and to inform him that Ananius had acted illegally in assembling the Sanhedrin without the Roman authority.”(Antiquities 20:9)

Most historians believe that this passage was penned by Josephus and was not a Christian insertion. Louis Feldman, professor of Classics at Yeshiva University states of this passage:

“Few have doubted the genuineness of this passage.”[5]

These three references, though not without controversy, are considered by the majority of historians to be substantially from the pen of Josephus. Professor Shlomo Pines, a well known Israeli scholar, discusses the fact of Jesus’ historicity and the references to Jesus by Josephus:

“In fact, as far as probabilities go, no believing Christian could have produced such a neutral text: for him the only significant point about it could have been its attesting the historical evidence of Jesus. But the fact is that until modern times this particular hare (i.e. claiming Jesus is a hoax) was never started. Even the most bitter opponents of Christianity never expressed any doubt as to Jesus having really lived.”[6]

Thallus

Thallus was a historian who lived in the middle of the first century C.E. His writings focus partly on the historical events of the Roman empire of the first century C.E. We do not have his original works, written around 52 C.E., but we do have the writings of men who referred to his work.

Julius Africanus

Julius Africanus, an early church father, writing in the year 221 C.E. wrote about the writings of Thallus. In a document written by Julius Africanus, there is a discussion about the darkness that was recorded by the writers of the New Testament at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus.

“Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land.” [That is, from noon to 3:00pm.] (Matthew 27:45)

Now the skeptic might easily dismiss this event, recorded in the gospel of Matthew, as mere dramatics, an attempt to dress up the crucifixion event with some supernatural imagery. However, the darkness which occurred at the time of a full moon was recorded by Thallus.

Africanus notes that Thallus had attempted to explain away the event:

“Thallus, in the third book of his history explains away the darkness as an eclipse of the sun, unreasonably as it seems to me.”[7]

Africanus, writing in the year 221 C.E., had access to the writings of Thallus. Thallus in his third book wrote that this darkness, which occurred during the reign of Caesar Tiberius, was a result of an eclipse of the sun. Africanus makes the point that this could not have been a solar eclipse, because the crucifixion took place at Passover, which always occurs during a full moon. During a full moon, there can be no solar eclipse, and Africanus recognized this.

An interesting aspect of this reference is that Thallus does not try to deny the existence of Jesus of Nazareth, the occurrence of his crucifixion nor the historical fact that the darkness occurred. He presents Jesus of Nazareth as an historical person, and the darkness as an historical event. His motive in writing about the darkness is to explain it as a natural event.

Philopon

Philopon, a sixth-century secular historian, wrote regarding Phlegon as well.[8] He wrote:

“And about this darkness...Phlegon recalls it in his book The Olympiads.”

Like Thallus, Phlegon verifies the historical existence of Jesus of Nazareth and the historicity of the darkness which occurred during the reign of Tiberius Caesar. These common threads occurring in the writings of two men who were not Christians, is powerful evidence that Jesus is an historical figure and an unnatural darkness(not an eclipse) occurred during his life.

Tacitus

Cornelius Tacitus, born circa 52-55 C.E., became a senator in the Roman government under Emperor Vespasian. He was eventually promoted to governor of Asia. Writing in the year 116 C.E., in his Annals, he writes of the burning of Rome in 64 C.E. And how Caesar Nero had tried to stop the rumor that he (Nero) was behind the destruction.

“Therefore, to scotch the rumor (that Nero had burned Rome) Nero substituted as culprits, and punished with the utmost refinements of cruelty, a class of men, loathed for their vices, whom the crowd styled Christians. Christus, the founder of the name, had undergone the death penalty

in the reign of tiberius, by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilatus, and the pernicious superstition was checked for a moment, only to break out once more, not merely in Judea, the home of the disease, but in the capital itself, where all things horrible or shameful in the world collect and find a vogue...They [the Christians] were covered with wild beasts' skins and torn to death by dogs; or they were fastened on crosses, and, when daylight failed were burned to serve as lamps by night. Nero had offered his gardens for the spectacle, and gave an exhibition in his circus, mixing with the crowd in the habit of a charioteer, or mounted on his car. Hence, in spite of a guilt which had earned the most exemplary punishment, there arose a sentiment of pity, due to the impression that they were being sacrificed not for the welfare of the state but to the ferocity of a single man.”[9]

This amazing document verifies that Jesus, or Christ, was a true historical figure, that he lived and was killed during the reign of Caesar Tiberius, that he was sentenced under Pontius Pilate and that by about 64 C.E., Christianity had spread rapidly throughout the Roman empire. Tacitus verifies that Christians were viciously tortured by Nero only 32 years after the death of Jesus of Nazareth. The historical validity of this letter by Tacitus is doubted by very few scholars. According to some scholars, Tacitus is:

“Universally considered the most reliable of historians, a man in whom sensibility and imagination, though lively, could never spoil a critical sense rare in his time and a great honesty in the examination of the documents.” [Amoit, Francois; Brunot, Amedee; Danielou, Yeah; Daniel-Rops, Henri. *The Sources for the Life of Christ*. Translated by P.J. Herpburne-Scott. New York; Hawthorn Books, 1962, pg. 16.]

Emperor Hadrian

During the period when Hadrian was emperor of Rome, 117-138 C.E., there continued to be tremendous persecution of Christians. Serenius Granianus, the governor of Asia at that time, wrote a letter to Emperor Hadrian asking for his advice regarding how he should handle the Christians. Hadrian wrote back to Serenius' successor, Minucius Fundanus, his response. This letter was preserved by Eusebius. This is an excerpt;

“I do not wish, therefore, that the matter should be passed be without examination, so that these men may neither be harassed, nor opportunity of malicious proceedings be offered to informers. If, therefore, the provincials can clearly evince their charges against the Christians, so as to answer before the tribunal, let them pursue this course only, but not by mere petitions, and mere outcries against the Christians. For it is far more proper, if anyone would bring an accusation, that you should examine it.”[11]

This fascinating letter from the Roman emperor himself verifies the historical existence of the church, the belief that Christians were trouble-makers, that Christianity was illegal at that time, and that Christians would be taken before a counselor simply for admitting that they were Christians. Though not a specific reference to Jesus of Nazareth, this very early historical reference to the church, its illegality in the Roman Empire and the persecutions (malicious proceedings) are powerful evidences for the rapid spread of the church within one generation of the life of Jesus. Therefore, this increases the reliability that Jesus was an

historical figure and that the events surrounding his life were extraordinary, so much so that people were willing to die for the belief that he was the Messiah.

Lucian of Samosata

Lucian of Samosata, a Greek satirist, wrote a remarkable statement regarding the church in 170 C.E.

“The Christians, you know, worship a man to this day—the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account... You see, these misguided creatures start with the general conviction that they are immortal for all time, which explains the contempt of death and voluntary self-devotion which are so common among them; and then it was impressed on them by their original lawgiver that they are all brothers, from the moment that they are converted, and deny the Gods of Greece, and worship the crucified sage, and live after his laws. All this they take quite on faith, with the result that they despise all worldly goods alike, regarding them merely as common property.”[12]

That is quite a testimony. This letter confirms that Christians worshipped a crucified Jewish sage, that they faced death bravely, and that they despised worldly attributes. He explains this on the basis that Christians believed they were immortal and would spend eternity with God.

Mara Bar-Serapion

Mara Bar-Serapion, a Syrian and a stoic philosopher, wrote this letter to his son from prison sometime after 70 C.E.

“What advantage did the Athenians gain from putting Socrates to death? Famine and plague came upon them as a judgment for their crime. What advantage did the men of Samos gain from burning Pythagoras? In a moment their land was covered with sand. What advantage did the Jews gain from their executing their wise King? It was just after that that their kingdom was abolished. God justly avenged these three wise men: the Athenians died of hunger; the Samians were overwhelmed by the sea; the Jews, ruined and driven from their land, live in complete dispersion. But Socrates did not die for good; he lived on in the statue of Plato. Pythagoras did not die for good; he lived on in the statue of Hera. Nor did the wise King die for good; he lived on in the teaching which he had given.”[13] This letter refers to Jesus of Nazareth as being the “wise King.” The writer is obviously not a Christian because he places Jesus on a par with Pythagoras and Socrates. Consequently, the writer can hardly be described as biased in his reference to Jesus and the church. Therefore, it is a valuable historical reference regarding the historicity of Jesus. There are many other non-Christian historical sources for Jesus of Nazareth but since space is limited we will move on to rabbinical sources.

Ancient Rabbinical References to Y’shua (Jesus)

Of all the ancient historical sources for Jesus of Nazareth, the least favorably biased would have to be rabbinic in origin. There are actually quite a large number of such references to Jesus of Nazareth. The problem with the rabbinical writings is that they use names like

“such and such” and “so and so” or “that man” when they refer to Jesus of Nazareth. Consequently, some of the references are considered to be unreliable. During the middle ages and the early renaissance, the Talmud and Midrash were cleaned up with the removal of most of the references to Jesus of Nazareth.

As expected, the remaining references to Jesus are very unflattering. However, they do verify a number of important historical facts that the gospels proclaim regarding Jesus of Nazareth. As mentioned earlier by Shlomo Pines, no one doubted that Jesus was an historical figure up until about two to three hundred years ago. The myth theory was created and perpetuated by atheists, agnostics and embraced by mainstream Judaism during the Renaissance.

In the Babylonian Talmud, which was compiled between the years 200-500 C.E., in Sanhedrin, 43a, there is a fascinating reference to Jesus of Nazareth:

“It has been taught: On the Eve of the Passover, they hanged Yeshu. And an announcer went out in front of him, for forty days saying: ‘he is going to be stoned because he practiced sorcery and enticed and led Israel astray.’ Anyone who knows anything in his favor, let him come and plead in his behalf.’ But, not having found anything in his favor, they hanged him on the Eve of the Passover.”

This is considered to be one of the very reliable rabbinical references to Jesus (“Yeshu”). The writer here verifies that Jesus of Nazareth was an historical figure, that he was crucified on the Eve of the Passover, and that he did miracles, referred to as sorcery. The supernatural events surrounding the life of Jesus were not denied, but verified. The miracles of Jesus were simply explained away as being from a demonic source, i.e., sorcery.

According to Jewish law it is illegal to perform capital punishment on the Eve of the Passover. However, this record verifies something that we wouldn’t expect to find in a rabbinical source, the fact that the Sanhedrin acted illegally in condemning and crucifying Jesus on Passover. Consequently, this reference is even more valuable in terms of validating the historicity of Jesus. Certainly, if any passage should have been edited from the Talmud, it should have been this one. The fact that a passage which points out an illegal action was retained in the Talmud makes it a credible and valuable source for the historicity of Jesus.

In the Talmud, Sanhedrin 43a, it says,

“Our rabbis taught that Yeshu had five disciples: Matti, Necki, Netsur, Burni, and Toda.” Now one of those names we can recognize, Matti, the disciple named Matthew. Again it is considered by historians to be another reliable reference in the Talmud for the historicity of Jesus of Nazareth.

Maimonides

Maimonides was a very highly revered thirteenth century rabbi. There was a saying back during the thirteenth century that, “there was never a greater man than Maimonides except Moses.” He was given the nickname, Rambam.

Maimonides wrote a fourteen volume work called the Mishne Torah. In this he made multiple references to the historical existence of Jesus of Nazareth. However, in the year 1631, Catholic and Jewish authorities censored the fourteenth volume, removing all references to Jesus. It was censored because there were multiple derogatory references to Jesus of Nazareth. During the Spanish inquisition certain members of the Catholic church used Maimonides' work, and his negative references about Jesus, to justify the killing of Jews. Consequently, these references were removed from most of the extant volumes of Maimonides' writings.

An excerpt from the uncensored versions of the Mishne Torah is a remarkable historical reference to Jesus.[14]

“Jesus of Nazareth who aspired to be the Messiah and was executed by the court was also [alluded to] in Daniel’s prophecies (Daniel 11:14), as ‘the vulgar [common] among your people shall exalt themselves in an attempt to fulfill the vision, but they shall stumble.’ Can there be a greater stumbling block than Christianity? All the prophets spoke of the Messiah as the Redeemer of Israel and its Savior, who would gather their dispersed and strengthen their [observation of] the Mitzvot [the commandments]. By contrast, [Christianity] caused the Jews to be slain by the sword, their remnant to be scattered and humbled, the Torah to be altered and the majority of the world to err and serve a god other than the Lord. Nevertheless, the intent of the Creator of the world is not within the power of man to comprehend, for his ways are not our ways, nor are his thoughts, our thoughts. [Ultimately,] all the deeds of Jesus of Nazareth and that Ishmaelite [Mohammed] who arose after him will only serve to prepare the way for the Messiah’s coming and the improvement of the entire world [motivating the nations] to serve God together, as [Zephaniah 3:9] states: ‘I will make the peoples pure of speech that they will all call upon the Name of God and serve him with one purpose.’”

Here Maimonides, writing in the thirteenth century, verifies that Jesus of Nazareth was executed by the Sanhedrin, that he aspired to be the Messiah, that he was referred to in the prophecies of Daniel as one of the sons of the lawless, and that Jesus of Nazareth led many astray.

It is fascinating that Maimonides calls Jesus and his church “a stumbling block.” I don’t think Maimonides remembered that the Tanakh states that the Messiah would be a stumbling block to both houses of Israel.

He will be as a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.”(Isaiah 8:14)

Surely Jesus of Nazareth was an historical figure and his life, message, ministry was a stumbling block to the Jews of his day.

[1] By extra-biblical sources, I mean references to the historical Jesus in writings other than the Bible.

[2] The Complete Works of Josephus, Translated by William Whiston, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Mich 49501.

- [3] For detailed discussion of the debate on the authenticity of this passage see He Walked Among Us, Josh McDowell, Bill Wilson, Here's Life Publishers, pg. 37.
- [4] Origen, Against Celsus 1.47 and his Commentary on Matthew 10.17, in The Ante Nicene Fathers, Roberts, Alexander and Donaldson, James, editors. Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973 American Reprint of Edinburg Edition, Grand Rapids, MI.
- [5] Josephus, Antiquities, Loeb Edition, vol LX, p. 496.
- [6] Pines, Shlomo, An Arabic Version of the Testamonium Flavianum and its Implications, Jerusalem Academic Press, 1971 pg 69
- [7] Africanus, Chronography, 18:1, Roberts, Alexander and Donaldson, James, editors. The Ante Nicene Fathers. Wm Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973 American Reprint of Edinburg edition, Grand Rapids, MI
- [8] Africanus, Chronography, 18:1, Roberts, Alexander and Donaldson, James, editors. The Ante Nicene Fathers. Wm Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973 American Reprint of Edinburg edition, Grand Rapids, MI
- [9] Tacitus, Annals, Loeb editions 15.44.
- [10] Amoit, Francois; Brunot, Amedee; Danielou, Jean; Daneil-Rops, Henri, The Sources for the Life of Christ. Translated by J.J. Herpburne-Scott. New York; Hawthorn Books, 1962, pg. 16.
- [11] Eusebius, The History of the Church, 4.9.
- [12] Lucian, The Death of Pregrine 11-13.
- [13] British Museum Syriac MS. Addition 14, 658.
- [14] Heaven the Last Frontier, Jeffrey, Grant; Frontier Research Publications.

LESSON 10

TRUE SCIENCE REVEALS THE BIBLE TO BE TRUE!

Skeptics would have us believe that clear thinking, rational, and educated people are increasingly abandoning the idea of a creator God and aligning with atheists who believe that everything came from nothing. Science, we are told, has proven the Bible account of creation to be untrue.

Mark Mittelberg, in his book, *The Reason Why Faith Makes Sense*, declares just the opposite. *“Has there been some new discovery that disproves the evidence of a deity? Have the claims of the supernatural been conclusively refuted to the point that we can now deduce there is no God? To the contrary, the evidence for God is growing day by day as thinking people - including scientists, historians, archaeologists, philosophers, and others, many of whom were former skeptics – find more and more support for the existence of God and for the claims of Christianity in particular. In fact, the strength of the evidence is mounting to the extent that one particular book came out recently with the title I Don’t Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist. I like that title because it really does seem that the problems of unbelief in God are greater than the problems of belief. To accept that nothing produced everything, nonlife produced life, randomness produced order, chaos produced information, unconsciousness produced consciousness, and non-reason produced reason would require a lot more faith than I’d be able to muster!”*

Why, then, is there still so much of an “anti-God bias” in popular skeptical literature? The answer has little to do with reason or evidence, and everything to do with personal preference and morality. Many simply don’t want to believe in God, so they give His existence no real thought. Those who do choose to actually examine the real evidence are inevitably faced with certain facts that cannot be lightly dismissed. Facts such as:

The Cosmological Argument (from the Greek, *cosmos* = world or universe): This argues for the beginning of the universe. That is, everything had a beginning, and whatever had a beginning had a cause; therefore the universe had a cause. Albert Einstein recognized that if his theory of General Relativity was true, it meant the universe was not eternal but had a beginning. His calculations revealed there was a definite beginning to all time, all matter and all space, which contradicted his personal belief that the universe was static and eternal. Later discoveries by fellow scientists proved that, in fact, everything that exists in the universe had a beginning, and in fact, the universe was far from static but was actually expanding from a single point in the distant past (“Red shift,” actually first observed by astronomer Edwin Hubble in 1927). As far as we know Einstein never converted to Christianity, but he definitely believed in a God who somehow created the worlds. He said he “wanted to know how God created the world.”

The cosmological argument is the argument from the beginning of the universe. In logical form, it goes like this:

1. Everything that had a beginning had a cause.

2. The universe had a beginning
3. Therefore the universe had a cause.

We observe this every day; cause and effect. Nothing happened by nothing. If your wife's hair is 6 inches shorter today than it was yesterday, there was a cause, a reason. She didn't just wake up with shorter hair, somebody cut it! It didn't just happen from nothing! If you find a big hole punched in the drywall of your 12 year old child's room, would you be so gullible to believe that nothing caused it? It just appeared? Did nothing also break the window? Can a robber use a "gun appeared out of nothing/nowhere in my hand" as his defense?

POINT: Just as the appearance of a hole in the drywall needs an explanation, so does the sudden appearance of a universe! Everything that had a beginning had a cause!

The universe had a beginning! Science has repeatedly proven it to be so. Consider the words of Robert Jastrow, astronomer and founding director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, as he summarized the conclusion of decades of scientific research in his book, *God and the Astronomers*:

"Five independent lines of evidence – the motions of the galaxies, the discovery of the primordial fireball, the laws of thermodynamics, the abundance of helium in the Universe and the life story of the stars – point to one conclusion; all indicate that the Universe had a beginning."

Jastrow further describes that incredible beginning (usually referred to by scientists as the Big Bang);

"The matter of the Universe is packed together into one dense mass under enormous pressure, and with temperatures ranging up to trillions of degrees. The dazzling brilliance of the radiation in this dense, hot Universe must have been beyond description. The picture suggests the explosion of a cosmic hydrogen bomb. The instant in which the cosmic boomb exploded marked the birth of the Universe. The seeds of everything that has happened in the Universe since were planted in that first instant; every star, every planet and every living creature in the Universe owes its physical origins to events that were set in motion in the moment of the cosmic explosion. In a purely physical sense, it was the moment of creation."

Theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking (and virtually every modern scientist) believes the universe expanded at a rate equivalent to a coin in your pocket becoming millions and millions of times wider than our entire galaxy – a galaxy so big that we have barely begun to explore – and it did this in a fraction of a nanosecond! But Hawking nor any other physicist on earth can offer any scientific explanation as to HOW or WHY it happened! In theology, we'd call it, a MIRACLE! POINT! Both logic and science tells us that the universe had a beginning (a spectacular beginning!), and whatever had a beginning had a cause. One can only conclude that the universe had a cause!

What the supposed most learned men on earth can't explain, the smallest Christian child can.

"In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

Psalms 19:1-4 There is a cause, an originator, a designer and creator! Look further back in the Bible and you discover His name – Jesus! John 1:1-5, 14. (see also Col.1:16-17; 2 Tim.1:8-9)

How is it that people who are supposed to be rational and educated can look at the universe and all that is in it; it's incredibly grand and complex design, the way everything works together so perfectly; and deny that there is a designer? No one would be so ignorant to believe their car just appeared from nothingness, or that a great explosion created a Boeing 747. Yet for all their so-called sophistry, these same people want us to be gullible enough to believe that the entire universe with all of its complexity and intricate design all “just happened,” “by chance.” Hawking credits “spontaneous creation” as the reason all exists. So, random, mindless, thoughtless, happenchance exploded and voila! Here we are in all our incredible complexity! Nothing created everything!

The Bible speaks specifically of these, who *“became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools”* (Romans 1:21-22).

Volumes have been written describing the amazing design and incredible complexity of every single living thing, from the cell and the atom, to the largest of creatures, and the intricate workings and design of the universe itself. Scientists say if gravity were to change in any way, even by as little as one part in ten thousand billion billion relative to the total range of the strengths of the four forces in nature, conscious life would be virtually impossible anywhere in the universe. The slightest changes in so many vital elements of our universe, the tilt of the earth on its axis, the tectonic plates, the percentage of oxygen in the atmosphere, the makeup of the atmosphere, the exact structure of the atom; nothing could exist!

Dr. Wernher von Braun, onetime director of NASA research and developer of the rocket that put America's first space satellite into orbit, said,

“In our modern world, many people seem to feel that our rapid advances in the field of science render such things as religious belief untimely or old fashioned. They wonder why we should be satisfied in believing something when science tells us that we know so many things. The simple answer to this contention is that we are confronted with many more mysteries of nature today than when the age of scientific enlightenment began. With every new answer unfolded, science has consistently discovered at least three new questions. The answers indicate that everything as well ordered and perfectly created as are our earth and universe must have a Maker, a Master Designer. Anything so orderly, so perfect, so precisely balanced, so majestic as this creation can only be the product of a Divine idea.”

It was, in fact, his observations of the incredible design and amazing order of the universe seen through his telescope that led Robert Jastrow, author of *God and the Astronomers*, to turn from atheism to belief in God. Another noted atheist, Dr. Anthony Flew, considered the world's foremost philosophical atheist and author of the book, *The Presumption of Atheism*, also abandoned atheism in his later years. Shortly before his death he penned his last book, *There is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind*.

Flew said that Einstein believed there had to be intelligence behind the integrated complexity of the physical world. *“If that is a sound argument, the integrated complexity of the organic world is*

just inordinately greater – all the creatures are complicated pieces of design. So an argument that is important about the physical world is immeasurably stronger when applied to the biological world,” he said.

Could it be that many are choosing not to honestly consider the real evidence because they don't want to believe? Do they simply fear that to acknowledge belief in a creator makes them accountable to that creator? (cf. Romans 1:18-20)

Scientific revelations in the Bible reveal that the Bible is True.

1. The Earth is Round.

Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. [Isa. 40:21-22]

This prophecy was made by the Old Testament prophet Isaiah over 700 years before the time of Christ. Be careful to note he makes reference to the circle of the earth. God is saying through His prophet Isaiah that the earth is round, a sphere, a circle or globe; the earth is not flat. Such a concept was totally contrary to what most scholars of the ancient world believed. Most maintained that the earth was flat and was upheld by two gigantic pillars. This was considered to be the reality even until the time of Christopher Columbus.

2. The Earth is unattached to anything

“He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.” (Job 26:7)

Job is the oldest book in the Bible and in it God declares that the earth hangs in space. It's not like an ornament hanging on a Christmas tree with a point of support. The earth is suspended in space, rotating on its axis, following the same precise pattern age after age.

It took scientists a long, long time to come to the conclusion that the earth is round. Had they read and applied the principles found in the Bible, they could have learned a great deal many centuries earlier. True science, not humanistic science, does not in any way discredit the Bible.

3. The Life is in the Blood.

For the life of the flesh is in the blood... For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is in the blood.... (Lev. 17:11,14)

“But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.” (Gen. 9:4)

God made these statements through His prophet Moses some 1400 years BC. It's the blood that carries on all the life processes of the body. That's something that modern medicine didn't discover

until a little over 100 years ago. When I studied barbering back in the late '60s, I had an old textbook that gave instructions on how to bleed people. Less than 100 years ago, it was a standard practice to bleed the sick in order to help them get well. When George Washington died in 1799, his physician bled him to death. The physician reportedly took an entire quart of blood from him. Had the physicians studied and applied the Bible principles and practices, Washington might have lived longer.

It's the blood that absorbs the oxygen from the air and lungs and carries the oxygen throughout the body. It's the blood that collects the carbon dioxide and other wastes that have been discharged by the blood into the lungs and breathed out of the body. It's the blood that collects digested food, takes it from the little cilia in the intestines and distributes it to the various parts of the body. It's the blood that feeds and supports all the organs of the body. If the blood supply be cut off from the arm, the arm will immediately begin to die and rot. If the blood be not sufficiently supplied to the scalp, the head will become bald. It is the blood that repairs the body. The blood can make new bone and knit the break together. The blood can close wounds and grow new flesh, new skin and even new nerves. It is the blood which fights disease. We now know that infectious germs are destroyed by white corpuscles in the blood and the pus from a sore is simply white corpuscles that have been killed in this battle against the enemies of the body. In other words, the life of the flesh is in the blood which the Bible said 3,500 years ago.

- John R. Rice -

4. The Fallacy of Evolution.

“In grammar school they taught me that a frog turning into a prince was a fairy tale. In the university they taught me that a frog turning into a prince was a fact” – Ron Carlson

Facts, fossil records and paleontological evidence all support creationism, not evolution. In fact, there are many things about evolution that are (or at least should be) a tremendous embarrassment to those who promote it. If, as the evolutionist asserts, life forms have been evolving for millions of years, then why are there no fossil records of all the strange transitional creatures? Surely some transitional life forms would be in evidence — but there are none! There are no missing links! This is extremely significant because, if Darwin's Theory were true, we should be able to search the fossil record and see proof of it! We should find millions of transitional life forms, of reptiles becoming birds, and apes becoming men, etc. But the fact is, not a single such transitional fossil has ever been found that supports Darwinism. What the fossil record does show is that a vast and diverse number of animals and birds and reptiles and other life forms all showed up all at the same time! Which is 100% consistent with creation!

What the fossil record also reveals is that species develop their own kind. Had the evolutionists bothered to read the book of Genesis it would have become perfectly clear because it plainly states that kind will reproduce after its own kind. Apple trees will produce apples; dogs will produce dogs, and monkeys will produce baby monkeys, not men. Certainly we can see adaptation within a species; one can selectively breed to produce a long dog, a tall dog, a shaggy dog, etc. (many refer to this as microevolution). But what you produce will still be a dog! You can't turn it into a cow or a horse or an elephant! No amount of interbreeding with variations of colors and sizes and other features will change its species! (that would be macroevolution—a transition from one species to

another, as Darwin postulated). And in the fossil records there are no transitional forms, no changing of the species. From biblical accounts we know that many of the ancients were shepherds. The sheep produced sheep then and they're still producing sheep thousands of years later. Camels are still camels, goats are still goats, and no evidence of change or transition into another species is occurring.

The theory of evolution, has been tried and found wanting. Its claims are wildly exaggerated or blatantly false, unverifiable and grossly inaccurate. As Norman Geisler said, *"This isn't science – this is a joke."* For evidence of their theory, Evolutionists claim that bacteria will adapt and develop a resistance to antibiotics, and that proves evolution! Really? Did the bacteria develop into a new species, grow legs and climb out of a petri dish? Did it grow wings and fly away? Or did it merely adapt, and survive, yet remain bacteria? Here's the facts: whatever so-called evidence or "proof" evolutionists drag out to prove their theory, all they can ever show is adaptation within a species, or microevolution. Microevolution is not evidence of macroevolution, or the transition of one species into another. The fact is that there is less evidence to validate the theory of evolution today than in Darwin's day. In 1859, Charles Darwin wrote, *"If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed, which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down."* His theory has not only broken down, it has crashed and burned against the bedrock of facts.

Creationists argue not from speculation but from real science, and arguments from Genetic Limits, Cyclical Change, Irreducible Complexity, the Non-viability of Transitional Forms, Molecular Isolation and the Fossil Record are unanswerable by Darwinists.

Furthermore, The second law of thermodynamics tells us that everything is devolving, i.e., getting worse and falling apart. Junk yards don't evolve becoming 747s. True science always supports the accuracy and truth of the Bible's declarations.

The following article is from **'Clarifying Christianity'**

The Bible is not a science book, yet it is scientifically accurate. We are not aware of any scientific evidence that contradicts the Bible. We have listed statements on this page that are consistent with known scientific facts. Many of them were listed in the Bible hundreds or even thousands of years before being recorded elsewhere. Many concepts and notes on this page are adapted from ideas and statements that appear in The DEFENDER'S Study Bible.[1]

Statements Consistent With Paleontology

Dinosaurs are referred to in several Bible books. The book of Job describes two dinosaurs. One is described in chapter 40 starting at verse 15, and the other in chapter 41 starting at verse 1. We think you will agree that 1½ chapters about dinosaurs is a lot—since most people do not even realize that they are mentioned in the Bible.

Statements Consistent With Astronomy

The Bible frequently refers to the great number of stars in the heavens. Here are two examples.

Genesis 22:17

Blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.

Jeremiah 33:22

As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.

Even today, scientists admit that they do not know how many stars there are. Only about 3,000 can be seen with the naked eye. We have seen estimates of 10 to 21 power stars—which is a lot of stars.[2] (The number of grains of sand on the earth's seashores is estimated to be 10 to 25 power. As scientists discover more stars, wouldn't it be interesting to discover that these two numbers match?)

The Bible also says that each star is unique .

1 Corinthians 15:41

There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory.

All stars look alike to the naked eye.* Even when seen through a telescope, they seem to be just points of light. However, analysis of their light spectra reveals that each is unique and different from all others.[1] (*Note: We understand that people can perceive some slight difference in color and apparent brightness when looking at stars with the naked eye, but we would not expect a person living in the first century A.D. to claim they differ from one another.)

The Bible describes the precision of movement in the universe.

Jeremiah 31:35,36

Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for a light by day, The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, And its waves roar (The LORD of hosts is His name): If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the LORD, Then the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever.

The Bible describes the suspension of the Earth in space.

Job 26:7

He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing.

Statements Consistent With Meteorology

The Bible describes the circulation of the atmosphere.

Ecclesiastes 1:6

The wind goes toward the south, And turns around to the north; The wind whirls about continually, And comes again on its circuit.

The Bible includes some principles of fluid dynamics.

Job 28:25

To establish a weight for the wind, And apportion the waters by measure.

The fact that air has weight was proven scientifically only about 300 years ago. The relative weights of air and water are needed for the efficient functioning of the world's hydrologic cycle, which in turn sustains life on the earth.[1] (If you are a physics enthusiast, please ignore our omission of the terms mass, gravity, and density from this comment.)

Statements Consistent With Biology

The book of Leviticus (written prior to 1400 BC) describes the value of blood.

Leviticus 17:11

For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.

The blood carries water and nourishment to every cell, maintains the body's temperature, and removes the waste material of the body's cells. The blood also carries oxygen from the lungs throughout the body. In 1616, William Harvey discovered that blood circulation is the key factor in physical life—confirming what the Bible revealed 3,000 years earlier.[1]

The Bible describes biogenesis (the development of living organisms from other living organisms) and the stability of each kind of living organism.

Genesis 1:11,12

“Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.’”

Genesis 1:21

So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:25

And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

The phrase “according to its kind” occurs repeatedly, stressing the reproductive integrity of each kind of animal and plant. Today we know this occurs because all of these reproductive systems are programmed by their genetic codes.[1]

The Bible describes the chemical nature of flesh.

Genesis 2:7

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

Genesis 3:19

In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.

It is a proven fact that a person’s mental and spiritual health is strongly correlated with physical health.[1] The Bible revealed this to us with these statements (and others) written by King Solomon about 950 BC.

Proverbs 12:4

An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, But she who causes shame is like rottenness in his bones.

Proverbs 14:30

A sound heart is life to the body, But envy is rottenness to the bones.

Proverbs 15:30

The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, And a good report makes the bones healthy.

Proverbs 16:24

Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, Sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.

Proverbs 17:22

A merry heart does good, like medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones.

Statements Consistent With Anthropology

There are cave paintings and other evidence that people inhabited caves. The Bible also speaks of men dwelling in caves.

Job 30:5,6

They were driven out from among men, They shouted at them as at a thief. They had to live in the clefts of the valleys, In caves of the earth and the rocks.

Note that these were not ape-men, but descendants of those who scattered from Babel. They were driven from the community by those tribes who competed successfully for the more desirable regions of the earth. Then for some reason they deteriorated mentally, physically, and spiritually.[1] (Go into a bad part of your town and you will see this concept in action today.)

Statements Consistent With Hydrology

The bible includes reasonably complete descriptions of the hydrologic cycle.[3]

Psalm 135:7

He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain; He brings the wind out of His treasuries.

Jeremiah 10:13

When He utters His voice, There is a multitude of waters in the heavens: And He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth. He makes lightning for the rain, He brings the wind out of His treasuries.

In these verses you can see several phases of the hydrologic cycle—the worldwide processes of evaporation, translation aloft by atmospheric circulation, condensation with electrical discharges, and precipitation.[1]

Job 36:27-29

For He draws up drops of water, Which distill as rain from the mist, Which the clouds drop down....And pour abundantly on man. Indeed, can anyone understand the spreading of clouds, The thunder from His canopy?

This simple verse has remarkable scientific insight. The drops of water which eventually pour down as rain first become vapor and then condense to tiny liquid water droplets in the clouds. These finally coalesce into drops large enough to overcome the updrafts that suspend them in the air.[1]

The Bible describes the recirculation of water.

Ecclesiastes 1:7

All the rivers run into the sea, Yet the sea is not full; To the place from which the rivers come, There they return again.

Isaiah 55:10

For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater,

The Bible refers to the surprising amount of water that can be held as condensation in clouds.

Job 26:8

He binds up the water in His thick clouds, Yet the clouds are not broken under it.

Job 37:11

Also with moisture He saturates the thick clouds; He scatters His bright clouds.

Hydrothermal vents[4] are described in two books of the Bible written before 1400BC—more than 3,000 years before their discovery by science.

Genesis 7:11

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

Job 38:16

Have you entered the springs of the sea? Or have you walked in search of the depths?

Statements Consistent With Geology

The Bible describes the Earth's crust (along with a comment on astronomy).

Jeremiah 31:37

Thus says the LORD: "If heaven above can be measured, And the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel For all that they have done, says the LORD."

Although some scientists claim that they have now measured the size of the universe, it is interesting to note that every human attempt to drill through the earth's crust to the plastic mantle beneath has, thus far, ended in failure.[1]

The Bible described the shape of the earth centuries before people thought that the earth was spherical.

Isaiah 40:22

It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

The word translated “circle” here is the Hebrew word *chuwg* which is also translated “circuit,” or “compass” (depending on the context). That is, it indicates something spherical, rounded, or arched—not something that is flat or square.

The book of Isaiah was written sometime between 740 and 680 BC. This is at least 300 years before Aristotle suggested that the earth might be a sphere.

This brings up an important historical note related to this topic. Many people are aware of the conflict between Galileo and the Roman Catholic Pope, Paul V. After publishing *A Dialogue on the Two Principal Systems of the World*, Galileo was summoned to Rome, where he was forced to renounce his findings. (At that time, “theologians” of the Roman Catholic Church maintained that the Earth was the center of the universe, and to assert otherwise was deemed heretical.)

We could not find any place in the Bible that claims that the Earth is flat, or that it is the center of the universe. History shows that this conflict, which took place at the time of the Inquisition, was part of a power struggle. As a result, scientific and biblical knowledge became casualties—an effect we still feel to this day.

Statements Consistent With Physics

The Bible suggests the presence of nuclear processes like those we associate with nuclear weaponry. This is certainly not something that could have been explained in 67 AD using known scientific principles (when Peter wrote the following verse).

2 Peter 3:10

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

The television is a practical (if not always worthwhile) device that uses electromagnetic waves (which transmit its video signal). The Bible contains passages that describe something like television—something that allows everyone on earth see a single event. (Note: such passages typically refer to the end of time)

Matthew 24:30

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Revelation 11:9-11

Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them.

References

[1] The DEFENDER'S Study Bible, Word Publishing, Grand Rapids, Michigan (1995).

[2] The Number of Stars

[3] The Hydrologic Cycle

[4] Submarine Volcanic Ecosystems (An article on hydrothermal vents.)

Bible Foreknowledge in Astronomy and Cosmology

The stars are too great in number to count

Bible verses: Genesis 15:5; Jeremiah 33:22; Hebrews 11:12

Date of verses: 1450-1410 BC; 627-585 BC ; 64-68 AD

Discovered by science: 19th Century AD with the advent of powerful telescopes. Prior to this, most thought there were no more than 6,000 stars (what could be seen with the naked eye from all points on the earth). See the CNN report titled Star survey reaches 70 sextillion.

The Earth is shaped like a sphere (round) and rotates

Bible verse: Isaiah 40:22; Luke 17:34-36

Date of Verses: 746-680 BC; 60 AD (also, Luke 17:34-36 depicts Christ's Second Coming as happening while some are asleep at night and others are working at day-time activities in the field, an indication of a rotating earth with day and night at the same time).

The sun is moving through space in a huge orbit

Bible verse: Psalms 19:4-6

Date of verse: About 1000 BC

Discovered by science: It was only recently discovered that the Sun is moving through space at about 600,000 miles per hour in an orbit that would take an estimated 230,000,000 years to complete. (Another interpretation of this verse suggests its talking about how the Sun only appears to rise in the east and set in the west from Earth's perspective, and is not referring to the Sun's orbital path at all).

Light travels in a path, darkness does not

Bible verse: Job 38:19

Date of verse: 950 BC or earlier

Earth floats freely in space

Bible verse: Job 26:7

Date of verse: 950 BC or earlier.

Circumcisions should be performed on the eighth day after birth

Bible verse: Genesis 17:12

Date of verse: 1450-1410 BC

According to the Old Testament (Genesis 17:12), circumcision of newborn males was to be performed on the eighth day after birth. Why the eighth day? In 1935 Professor H. dam proposed the name "vitamin K" for the factor in foods which helped prevent hemorrhaging in baby chicks. We now know that vitamin K is responsible for the production of prothrombin by the liver. If vitamin K is deficient, there will be a prothrombin deficiency and hemorrhaging may occur, since both vitamin K and prothrombin are necessary for proper blood clotting. Oddly enough, it is only on the 5th through the 7th days of the newborn male's life that vitamin K begins to be produced (the vitamin is normally produced by bacterial action in the intestinal tract). and it is only on day eight that the percentage of prothrombin climbs above 100% of normal! The only day in the entire life of the newborn that the blood clotting element prothrombin is that high is day eight. The best day for surgical procedure like circumcision is therefore day eight.

Meteorology

The Jet Stream

Bible verse: Ecclesiastes 1:6

Date of verse: 935 BC

First discovered by airmen during WW II. Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world, is at its peak 29,028 feet tall. Yet the Jet Stream exists from 32,800 and 164,100 feet. Since airplanes didn't exist in 935 BC, how was the author of Ecclesiastes able to give such an accurate description of the jet stream? Keep in mind that Ecclesiastes was written AFTER all the upheaval of Noah's flood. Some believe it is likely that Mount Everest was not as high in 935 BC as it is today, making it even more unlikely that humans could have used mountains to have discovered the jet stream.

Air has weight

Bible verse: Job 28-25

Date of verse: 950 BC or earlier

Mathematician Evangelista Torricelli discovered this in 1643.

The oceans have circulating currents or 'paths'

Bible verses: Psalms 8:8; Isaiah 43:16

Date of verses: About 1000 BC; 746-680 BC

Late 1800's. Dr. Matthew Maury is considered one of the major founders of the science of oceanography. He was also a creationist who believed in the absolute authority and accuracy of the Bible. One day while he was sick in bed, he asked his son to read the Bible to him. One of the verses his son read was Psalms 8:8. That particular verse mentioned "paths" in the seas. Believing that the Bible must be correct about these "paths", he set out to find them. As a result, Dr. Maury was the first to discover (in modern times) that the seas were circulating systems with interaction between wind and water.

There are springs that arise from the ocean floor

Bible verses: Job 38:16

Date of verses: 950 BC or earlier

The earliest secular references to these springs was by the Roman geographer Strabo, who lived from 63 BC to 21 AD.

Mountains and deep valleys exist on the ocean floor

Bible verses: Job 38:16; Jonah 2:5-6

Date of verses: 950 BC or earlier; 840 or 586 BC

The Challenger expedition (1873-1876) commenced the first scientific exploration of the ocean floor, during which a canyon 5 1/2 miles deep was discovered in the Pacific.

The Bible is Called by Many Different Names; it is called the Law, the Covenants, the Testimonies, the Commandments, the Precepts, the Ordinances, the Statutes, the Word, the Scriptures, the Judgments, etc.

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. [Ps. 19:7]

For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. [Ps. 119:89]

Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever. [Ps. 119:160]

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. [2 Tim. 3:16]

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. [2 Pe. 1:21]

Consider what we read from the prophets where they said, Thus saith the Lord. The prophets claim divine inspiration. How many times do the prophets say, And the word of the Lord came unto me saying. They repeatedly claim divine inspiration and infallibility.

And God spake all these words, saying. [Ex. 20:1]

God made this statement as a prelude to the Ten Commandments. This isn't a man's opinion or Moses' brilliance. These laws were not compiled as a result of the work of a religious conclave or committee of men but it was God's Word.

The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. [2 Sam. 23:2]

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto him the plagues that are written in the book: And if any man shall take away from the

words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. [Rev. 22:18-19]

Jesus Taught that the Bible is God's Word.

Repeatedly in the gospels, we read of Jesus saying that the scripture must be fulfilled.

And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. [Lk. 16:17]

Jesus rebuked the Emmaus Road disciples for being slow of heart to believe all the things that were written in the scriptures concerning Him.

Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. [Lk. 24:25-27]

Jesus declared that the Word of God would stand forever.

Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. [Mk. 13:31]

During the time of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, He answered all the devil's enticements with the Word of God.

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. [Mat. 4:4]

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. [Lk. 4:4]

He said, *...the scripture cannot be broken. [John 10:35]*

Why can't the scriptures be broken? Because it's God's Word and infallible.

Jesus called the Bible, "God's Word," and Truth" (John 17:17) "*Thy Word is truth*"

The Bible is God's Word to Mankind.

The Message of the Bible is Jesus Christ.

The entire message of the Bible from beginning to end is Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, it's Christ the coming Savior and in the New Testament, Christ the Savior who came to take away the sins of the world. He will take our sins; He has already borne that burden. All we need do is believe it, repent of our sins, and call upon the Lord to save and forgive us (Romans 10:13).

Messianic Prophecies

Many different scholars and students of the Bible have endeavored to make a list of the Messianic prophecies. Some are shorter, and others are quite longer. This is a list of 324 messianic prophecies. I think it was compiled by an organization called *Hope of Israel*, but I'm not certain. Obviously some of the prophecies are very clear, and others less so. Nevertheless one can only draw one conclusion by reading them: Jesus Christ is Gods Messiah!

Gen 3:15 Seed of a woman (virgin birth) Luke 1:35, Mt 1:18-20
Gen 3:15 He will bruise Satan's head Heb 2:14, 1 Jn 3:18
Gen 5:24 The bodily ascension to heaven illustrated Mk 6:19
Gen 9:26,27 The God of Shem will be the Son of Shem Luke 3:36
Gen 12:3 As Abraham's seed, will bless all nations Acts 3:25,26
Gen 12:7 The Promise made to Abraham's Seed Gal 3:16
Gen 14:18 A priest after Melchizedek Heb 6:20
Gen 14:18 A King also Heb 7:2
Gen 14:18 The Last Supper foreshadowed Mt 26:26-29
Gen 17:19 The Seed of Isaac Rom 9:7
Gen 22:8 The Lamb of God promised Jn 1:29
Gen 22:18 As Isaac's seed, will bless all nations Gal 3:16
Gen 26:2-5 The Seed of Isaac promised as the Redeemer Heb 11:18
Gen 49:10 The time of His coming Luke 2:1-7; Gal 4:4
Gen 49:10 The Seed of Judah Luke 3:33
Gen 49:10 Called Shiloh or One Sent Jn 17:3
Gen 49:10 To come before Judah lost identity Jn 11:47-52
Gen 49:10 To Him shall the obedience of the people be Jn 10:16
Ex 3:13,14 The Great "I Am" Jn 4:26
Ex 12:5 A Lamb without blemish 1 Pet 1:19
Ex 12:13 The blood of the Lamb saves from wrath Rom 5:8
Ex 12:21-27 Christ is our Passover 1 Cor 5:7
Ex 12:46 Not a bone of the Lamb to be broken Jn 19:31-36
Ex 15:2 His exaltation predicted as Yeshua Acts 7:55,56
Ex 15:11 His Character-Holiness Luke 1:35; Acts 4:27
Ex 17:6 The Spiritual Rock of Israel 1 Cor 10:4
Ex 33:19 His Character-Merciful Luke 1:72
Lev 14:11 The leper cleansed-Sign to priesthood Luke 5:12-14; Acts 6:7
Lev 16:15-17 Prefigures Christ's once-for-all death Heb 9:7-14
Lev 16:27 Suffering outside the Camp Mt 27:33; Heb 13:11,12
Lev 17:11 The Blood-the life of the flesh Mt 26:28; Mk 10:45
Lev 17:11 It is the blood that makes atonement 1 Jn 3:14-18
Lev 23:36-37 The Drink-offering: "If any man thirst" Jn 19:31-36
Num 9:12 Not a bone of Him broken John 19:31-36
Num 21:9 The serpent on a pole-Christ lifted up Jn 3:14-18
Num 24:17 Time: "I shall see him, but not now" Gal 4:4
Deut 18:15 "This is of a truth that prophet" Jn 6:14
Deut 18:15-16 "Had ye believed Moses, ye would believe me" Jn 5:45-47
Deut 18:18 Sent by the Father to speak His word Jn 8:28,29

Deut 18:19 Whoever will not hear must bear his sin Jn 12:15
 Deut 21:23 Cursed is he that hangs on a tree Gal 3:10-13
 Ruth 4:4-9 Christ, our kinsman, has redeemed us Eph 1:3-7
 1 Sam 2:10 Shall be an anointed King to the Lord Mt 28:18; Jn 12:15
 2 Sam 7:12 David's Seed Mt 1:1
 2 Sam 7:14a The Son of God Luke 1:32
 2 Sam 7:16 David's house established forever Luke 3:31; Rev 22:16
 2 Ki 2:11 The bodily ascension to heaven illustrated Luke 24:51
 1 Chr 17:11 David's Seed Mt 1:1; Mt 9:27
 1 Chr 17:12,13a To reign on David's throne forever Luke 1:32,33
 1 Chr 17:13a "I will be His Father, Hemy Son" Heb 1:5
 Job 19:23-27 The Resurrection predicted Jn 5:24-29
 Psa 2:1-3 The enmity of kings foreordained Acts 4:25-28
 Psa 2:2 To own the title, Anointed (Christ) Acts 2:36
 Ps 2:6 His Character-Holiness Jn 8:46; Rev 3:7
 Ps 2:6 To own the title King Mt 2:2
 Ps 2:7 Declared the Beloved Son Mt 3:17
 Psa 2:7,8 The Crucifixion and Resurrection intimated Acts 13:29-33
 Psa 2:12 Life comes through faith in Him Jn 20:31
 Psa 8:2 The mouths of babes perfect His praise Mt 21:16
 Psa 8:5,6 His humiliation and exaltation Luke 24:50-53; 1 Cor 15:27
 Psa 16:10 Was not to see corruption Acts 2:31
 Psa 16:9-11 Was to arise from the dead Jn 20:9
 Psa 17:15 The resurrection predicted Luke 24:6
 Psa 22:1 Forsaken because of sins of others 2 Cor 5:21
 Psa 22:1 Words spoken from Calvary, "My God" Mk 15:34
 Psa 22:2 Darkness upon Calvary Mt 27:45
 Psa 22:7 They shoot out the lip and shake the head Mt 27:39
 Psa 22:8 "He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him " Mt 27:43
 Psa 22:9 Born the Saviour Luke 2:7
 Psa 22:14 Died of a broken (ruptured) heart Jn 19:34
 Psa 22:14,15 Suffered agony on Calvary Mk 15:34-37
 Psa 22:15 He thirsted Jn 19:28
 Psa 22:16 They pierced His hands and His feet Jn 19:34,37; Jn 20:27
 Psa 22:17,18 Stripped Him before the stares of men Luke 23:34,35
 Psa 22:18 They parted His garments Jn 19:23,24
 Psa 22:20,21 He committed Himself to God Luke 23:46
 Psa 22:20,21 Satanic power bruising the Redeemer's heel Heb 2:14
 Psa 22:22 His Resurrection declared Jn 20:17
 Psa 22:27 He shall be the governor of the nations Col 1:16
 Psa 22:31 "It is finished" Jn 19:30
 Psa 23:1 "I am the Good Shepherd" Jn 10:11
 Psa 24:3 His exaltation predicted Acts 1:11; Phil 2:9
 Psa 30:3 His resurrection predicted Acts 2:32
 Psa 31:5 "Into thy hands I commit my spirit" Luke 23:46
 Psa 31:11 His acquaintances fled from Him Mk 14:50
 Psa 31:13 They took counsel to put Him to death Jn 11:53
 Psa 31:14,15 " He trusted in God, let Him deliver him" Mt 27:43
 Psa 34:20 Not a bone of Him broken Jn 19:31-36
 Psa 35:11 False witnesses rose up against Him Mt 26:59
 Psa 35:19 He was hated without a cause Jn 15:25
 Psa 38:11 His friends stood afar off Luke 23:49
 Psa 40:2-5 The joy of His resurrection predicted Jn 20:20
 Psa 40:6-8 His delight-the will of the Father Jn 4:34

Psa 40:9 He was to preach the Righteousness in Israel Mt 4:17
 Psa 40:14 Confronted by adversaries in the Garden Jn 18:2-7
 Psa 41:9 Betrayed by a familiar friend Jn 13:18
 Psa 45:2 Words of Grace come from His lips Luke 4:22
 Psa 45:6 To own the title, God or Elohim Heb 1:8
 Psa 45:7 A special anointing by the Holy Spirit Mt 3:16; Heb1:9
 Psa 45:7,8 Called the Christ (Messiah or Anointed) Luke 2:11
 Psa 55:12-14 Betrayed by a friend, not an enemy Jn 13:18
 Psa 55:15 Unrepentant death of the Betrayer Mt 27:3-5; Acts 1:16-19
 Psa 68:18 To give gifts to men Eph 4:7-16
 Psa 68:18 Ascended into Heaven Luke 24:51
 Psa 69:4 Hated without a cause Jn 15:25
 Psa 69:8 A stranger to own brethren Luke 8:20,21
 Psa 69:9 Zealous for the Lord's House Jn 2:17
 Psa 69:14-20 Messiah's anguish of soul before crucifixion Mt 26:36-45
 Psa 69:20 "My soul is exceeding sorrowful" Mt 26:38
 Psa 69:21 Given vinegar in thirst Mt 27:34
 Psa 69:26 The Saviour given and smitten by God Jn 17:4; Jn 18:11
 Psa 72:10,11 Great persons were to visit Him Mt 2:1-11
 Psa 72:16 The corn of wheat to fall into the Ground Jn 12:24
 Psa 72:17 His name, Yinon, will produce offspring Jn 1:12,13
 Psa 72:17 All nations shall be blessed by Him Acts 2:11,12,41
 Psa 78:12 He would teach in parables Mt 13:34-35
 Psa 78:2b To speak the Wisdom of God with authority Mt 7:29
 Psa 88:8 They stood afar off and watched Luke 23:49
 Psa 89:27 Emmanuel to be higher than earthly kings Luke 1:32,33
 Psa 89:35-37 David's Seed, throne, kingdom endure forever Luke 1:32,33
 Psa 89:36-37 His character-Faithfulness Rev 1:5
 Psa 90:2 He is from everlasting Micah 5:2; Jn 1:1
 Psa 91:11,12 Identified as Messianic; used to tempt Christ Luke 4:10,11
 Psa 97:9 His exaltation predicted Acts 1:11; Eph 1:20
 Psa 100:5 His character-Goodness Mt 19:16,17
 Psa 102:1-11 The Suffering and Reproach of Calvary Jn 21:16-30
 Psa 102:25-27 Messiah is the Preexistent Son Heb 1:10-12
 Psa 109:25 Ridiculed Mt 27:39
 Psa 110:1 Son of David Mt 22:43
 Psa 110:1 To ascend to the right-hand of the Father Mk 16:19
 Psa 110:1 David's son called Lord Mt 22:44,45
 Psa 110:4 A priest after Melchizedek's order Heb 6:20
 Psa 112:4 His character-Compassionate, Gracious, et al Mt 9:36
 Psa 118:17,18 Messiah's Resurrection assured Luke 24:5-7; 1 Cor 15:20
 Psa 118:22,23 The rejected stone is Head of the corner Mt 21:42,43
 Psa 118:26a The Blessed One presented to Israel Mt 21:9
 Psa 118:26b To come while Temple standing Mt 21:12-15
 Psa 132:11 The Seed of David (the fruit of His Body) Luke 1:32
 Psa 138:1-6 The supremacy of David's Seed amazes kings Mt 2:2-6
 Psa 147:3,6 The earthly ministry of Christ described Luke 4:18
 Psa 1:23 He will send the Spirit of God Jn 16:7
 Song 5:16 The altogether lovely One Jn 1:17
 Isa 6:1 When Isaiah saw His glory Jn 12:40-41
 Isa 6:9-10 Parables fall on deaf ears Mt 13:13-15
 Isa 6:9-12 Blinded to Christ and deaf to His words Acts 28:23-29
 Isa 7:14 To be born of a virgin Luke 1:35
 Isa 7:14 To be Emmanuel-God with us Mt 1:18-23

Isa 8:8 Called Emmanuel Mt 28:20
 Isa 8:14 A stone of stumbling, a Rock of offense 1 Pet 2:8
 Isa 9:1,2 His ministry to begin in Galilee Mt 4:12-17
 Isa 9:6 A child born-Humanity Luke 1:31
 Isa 9:6 A Son given-Deity Luke 1:32; Jn 1:14; 1 Tim 3:16
 Isa 9:6 Declared to be the Son of God with power Rom 1:3,4
 Isa 9:6 The Wonderful One, Peleh Luke 4:22
 Isa 9:6 The Counsellor, Yaatz Mt 13:54
 Isa 9:6 The Mighty God, El Gibor Mt 11:20
 Isa 9:6 The Everlasting Father, Avi Adth Jn 8:58
 Isa 9:6 The Prince of Peace, Sar Shalom Jn 16:33
 Isa 9:7 To establish an everlasting kingdom Luke 1:32-33
 Isa 9:7 His Character-Just Jn 5:30
 Isa 9:7 No end to his Government, Throne, and Peace Luke 1:32-33
 Isa 11:1 Called a Nazarene-the Branch, Netzer Mt 2:23
 Isa 11:1 A rod out of Jesse-Son of Jesse Luke 3:23,32
 Isa 11:2 The anointed One by the Spirit Mt 3:16,17
 Isa 11:2 His Character-Wisdom, Understanding, et al Jn 4:4-26
 Isa 11:4 His Character-Truth Jn 14:6
 Isa 11:10 The Gentiles seek Him Jn 12:18-21
 Isa 12:2 Called Jesus-Yeshua (salvation) Mt 1:21
 Isa 25:8 The Resurrection predicted I Cor 15:54
 Isa 26:19 His power of Resurrection predicted Jn 11:43,44
 Isa 28:16 The Messiah is the precious corner stone Acts 4:11,12
 Isa 29:13 He indicated hypocritical obedience to His Word Mt 15:7-9
 Isa 29:14 The wise are confounded by the Word I Cor 1:18-31
 Isa 32:2 A Refuge-A man shall be a hiding place Mt 23:37
 Isa 35:4 He will come and save you Mt 1:21
 Isa 35:5 To have a ministry of miracles Mt 11:4-6
 Isa 40:3,4 Preceded by forerunner Jn 1:23
 Isa 40:9 "Behold your God" Jn 1:36; Jn19:14
 Isa 40:11 A shepherd-compassionate life-giver Jn 10:10-18
 Isa 42:1-4 The Servant-as a faithful, patient redeemer Mt 12:18-21
 Isa 42:2 Meek and lowly Mt 11:28-30
 Isa 42:3 He brings hope for the hopeless Jn 4
 Isa 42:4 The nations shall wait on His teachings Jn 12:20-26
 Isa 42:6 The Light (salvation) of the Gentiles Luke 2:32
 Isa 42:1,6 His is a Worldwide compassion Mt 28:19,20
 Isa 42:7 Blind eyes opened Jn 9:25-38
 Isa 43:11 He is the only Saviour Acts 4:12
 Isa 44:3 He will send the Spirit of God Jn 16:7,13
 Isa 45:23 He will be the Judge Jn 5:22; Rom 14:11
 Isa 48:12 The First and the Last Jn 1:30; Rev 1:8,17
 Isa 48:17 He came as a Teacher Jn 3:2
 Isa 49:1 Called from the womb-His humanity Mt 1:18
 Isa 49:5 A Servant from the womb Luke 1:31; Phil 2:7
 Isa 49:6 He is Salvation for Israel Luke 2:29-32
 Isa 49:6 He is the Light of the Gentiles Acts 13:47
 Isa 49:6 He is Salvation unto the ends of the earth Acts 15:7-18
 Isa 49:7 He is despised of the Nation Jn 8:48-49
 Isa 50:3 Heaven is clothed in black at His humiliation Luke 23:44,45
 Isa 50:4 He is a learned counsellor for the weary Mt 11:28,29
 Isa 50:5 The Servant bound willingly to obedience Mt 26:39
 Isa 50:6a "I gave my back to the smiters" Mt 27:26

Isa 50:6b He was smitten on the cheeks Mt 26:67
 Isa 50:6c He was spat upon Mt 27:30
 Isa 52:7 To publish good tidings of peace Luke 4:14,15
 Isa 52:13 The Servant exalted Acts 1:8-11; Eph 1:19-22
 Isa 52:13 Behold, My Servant Mt 17:5; Phil 2:5-8
 Isa 52:14 The Servant shockingly abused Luke 18:31-34; Mt 26:67,68
 Isa 52:15 Nations startled by message of the Servant Rom 15:18-21
 Isa 52:15 His blood shed to make atonement for all Rev 1:5
 Isa 53:1 His people would not believe Him Jn 12:37-38
 Isa 53:2a He would grow up in a poor family Luke 2:7
 Isa 53:2b Appearance of an ordinary man Phil 2:7-8
 Isa 53:3a Despised Luke 4:28-29
 Isa 53:3b Rejected Mt 27:21-23
 Isa 53:3c Great sorrow and grief Luke 19:41-42
 Isa 53:3d Men hide from being associated with Him Mk 14:50-52
 Isa 53:4a He would have a healing ministry Luke 6:17-19
 Isa 53:4b He would bear the sins of the world 1 Pet 2:24
 Isa 53:4c Thought to be cursed by God Mt 27:41-43
 Isa 53:5a Bears penalty for mankind's transgressions Luke 23:33
 Isa 53:5b His sacrifice would provide peace between man and God Col 1:20
 Isa 53:5c His back would be whipped Mt 27:26
 Isa 53:6a He would be the sin-bearer for all mankind Gal 1:4
 Isa 53:6b God's will that He bear sin for all mankind 1 Jn 4:10
 Isa 53:7a Oppressed and afflicted Mt 27:27-31
 Isa 53:7b Silent before his accusers Mt 27:12-14
 Isa 53:7c Sacrificial lamb Jn 1:29
 Isa 53:8a Confined and persecuted Mt 26:47; Mt 27:31
 Isa 53:8b He would be judged Jn 18:13-22
 Isa 53:8c Killed Mt 27:35
 Isa 53:8d Dies for the sins of the world 1 Jn 2:2
 Isa 53:9a Buried in a rich man's grave Mt 27:57
 Isa 53:9b Innocent and had done no violence Mk 15:3
 Isa 53:9c No deceit in his mouth Jn 18:38
 Isa 53:10a God's will that He die for mankind Jn 18:11
 Isa 53:10b An offering for sin Mt 20:28
 Isa 53:10c Resurrected and live forever Mk 16:16
 Isa 53:10d He would prosper Jn 17:1-5
 Isa 53:11a God fully satisfied with His suffering Jn 12:27
 Isa 53:11b God's servant Rom 5:18-19
 Isa 53:11c He would justify man before God Rom 5:8-9
 Isa 53:11d The sin-bearer for all mankind Heb 9:28
 Isa 53:12a Exalted by God because of his sacrifice Mt 28:18
 Isa 53:12b He would give up his life to save mankind Luke 23:46
 Isa 53:12c Grouped with criminals Luke 23:32
 Isa 53:12d Sin-bearer for all mankind 2 Cor 5:21
 Isa 53:12e Intercede to God in behalf of mankind Luke 23:34
 Isa 55:3 Resurrected by God Acts 13:34
 Isa 55:4 A witness Jn 18:37
 Isa 59:15-16a He would come to provide salvation Jn 6:40
 Isa 59:15-16b Intercessor between man and God Mt 10:32
 Isa 59:20 He would come to Zion as their Redeemer Luke 2:38
 Isa 61:1-2a The Spirit of God upon him Mt 3:16-17
 Isa 61:1-2b The Messiah would preach the good news Luke 4:17-21
 Isa 61:1-2c Provide freedom from the bondage of sin and death Jn 8:31-32

Isa 61:1-2 Proclaim a period of grace Jn 5:24
 Jer 23:5-6a Descendant of David Luke 3:23-31
 Jer 23:5-6b The Messiah would be God Jn 13:13
 Jer 23:5-6c The Messiah would be both God and Man 1 Tim 3:16
 Jer 31:22 Born of a virgin Mt 1:18-20
 Jer 31:31 The Messiah would be the new covenant Mt 26:28
 Jer 33:14-15 Descendant of David Luke 3:23-31
 Eze 17:22-24 Descendant of David Lk 3:23-31
 Eze 34:23-24 Descendant of David Mt 1:1
 Dan 7:13-14a He would ascend into heaven Acts 1:9-11
 Dan 7:13-14b Highly exalted Eph 1:20-22
 Dan 7:13-14c His dominion would be everlasting Luke 1:31-33
 Dan 9:24a To make an end to sins Gal 1:3-5
 Dan 9:24b He would be holy Luke 1:35
 Dan 9:25 Announced to his people 483 years, to the exact day, after the decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem Jn 12:12-13
 Dan 9:26a Killed Mt 27:35
 Dan 9:26b Die for the sins of the world Heb 2:9
 Dan 9:26c Killed before the destruction of the temple Mt 27:50-51
 Dan 10:5-6 Messiah in a glorified state Rev 1:13-16
 Hos 13:14 He would defeat death 1 Cor 15:55-57
 Joel 2:32 Offer salvation to all mankind Rom 10:12-13
 Mic 5:2a Born in Bethlehem Mt 2:1-2
 Mic 5:2b God's servant Jn 15:10
 Mic 5:2c From everlasting Jn 8:58
 Hag 2:6-9 He would visit the second Temple Luke 2:27-32
 Hag 2:23 Descendant of Zerubbabel Luke 3:23-27
 Zech 3:8 God's servant Jn 17:4
 Zech 6:12-13 Priest and King Heb 8:1
 Zech 9:9a Greeted with rejoicing in Jerusalem Mt 21:8-10
 Zech 9:9b Beheld as King Jn 12:12-13
 Zech 9:9c The Messiah would be just Jn 5:30
 Zech 9:9d The Messiah would bring salvation Luke 19:10
 Zech 9:9e The Messiah would be humble Mt 11:29
 Zech 9:9f Presented to Jerusalem riding on a donkey Mt 21:6-9
 Zech 10:4 The cornerstone Eph 2:20
 Zech 11:4-6a At His coming, Israel to have unfit leaders Mt 23:1-4
 Zech 11:4-6b Rejection causes God to remove His protection Luke 19:41-44
 Zech 11:4-6c Rejected in favor of another king Jn 19:13-15
 Zech 11:7 Ministry to "poor," the believing remnant Mt 9:35-36
 Zech 11:8a Unbelief forces Messiah to reject them Mt 23:33
 Zech 11:8b Despised Mt 27:20
 Zech 11:9 Stops ministering to the those who rejected Him Mt 13:10-11
 Zech 11:10-11a Rejection causes God to remove protection Luke 19:41-44
 Zech 11:10-11b The Messiah would be God Jn 14:7
 Zech 11:12-13a Betrayed for thirty pieces of silver Mt 26:14-15
 Zech 11:12-13b Rejected Mt 26:14-15
 Zech 11:12-13c Thirty pieces of silver thrown into the house of the Lord Mt 27:3-5
 Zech 11:12-13d The Messiah would be God Jn 12:45
 Zech 12:10a The Messiah's body would be pierced Jn 19:34-37
 Zech 12:10b The Messiah would be both God and man Jn 10:30
 Zech 12:10c The Messiah would be rejected Jn 1:11
 Zech 13:7a God's will He die for mankind Jn 18:11
 Zech 13:7b A violent death Mt 27:35
 Zech 13:7c Both God and man Jn 14:9

Zech 13:7d Israel scattered as a result of rejecting Him Mt 26:31-56
Mal 3:1a Messenger to prepare the way for Messiah Mt 11:10
Mal 3:1b Sudden appearance at the temple Mk 11:15-16
Mal 3:1c Messenger of the new covenant Luke 4:43
Mal 4:5 Forerunner in the spirit of Elijah Mt 3:1-2
Mal 4:6 Forerunner would turn many to righteousness Luke 1:16-17