

TEN EVIDENCES FOR THE BIBLE

By Charlie H. Campbell

The Bible is unarguably an incredible book. It is the best-selling, most quoted, most published, most circulated, most translated, most influential book in the history of mankind. [1] There is no close second.

- How can we know that the Bible isn't just an ancient book of fiction and folklore?
- Haven't the contents of the Bible been tampered with down through the centuries?
- Isn't the Bible out-of-sync with scientific discoveries?
- What makes the Bible any different than other religious books like the Quran or the Book of Mormon?

Those are questions that intelligent, critical thinking people are asking today and those are questions they have a *right* to ask. I think they *should* be asking those questions. Those are questions I used to ask (you can read my story [here](#)). And God's heart for His people is that we be able to provide answers to people (e.g., 1 Peter 3:15, Jude 1:3).

So, in this article I'm going to lay out a broad, but somewhat concise overview of ten different lines of evidence that I think demonstrate (when considered in their totality) that the Bible is indeed what it claims to be: the trustworthy Word of God—written by men yes—but men who were guided by God as they penned its words (2 Peter 1:21, 2 Timothy 3:16).

TEN EVIDENCES FOR THE BIBLE

1. FULFILLED PROPHECY

Of course, sports analysts, political experts, and astrologers seem to enjoy making predictions about the future, but their failure rate quickly reveals how inept humans are at foretelling events even just a year in advance. My goodness, a day or two before the recent 2016 Presidential election most experts were telling us that Hillary Clinton was going to be our next President. Well we see how that turned out. We can't even speak accurately about events a day or two in advance. This is one of the reasons the Bible's fulfilled prophecies are so astounding!

Over and over again, the authors of the Bible rightly foretold future events (often times, hundreds of years in advance). The Bible is literally filled with hundreds of specific, detailed prophecies about persons, places, and events—many of which have already come to pass.

Consider a few of the prophecies made regarding Jesus. Of course, long before Jesus was born, the Old Testament prophets told us a Savior was coming who would make a way for mankind to be forgiven of our sins and reconciled to God.

The Old Testament prophesied this Savior would be:

- born of the seed of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3, 22:18)
- of the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10)
- and in the lineage of David (2 Samuel 7:12f)
- Micah 5:2 said that He would be born in Bethlehem
- that He'd come while the temple was still standing (Malachi 3:1)
- that He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14)
- that He would open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, and cause the lame to walk (Isaiah 35:5-6)

- that He'd be rejected by His own people (Psalm 118:22; 1 Peter 2:7)
- The Scriptures foretold the precise time in history when He would die (Daniel 9:24-26)
- how He would die (Psalm 22:16-18, Isaiah 53; Zechariah 12:10)
- and that He would rise from the dead (Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27-32)

This is just a tiny sampling of the prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus's life. The Old Testament (completed 400 years before Jesus' birth) contains more than 300 references to the Messiah that were fulfilled in Jesus' life. Calculations using the science of probability on just 8 of these prophecies, have shown that the chance someone could have fulfilled them to be:

1 in 10¹⁷

Or put another way, that is...

1 in 100 Quadrillion!

[The mathematical calculations are laid out in Peter Stoner's book, [Science Speaks, chapter 3](#)]

And there are hundreds of other prophecies in the Bible that have been fulfilled concerning the rise and fall of nations, and other matters. Well, the fulfillment of these prophecies is compelling evidence that these men spoke with the aid of the all-knowing, all-powerful God written about in the Bible—the God who declared:

Isaiah 46:9-10

"I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done."

In other words, God says here, 'There's no one else who can do this!' And that is certainly the case. No other book in the world is able to substantiate its claims with this kind of supernatural ability to rightly foretell future events. There are no fulfilled prophecies in the Quran, the Hindu Vedas, the Book of Mormon, or any other sacred religious writings. Not one.

Fulfilled prophecy is something that sets the Bible apart from every other religious book.

SKEPTIC: "Hold on a second Charlie. Maybe the disciples just made up all of these things that Jesus supposedly did. Perhaps they read all of those prophecies in the Old Testament and decided to make up an elaborate story about Jesus fulfilling them!"

Ahh, that is a legitimate concern (that the disciples were just lying, just fabricating the whole story about Jesus). Well, I'm going to address that concern and show you why I don't think they *were* lying later on in the study when we get to evidence number eight.

If you'd like to learn more about fulfilled prophecies, I urge you to pick up a copy of this fantastic book: *Every Prophecy of the Bible* by Dr. John Walvoord.

[Click here for more details or to order.](#)

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Many critics who brush off the Bible as a compilation of folklore and legends, do so overlooking the fact that thousands of archaeological discoveries over the past century have verified the historical reliability of the Bible.

Nelson Glueck, who appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine and who is considered one of the greatest archaeologists ever, wrote:

"No archeological discovery has ever controverted [overturned] a Biblical reference. Scores of archeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of Biblical descriptions has often led to amazing discoveries." [Nelson Glueck, *Rivers in the Desert*, p. 31.]

These are the words of a man who has been credited with uncovering more than fifteen hundred ancient sites in the Middle East. ["Archaeology: The Shards of History," *Time*, December 13, 1963.]

James Mann of U. S. News and World Report said:

"A wave of archaeological discoveries is altering old ideas about the roots of Christianity and Judaism—and affirming that the Bible is more historically accurate than many scholars thought." [James Mann, "New Finds Cast Fresh Light on the Bible," U. S. News and World Report, August 24, 1981, 34.]

Dr. Clifford Wilson, the former Director of the Australian Institute of Archaeology, stated:

"It is remarkable that where confirmation is possible and has come to light, the Bible stands investigation in ways that are unique in all literature. Its superiority to attack, its capacity to withstand criticism, its amazing facility to be proved right after all, are all staggering by any standards of scholarship. Seemingly assured results "disproving" the Bible have a habit of backfiring. Over and over again the Bible has been vindicated." [Clifford Wilson, *Archaeology—the Bible and Christ*, volume 17, (Victoria, Australia: Pacific Christian Ministries), no page number available. Cited in John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *Handbook of Biblical Evidences* (1997), 288–289]

Allow me to share a few examples of discoveries that have helped to shed light on the Bible's reliability.

A. DAVID

Until 1993, not a shred of evidence could be found anywhere outside the Bible that David, the king of Israel, ever existed and so it had become fashionable in some academic circles to dismiss the David stories as mere invention. The critics' verdict was that David was "nothing more than a figure of religious and political mythology." [Jeffrey Sheler, *Is the Bible True?* (1999), 95–96]

Well, their skepticism regarding David collapsed overnight in 1993 when a nearly 3000-year-old inscription was unearthed in Israel mentioning David the king of Israel. This was a tremendous discovery and helped to verify for the first time outside the Bible that David was an actual historical figure. In light of this discovery, *Time* magazine stated:

"The skeptics' claim that King David never existed is now hard to defend." [Michael D. Lemonick, "Are the Bible's Stories True? Archaeology's Evidence," *Time* magazine, December 18, 1995]

Indeed it is.

B. PONTIUS PILATE

Another fascinating discovery concerns Pontius Pilate. The New Testament authors tell us he was the Roman governor of Judea at the time of Jesus who oversaw Jesus' trial and then sentenced Him to death by crucifixion (Matthew 27:2; Luke 3:1). Was Pilate a legendary figure? No.

In 1961, a team of Italian archaeologists was digging in Caesarea, on the shore of the beautiful Mediterranean Sea in Israel. While clearing away the sand and overgrowth from the jumbled ruins of a Roman theater, these archaeologists made an astonishing find. They uncovered a limestone block that bore an inscription in Latin dating to the early part of the first century that mentioned "Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judea." This inscription verifies that Pontius Pilate was an actual historical person, that he reigned in the very position ascribed to him by the Gospels, and as prefect he would have had the authority to condemn or pardon Jesus, just as the Gospel accounts report.

C. FIRST CENTURY CRUCIFIXION

Another discovery helped to verify the reality of crucifixion in Israel in the first century. According to the Bible, Jesus's hands or wrists were nailed to the cross (John 20:25). But at one time, critics said crucifixions with nails never took place in Israel in the first century. No evidence of any crucified victim had ever been uncovered in Israel—so skeptics and scholars dismissed the Gospels' accounts as either imagined or inaccurate. Well, critics of the Bible were shown to be wrong again in 1968. It was then that a crew of builders from the Israel Ministry of Housing working in Jerusalem accidentally discovered an ancient Jewish cemetery that contained the remains of several men who were killed during the Jewish revolt against Rome in approximately AD 70. One of the bone ossuaries contained the skeleton of a young man and an inscription of the man's name (Yohanan Ben Ha'galgol).

What stunned the archaeologists most though was how this man died. He was put to death by crucifixion with nails. How was that determined? He still had an iron spike driven through his heel bone. The Romans typically removed the nails from their victims—iron was expensive—but apparently this nail was too difficult to remove. The tip of the nail had been bent back toward the head, likely the result of hitting a knot in the wood. And so, the soldiers left it there. And now we have solid archaeological evidence that the Romans did crucify people in Israel, in the first century, with nails—just as the Bible said.

Other discoveries include:

- Ancient extrabiblical accounts of a catastrophic flood (Genesis 6–8)
- The palace of Sennacherib the king of Assyria (2 Chronicles 32:1f) and a wall relief depicting the Assyrian siege on Lachish (2 Kings 18:13–17; Isaiah 36:1–2)
- The ruins of Jericho (Joshua 6) along with evidence the city wall “fell down flat” (6:20) at the very time the Old Testament dates the crossing of the Hebrew people into Canaan (c. 1400 BC)
- Hezekiah's tunnel (2 Kings 20:20) built to secretly channel water into the city of Jerusalem c. 700 BC
- The ancient ruins of Babylon (Book of Daniel), including the ruins of king Nebuchadnezzar's palaces, temples, city walls, houses, inscriptions mentioning “Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon”
- The Babylonian Chronicle. These ancient historical records verify that the Babylonians invaded the land of Judah, besieged the city of Jerusalem, and took the Jews captive back to Babylon...just as the Bible said they did (2 Kings 24; Daniel 1).
- The “Pool of Siloam” (John 9:1–12) where Jesus sent the blind man with mud on his eyes to wash and receive healing
- The well called “Jacob's Well” (John 4:6) where Jesus met the Samaritan woman
- The pool called “Bethesda” (John 5:2) where Jesus told the man who had been lame for 38 years to take up his bed and walk
- Herod's palace (Mark 6:14–29) where John the Baptist was imprisoned and killed; the historian Josephus mentions this palace and John the Baptist's imprisonment and murder there
- A bone ossuary mentioning Caiaphas the Jewish high priest (Matthew 26:3) who presided over Jesus's late night trial (Matthew 26:57–68)
- The synagogue in Capernaum (Mark 1:21) on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee where Jesus often taught
- Mosaic tile floor of an early Christian church in Megiddo, Israel, that says the church was built in the memory of “the God Jesus Christ”—evidence the early Christians believed Jesus was God

My book, [Archaeological Evidence for the Bible](#), discusses these and many other discoveries in greater detail (along with citations and footnotes). We also have a [DVD wherein I discuss many of these finds](#).

Archaeology has not proven so helpful for other religious writings. Consider the Book of Mormon.

“Not one piece of evidence has ever been found to support the Book of Mormon -- not a trace of the large cities it names, no ruins, no coins, no letters or documents or monuments, nothing in writing. Not even one of the rivers or mountains or any of the topography it mentions has ever been identified.” [Dave Hunt, p.156, *In Defense of the Faith*; also see p. 107 in *The Case for Christ*, by Lee Strobel].

Nothing which demonstrates that the Book of Mormon is anything other than an early nineteenth century piece of American fiction, invented by Joseph Smith has ever been found. We address numerous

other [problems with the Book of Mormon](#) here.

3. THE BIBLE'S INTERNAL CONSISTENCY

What do I mean when I speak of the Bible's internal consistency? I am talking about the Bible's internal harmony. From the first book of the Bible, Genesis, to the last book, Revelation, the Bible is absolutely consistent in what it teaches.

SKEPTIC: "Why is that an evidence of the Bible's trustworthiness? There are plenty of books that are internally consistent."

I agree. Back in the 1990s I worked at a surfing magazine in Laguna Beach, California. And we put out an internally consistent magazine every month. Does that mean the authors of our different articles were writing down God-inspired Scripture? No. I can assure you of that!

SKEPTIC: "Well then, what makes the Bible any different than some other book or magazine that is internally consistent?"

Well, let me share with you a few reasons I think the internal harmony of the Bible is an amazing evidence of its divine origin.

A. The Bible addresses life's most controversial questions.

At the surfing magazine, we wrote about who won the latest surfing contest, surf wax, sunscreen. Pretty trivial matters looking back on it all now. But these aren't the type of matters the authors of the Bible wrote about. They weren't writing about surf wax and sunscreen. No. From beginning to end they tackled the big questions of life. Questions like:

- How did the universe come into existence?
- Does God exist? And if so, what is He like?
- Why does man exist?
- What is our purpose for being here?
- Why is there evil and suffering in the world?
- What happens to us after we die?

These are the big controversial questions of life. These are the kinds of questions that people tend to disagree about (ask your neighbors!) and yet these are the very questions the authors of the Bible tackle head on, chapter after chapter, book after book, and they do so absolutely consistently.

B. The Bible is a collection of 66 different documents.

It might be easy to have internal harmony if the Bible was a single document, but it's not. It's a compilation of more than five-dozen different books.

C. The Bible was written by approximately 40 different authors.

Contrast this with the Quran. I think it would be easy to have internal harmony in the Quran. It contains the teachings of just one man—Muhammad, born about 570 years after Jesus. The Bible is completely different than the Quran in this regard; it contains the teachings, the writings, of approximately 40 different people. Side note: The Quran is not internally harmonious, more [here](#).

D. Many of the Bible's authors came from different educational and cultural backgrounds.

Peter was a fisherman. Paul was a scholar. Daniel was a prime minister. Asaph was a musician. Matthew was a tax collector. David was a shepherd, then a king. Luke was a historian and medical doctor.

E. The Bible was written over a period of approximately 1500+ years (1446 BC – AD 95)

Many of the authors did not even know one another.

F. Many of the authors were separated by hundreds of miles geographically.

The Bible was written in a variety of places on three different continents: Africa, Asia and Europe. For example, Paul wrote four letters imprisoned in Rome. The apostle John wrote while a prisoner banished to the Isle of Patmos in the Mediterranean Sea. The prophet Ezekiel wrote his work while held captive in Babylon.

G. The Bible was written in three different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

Now, I don't know about you, but when I think of pulling together forty different people (spread out over fifteen centuries, on three different continents, who speak three different languages) and having them write sixty-six different documents regarding life's most controversial questions—I'm thinking we are going to have some serious problems. That book is a going to be a confusing and difficult read!

Yet, in spite of all these factors, the Bible is a perfectly harmonious, consistent account of how God is seeking to reconcile sinners like you and me back into relationship with to Himself. This internal consistency is powerful evidence the authors of the Bible were being guided by the Holy Spirit when they wrote the different books of the Bible.

4. EXTRABIBLICAL WRITINGS

What am I talking about? I'm talking about the fact that there are dozens of writings that survive *outside* of the Bible (in the records of the Assyrians, Babylonians and Romans) that verify the historical accuracy of the Bible's records of different persons, places, and events.

As far as **persons** are concerned, external sources verify that more than 50 persons mentioned in the Old Testament and 30 persons written about in the New Testament were actual historical figures (see list of names and sources on p. 270 in *I Don't Have Enough Faith To Be An Atheist* by Norman Geisler and Frank Turek). Because of engravings and statues, we even know what 18 of them looked like (12 from the Old Testament and 6 from the New Testament)! So, we are not reading about mythological characters when we read the Bible. We're reading about real people.

As for Biblical **events** that have extrabiblical corroboration, the examples are plentiful. Here are a couple examples.

We are told in the Bible that Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians came against the southern kingdom of Judah (605 BC), besieged the city of Jerusalem and took many of the Jews (including Daniel) captive back to the city of Babylon in modern day Iraq (2 Kings 24:1ff, Dan. 1). Well, this has been confirmed outside the Bible. Where so? In ancient Babylonian records.

Thousands of ancient Babylonian clay tablets containing a treasure trove of information about Babylon's history were unearthed in Babylon in the mid-nineteenth century. They are known as the Babylonian Chronicle tablets. They tell us of the very siege against Jerusalem written about in 2 Kings 24 and Daniel 1 and the fact that the Babylonians took the Jews captive back to Babylon. Of course, this just goes to show that the authors of the Bible were telling us the truth about this matter.

The New Testament tells us that Herod the Great's son, Herod Antipas, cast John the Baptist into prison for condemning Antipas's adulterous relationship with his brother's wife (Matt. 14:1-5). Sometime later an executioner came and John was beheaded (Matt. 14:10). You're familiar with that. Well, this too has been confirmed outside of the Bible. The first century historian, Flavius Josephus, talks about:

- Herod Antipas
- Herod's adulterous wife
- and the murder of John the Baptist in his *Antiquities of the Jews*.

Here is a short excerpt from Josephus:

"John, that was called the Baptist...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...Herod, who feared the great influence John had over the people...sent [John] a prisoner, out of Herod's suspicious temper, to Macherus, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death."
(*Antiquities*, 18:116-119).

So, Josephus verifies for us that John the Baptist was an actual person and that he was put to death by Herod, just as the Bible says.

Josephus mentions more than a dozen individuals talked about in the Bible, including: Herod the Great, Caiaphas, Pontius Pilate, James "the brother of Jesus," Felix, Festus, and even Jesus. Listen to one of Josephus' statements about Jesus:

"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 the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified 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..." (*Antiquities of the Jews*, 18:63-64, from a surviving manuscript in Arabic)

These are not the words of the Bible or a Christian, but a historian writing outside of the pages of Scripture. He verifies for us that Jesus lived and was crucified under the reign of Pontius Pilate.

There are more than 30 sources outside of the Bible, written within 150 years of Jesus' life that attest to more than 100 facts regarding Jesus' life, teachings, crucifixion, and resurrection. (See: *The Historical Jesus: Ancient Evidence for the Life of Christ* by Gary R. Habermas). Some of these other sources include:

- A. Cornelius Tacitus (ca. A.D. 55 –120) a Roman Historian
- B. Gaius Suetonius (the chief secretary of Emperor Hadrian (A.D. 117 –138)
- C. The Jewish Talmud (Sanhedrin 43A)

Other historical sources outside of the Bible corroborate details surrounding:

- The Flood
- Long life spans prior to the Flood
- Details surrounding the Exodus
- The Assyrian invasion of Israel
- Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Judah
- Cyrus's freeing of Jews from Babylon
- The prolonged darkness on the day Jesus died
- Herod Agrippa's sudden death after being hailed as a god
- The expulsion of the Jews from Rome

Friend, these are just a few examples—all written about outside the Bible. Critics of the Bible who brush off the Biblical accounts as mere legends or "ancient fiction" only reveal their ignorance of these

discoveries. If you'd like to read more about these matters (with full citations/footnotes), please see my books: [Archaeological Evidence for the Bible](#) and [Scrolls and Stones](#).

5. THE BIBLE'S AMAZING SCIENTIFIC ACCURACY AND FORESIGHT

Of course, many critics of the Bible would disagree that the Bible is scientifically accurate. They point to verses that say things like “the sun stood still” in Joshua 10:13 or John’s reference to “the four corners of the Earth” (Rev. 7:1). And they conclude that the Bible teaches that the Sun revolves around a flat, four-cornered Earth.

Well, they are overlooking the fact that the writers of the Bible were not writing a technical textbook on astronomy. They were describing things as they appeared to the eye (as was the case in Joshua 10) or employing normal figures of speech, as was the case with John’s reference to the “four corners of the Earth.”

And we, living in this scientifically advanced age, still do the same thing! We don’t wake up early in the morning, throw open the Eastern window and say, “What a beautiful Earth revolve!” No. We say, “What a beautiful sunrise!” Technically speaking, that is unscientific terminology. Meteorologists tell us on the nightly news what time the “sunset” will be. We don’t accuse them of being unscientific. They’re using simple, straightforward language to describe the way things appear.

When the apostle John referred to the “four corners of the Earth” in Revelation 7:1 he was using a figure of speech to describe the extremities of the land in the four cardinal directions: North, South, East and West. And we still use this figure of speech today. News agencies boast about how they have sent out their reporters to the four corners of the Earth to track down their stories.

So, keeping in mind that the writers of the Bible described things in simple terms as they appeared to the eye, and that they employed figures of speech (metaphors, personification and such) does away with many of the alleged scientific inaccuracies in the Bible.

Now, granted, Scripture is out-of-sync with some of the *philosophies* and *theories* some scientists hold to. The most obvious being atheistic naturalism and the theory of biological macro-evolution. If a scientist believes everything that exists came into being from nothing and by nothing and then evolved to its current state via a mindless series of unguided natural causes, then yes! —the Bible is out-of-sync with that. That goes without saying. But when it comes to known, testable, verifiable facts, the Bible has been found to be in perfect harmony with the way things really are, which is incredible when you think about it, because as you know the Bible was written two to four thousand years ago—long before the invention of microscopes, telescopes, satellites, and other technologies that have allowed us to investigate our Earth and the universe.

The fact that the Bible was written so long ago, touches on a myriad of topics, and yet does not contain any scientific errors, might be considered evidence for divine inspiration all on its own. Why? Without exception, every ancient religious writing has certain unscientific views of astronomy, medicine, hygiene, and so on.

For example, the Hindu Vedas teach that the Earth is flat and triangular. They also teach that earthquakes are the result of elephants shaking their bodies underneath the ground.

The Quran 18:86 says that the Sun sets in a muddy spring. The Quran says, “when he reached the setting-place of the Sun, he found it setting in a muddy spring.” You could get away with an unscientific statement like that in certain parts of the world in the seventh century.

The Bible steers free of these kinds of errors. But not only that, it makes known amazing facts about our world and the universe thousands of years before scientists discovered that they were actually true. Allow me to share with you a few examples:

A. The Sun

In contrast to the Quran, the Bible teaches that the Sun is actually on a circuit through space. Writing of the Sun in Psalm 19:6, David said, "Its rising is from one end of heaven, and its circuit to the other end." For many years critics scoffed at this verse, claiming that it taught that the Sun revolves around the Earth. Scientists at that time thought the Sun was stationary. However, it has been discovered in recent years that the Sun is in fact on a circuit through space, just like the Bible says.

B. The Shape of the Earth

Long before the Greeks figured out that the world was round, the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians and Chinese believed the world was flat. Amazingly, the Bible went against the grain and gave indications that the Earth was a sphere. In a book thought to be written about 2000 BC, Job 26:10 tells us that God "has inscribed *acircle* on the surface of the waters at the boundary of light and darkness." That's interesting. Stay with me on this. Job says God has drawn "a circle on the surface of the waters at the boundary of light and darkness." This boundary between light and darkness is where evening and morning occur. Notice that the boundary is not a square or a triangle. It's a circle. Why? Because the Earth is round. Another verse that speaks of the circular shape of the Earth is found in Isaiah 40:22, written about 700 BC: "It is He [God] who sits above the circle of the Earth."

C. The Suspension of the Earth

Before Isaac Newton discovered gravity, Hindus believed the Earth rested on the backs of elephants who stood on the back of a turtle that was swimming in a great endless sea. That's some turtle! There were all kinds of theories in the ancient world. People thought something has to support the Earth. What did the Bible say? In one of the oldest books in the Bible, Job said: "He [God] hangs the Earth on *nothing*" (Job 26:7). Nothing! In other words, the Earth hangs completely unattached in space. This is astounding. Scientists were still trying to figure this out thousands of years later.

D. The Stars

Before the invention of the telescope, people believed the stars could all be numbered. People were so confident of this, they drew up star charts, with all the stars named and numbered. The Greek astronomer and mathematician Hipparchus (190-120 BC) claimed there were 1,026 stars. The astronomer and mathematician Ptolemy (AD c. 85-165) said there were 1,056 stars. The German astronomer Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) counted 1,006.

When Galileo (a devout Christian) pointed his telescope to the heavens in 1608, he discovered these previous counts were way off and that the Bible was actually right. What had the Bible said?

God said in...

Jeremiah 33:22

"The host of heaven [a reference to the stars] cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured."

God says the stars *cannot* be numbered. In fact, trying to do so would be about as futile as trying to count the grains of sand floating around in the sea, obviously an impossible task. Jeremiah wrote that more than 2,000 years *before* Galileo made his discovery.

Today, with the help of powerful telescopes, astronomers tell us that the universe contains somewhere between 100 billion and a trillion galaxies containing anywhere between 100 billion and 10 trillion stars each. [Source: [AP/Washington Times](#)]

This all adds up to a lot of stars! Astronomers have to keep revising their estimates of how many stars have been discovered. A new study, published in the journal *Nature*, suggests there are a mind-blowing 300 sextillion stars. That is a 3 followed by 23 zeros or take 3 trillion and multiply it by 100 billion. [Source: [AP/Washington Times](#)]

Surely the host of heaven cannot be numbered! (Jeremiah 33:22).

Now all of these statements in the Bible about the stars, the universe, and the Earth raise a question: How did the authors of the Bible know these kinds of things? Were they taking wild guesses?

I don't think so. I think their perfect accuracy rules that out, especially when you consider the fact that there are [dozens](#) of statements like these in the Bible.

Well, the Bible tells us how they knew these things in 2 Peter 1:21. It says there that "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." That is to say, God, who knows all there is to know about the universe He created, superintended (came along side) the writing of the Bible to make sure that what He *wanted* written, *was* written.

You can remember these first five evidences with the acronym **F.A.C.E.S.**

6. THE MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

Critics of the Bible like Bart Ehrman, Muslims, and Mormons commonly say the Bible has been translated and copied so many times down through the centuries we can't trust what it says today—even if the Bible was once trustworthy. Well, as popular as this belief may be, it's a mistaken one. And the manuscript evidence actually proves this to be the case.

What is a manuscript? A manuscript is any surviving hand-written copy of an ancient document that predates the invention of the printing press in 1455.

Today there survives more some 25,000 partial and complete, ancient handwritten manuscript copies of the New Testament, as well as thousands of copies of the Old Testament...many of them predating the time of Christ. Did you know that? There are handwritten copies of the Old Testament, copied by scribes prior to Jesus' birth, that survive to this day! Let me tell you how they were found (a fascinating story!).

In 1947 a shepherd boy tending his father's sheep in Qumran, north and to the west of the Dead Sea in Israel, made an amazing discovery while looking for a lost goat. There in Qumran, in a hillside cave that had laid untouched for nearly two thousand years, this twelve-year-old Muslim boy discovered a collection of large clay jars containing carefully wrapped leather manuscripts. What this boy stumbled upon was an ancient collection of handwritten copies of the Old Testament that dated as far back as the third century before Christ. This was truly an amazing discovery!

Archaeologists spent years searching the surrounding caves. By the time they were done, copies of every book of the Old Testament had been discovered (with the exception of Esther). In some cases there were multiple copies of the same book. For example, there were nineteen copies of the Book of Isaiah, twenty-five copies of Deuteronomy and thirty copies of the Psalms.

Now, why do I mention the Dead Sea Scrolls? The Dead Sea Scrolls and hundreds of other manuscripts dating back to the time of the early church, have allowed Biblical scholars, translators, and textual experts

to recover (with a very high degree of certainty) the text of the Bible that Jesus quoted and the early Christians used 2000 years ago.

To prove that the text of the Bible is no longer faithful to the original text, critics would have to be able to point to ancient copies of the Bible and show us what they used to say, and then show that our modern Bibles say something different. Well, that's the very thing critics cannot do because when you look at the ancient manuscript copies of the Bible, you find that our modern copies of the Bible say what the ancient manuscripts say. And for good reason! Our modern Bibles are translated directly from ancient manuscript copies of the Bible.

Are there some tiny spelling variations, slips of the pen, and grammatical mistakes in some of the manuscripts? Yes. Are there accidental omissions and additions in some of them? Yes. Are there different arrangements of the words in some? Yes. But none of these variants have kept scholars from being able to reconstruct what the original documents said. And even if we did not have any ancient manuscripts copies of the Bible, there is another way of verifying that we have accurate copies of the Bible, and that is by examining the writings of the church fathers. By church fathers I am referring to those leaders in the church, of the first three centuries A.D., following the original disciples. I'm talking about men like Justin Martyr, Eusebius, Tertullian, Polycarp. These men, in their writings and correspondence with one another, and in their letters to different churches, quote the Old and New Testament over and over again. In fact, the early church fathers quote the New Testament alone more than 86,000 times. And here is something most people don't realize. Their writings survive to this day! You can go to Amazon.com right now and buy an encyclopedic size set of [the writings of the church fathers](#) and see with your own eyes their numerous quotations of both the Old and New Testaments.

There are enough quotations from the early church fathers that even if we did not have a single manuscript copy of the Bible, scholars could still reconstruct most of the New Testament today just from their writings [Norman Geisler and William Nix, *General Introduction to the Bible*, 430]. This shouldn't come as a surprise to us. Isaiah 40:8 says, "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever." Jesus said in Matthew 24:35, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away."

For more on the manuscript evidence, I recommend:

- Norman Geisler: *From God to Us: How We Got the Bible*
- F. F. Bruce: [The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?](#)
- Walter C. Kaiser: *The Old Testament Documents: Are They Reliable and Relevant?*

7. THE BIBLE'S FORTHRIGHTNESS ABOUT FAILURES & SINS

Have you ever gone to a website, maybe for a company or charity, and clicked the "ABOUT US" button? There's nearly always a carefully-crafted, glowing overview of what that company, political organization, or religious group is about. If they have an "Our History" button or "Our Founder" button, again you nearly always get a favorable overview of the founder. You never read that the founder is a murderer or an adulterer or has a criminal record! For obvious reasons, right?

Knowing human tendency to leave out those kinds of details, I find the Bible's forthrightness to be quite remarkable. Over and over, the Biblical writers tell us about the failures, weaknesses, and sins of...

- the fathers of the faith (e.g., Abraham and Moses)
- their own people (the Israelites)
- and even themselves (the writers)

Does this forthrightness prove the Bible is divinely inspired? No. But I think this kind of transparency helps strengthen the case that the Bible appears to be an honest work. Allow me to remind you of some transparent details we read about in the Bible

- Noah's drunkenness and inappropriate nakedness shortly after the Flood (Genesis 9:21–22)
- Abraham's lying (on more than one occasion) about Sarah being his sister (Genesis 12:13, 20:2)
- Moses's murder of a man in Egypt (Exodus 2:11–12), his outburst of anger in the wilderness, how he misrepresented God and as a result wasn't allowed to enter into the Promised Land (Numbers 20:10-12). Who wrote the books of Exodus and Numbers where these matters are explained? Moses. He tells us about his failures and sins in his own writings. These sound like the words of someone who was committed to communicating the truth.
- The nation of Israel rejecting God on numerous occasions to worship other false gods (e.g., the Book of Judges). What nation did God use to write down the Scriptures? Israel (the Jews). Is this the kind of thing they would make up about themselves? How unfaithful they were to the very God who saved them from their slavery in Egypt? I don't think so.
- David's adultery with Bathsheba and subsequent murder of her husband Uriah (2 Samuel 11)
- Jesus called Peter "Satan" (Mark 8:33)
- Peter denying he knew Jesus, after promising he would never do such a thing (Matthew 26:33ff)
- The time Paul had to rebuke Peter for his fear of being seen eating with Gentiles (Galatians 2:11-12)
- The disciples' prideful argument over which one of them was the greatest (Luke 22:24)
- The disciples falling asleep when Jesus asked them to pray (Mark 14:32-41)
- The disciples running away to save their own necks when Jesus was arrested (Mark 14:50)...not to mention Peter cutting off the ear of the priest's servant a short time earlier, swiftly drawing a rebuke from Jesus (John 18:10)
- Paul's confession that he was "a wretched man" (Romans 7:24) and the "chief" of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15)
- Paul and Barnabas's argument over Mark being allowed to travel with them (Acts 15:37-39)

I could go on. Do these sound like the words of men who were lying?

I have a hard time believing that. The fact that the authors of the Bible include these details leads me to conclude that these men were more interested in telling the truth than making themselves look good.

8. THE WILLINGNESS OF THE DISCIPLES TO DIE FOR JESUS

Now, earlier tonight the skeptic raised a legitimate concern when it came to the prophecies that Jesus fulfilled. He said, "Maybe the disciples just made up all of these things that Jesus supposedly did. Perhaps they read all of those prophecies in the Old Testament and decided to make up an elaborate story about Jesus fulfilling them!"

Well, in addition to their forthrightness about their sins and failures, there's another reason why I don't think the disciples were lying. Flavius Josephus, Eusebius, Tertullian, and other independent extrabiblical sources* record for us that many of Jesus' earliest followers, including the apostles, suffered intense persecution and even death for their on-going belief and preaching that Jesus was Lord and was risen from the dead.

[*Hegesippus, Polycarp, Ignatius, Cornelius Tacitus, Dionysius, Clement of Alexandria, Clement of Rome, Origen. For a good overview of these sources and what they said regarding this matter, see Gary Habermas and Michael Licona, *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus*, 56–62.]

We are told in these extrabiblical sources that:

- Matthew was slain with an axe in a city of Ethiopia
- Mark died in Alexandria, in Northern Egypt after having been cruelly dragged through the streets of that

city.

- Luke was hung to death in Greece
- John was tortured and then banished to the island of Patmos (Rev. 1:9)
- James, the brother of John, was beheaded in Jerusalem (see Acts 12:2)
- James the Less (as he's called in Mark 15:40) was thrown from a pinnacle of the temple and then stoned
- Philip was hung up against a pillar in Heiropolis and then stoned
- Bartholomew was flayed alive
- Andrew was bound to a cross and left to die
- Jude was shot to death with arrows
- Matthias (the apostle chosen to replace Judas) was first stoned, and then beheaded
- Barnabas was stoned to death
- Paul, after a variety of tortures and imprisonments, was beheaded in Rome
- Thomas was run through the body with a spear in southeast India
- Peter was crucified upside down in Rome

Question for you: Were these men lying?

I find it hard to believe that men willing to die excruciatingly painful deaths for telling people about Jesus were just "making up a story about Him." Nobody willingly endures persecution and these kinds of deaths for something they are just making up. But don't misunderstand me, just because someone is willing to die for something doesn't prove that what he says is true. Some Muslim terrorists are willing to die for Allah today. The disciples deaths are just compelling evidence that:

- They really believed Jesus existed
- They really believed He was the Messiah
- They really believed He died on a cross and rose from the grave three days later.

And I believe them! If the disciples were just lying (just inventing Jesus), do you think they'd really be willing to endure years of persecution, imprisonments, torture, and then these painful deaths for someone who didn't do the things they said He did? I have a hard time believing that!

Perhaps you've heard of Charles Colson. He served in President Richard Nixon's administration back in the 1970s before it was brought down by the Watergate scandal. Colson was a godless man at the time. Well, he became a Christian after spending time in prison for obstruction of justice in a case related to the Watergate scandal. One of the evidences for the New Testament account of Jesus' resurrection that he found compelling was the persecution the disciples endured telling people about the resurrection. Colson said this:

"I know the resurrection is a fact, and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because 12 men testified they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, then they proclaimed that truth for 40 years, never once denying it. Everyone was beaten, tortured, stoned and put in prison. They would not have endured that if it weren't true. Watergate embroiled 12 of the most powerful men in the world—and they couldn't keep a lie for three weeks. You're telling me 12 apostles could keep a lie for 40 years? Absolutely impossible." [\[Source\]](#)

9. THE BIBLE'S TRANSFORMING POWER FOR GOOD

The Bible claims to be living and powerful (Hebrews 4:12; Psalm 19:7-10). And that has indeed proven to be the case. No other book in the world has had the transforming effect upon lives and societies for good, than that of the Bible. Now, of course, this alone does not prove that the Bible is the Word of God, but I do think that this fits into the case I've been building.

God didn't have the Bible written down to entertain us. The Bible was given to us so that we might know God, be reconciled to Him, and live our lives for Him in a way that is pleasing to Him. Do we see that happening in the lives of those who read it? Absolutely!

Wherever the gospel has gone and been received—from prisons to remote villages deep inside third world countries—it has had a transforming effect on people's lives for good. Down through the centuries, its words have converted millions of unbelievers to faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

Countless people (including myself!) who would testify that they were immoral, godless sinners, drowning in a cesspool of sins (harmful to themselves and others), have been transformed into men and women who reflect Jesus as they have prayerfully read the Bible. I have seen it over and over!

In addition to changing lives, the Bible has inspired people to:

- build countless hospitals and orphanages
- start many of the world's greatest universities (Harvard, Yale, Princeton, were started by Christians for Christian purposes)
- launch innumerable humanitarian efforts to the poor
- work for the equality of men and women and those of different skin colors
- investigate the world and universe scientifically
- further the development of great art and music
- abolish slavery (William Wilberforce, an evangelical Christian and member of the British Parliament in the early 19th century, was the one largely responsible for the abolition of the slave trade)

Now, obviously a lot more could be said about all this. If you'd like to read about how the Bible has changed the world for good, I highly recommend the book [What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?](#) by D. James Kennedy and Jerry Newcombe. It is excellent!

The historian Philip Schaff summarized the enormous impact the Bible has had on people when he wrote this about Jesus:

"Jesus of Nazareth, without money and arms, conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed, and Napoleon; without science and learning, He shed more light on things human and divine than all philosophers and scholars combined; without the eloquence of schools, He spoke such words of life as were never spoken before or since, and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of orator or poet; without writing a single line, He set more pens in motion, and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, learned volumes, works of art, and songs of praise than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times." [Schaff, *The Person of Christ*, 29]

No other book in the world has had the kind of far-reaching, culture-crossing, multi-generational transforming effect on human lives and societies for good, the Bible has.

10. THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD

Another reason that you can be sure that the Bible is trustworthy is because Jesus said it was! If there's anyone we can trust regarding the Word of God, it's the One who proved Himself to be the Son of God by fulfilling hundreds of Old Testament prophecies, living a sinless life, performing numerous miracles and His resurrection from the dead. And Jesus assured us that the Jewish Scriptures could be trusted: Jesus taught that the Scriptures were:

A. Without Error

In John 17:17, Jesus said in His prayer to His Father, "Thy word is [Full of contradictions? Errors? No.] truth."

B. Historically Reliable

Jesus affirmed as historically true some of the most disputed passages of the Old Testament, including the story of Jonah in the great fish (Matt. 12:40), the destruction of the world by a flood in the days of Noah (Matt.24:37-39), and others (for more, see Dan Story, *Defending Your Faith*, p. 55-60 and Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1, p. 559).

C. Divinely Authoritative

When Jesus was in the wilderness being tempted by Satan (Matt. 4:1–11), He resisted this ungodly foe by quoting Scripture. Over and over again, Jesus responded to Satan and His other critics (the Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes) by pointing to Scripture, saying: “It is written...it is written...it is written” (Matt. 4:4-10). He did the same with His disciples (Matt. 26:31; Mark 14:21; Luke 24:46). Why? Because He believed Scripture is authoritative on all matters related to faith and practice.

D. Accurate Regarding Human Origins

For example, when it comes to the whole debate today over evolution versus creation, Jesus affirmed that the early chapters of Genesis were accurate when He said, “Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female...” (Matt. 19:4). Adam and Eve didn’t come on the scene after billions of years of mutations and evolution. No. God created them all the way back in the beginning—just like Moses reported in the Book of Genesis.

E. Infallible (Dependable, or Unbreakable)

In John 10:35 Jesus said, “The Scripture cannot be broken.”

You can build your life on the Word of God. You can stand upon God’s promises. The Word of God is not going to collapse underneath you.

F. Indestructible

In Matthew 5:18 Jesus said, “For truly I say to you, until heaven and Earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.”

If Jesus was a prophet of God, as even the Quran teaches (Surah 4:171), or even if He was a good teacher (as so many are willing to believe today), it would be wise for us to take His Word on the matter: the Bible is a historically reliable, divinely authoritative, dependable, error free, indestructible book!

SKEPTIC: “Come on, Charlie, you’re referring to the words of Jesus *in* the Bible to prove the Bible. That’s circular reasoning!”

It isn’t. As I pointed out earlier, the Bible is not a single book. It is a collection of 66 books written by numerous authors. So, to quote Jesus’ words recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John to help shed light on the reliability of something Moses or another author wrote in a different book is not circular reasoning at all. I’m quoting independent sources.

SKEPTIC: “Okay Charlie! But, Jesus was only talking about the *Old* Testament when He said those things. The New Testament had not been written.”

That’s right! Jesus did say those things about the Old Testament. But He also promised His disciples God’s aid (the Holy Spirit) to write the New Testament. On the eve of His crucifixion, Jesus told them, “The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you” (John 14:26). A short time later that same evening, Jesus told His disciples in John 16:13, “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.”

As these men went out into the world to tell people about Jesus (Matthew 28:18–20), whether by preaching and teaching, or penning the Gospels and epistles, they were going to have the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit to guide them. Jesus assured them of that. So, Jesus validated the trustworthiness of the Old Testament and He promised the trustworthiness of the New. Based on Jesus' testimony, you can trust both.

CONCLUSION: GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS

Friend, you can trust the Bible! You can read it with confidence! You can stand upon its promises! You can draw comfort from its passages. You can gain wisdom from its pages and best of all, you can know your creator by reading it. What a joy it is to know God and to live for Him!

Do you know the God of the Bible? Do you know your creator? Are you experiencing the joy of walking with God? Are you experiencing the peace that comes with knowing your sins have been forgiven and that all is right between you and God? You can.

That is why Jesus, God in the flesh, suffered on that cruel wooden cross two thousand years ago. He was paying the penalty for your sins so that you could be forgiven, so that you could escape eternity in Hell and be brought back into a right relationship with your creator. He rose from the grave three days later, ascended into Heaven and today He is offering all of mankind—you!—the complete forgiveness of sins and everlasting life to all who will place their faith in Him. Have you done that? Is Jesus Christ your Lord?

The Bible says that one day you will stand before God to give an account for your life. If you have never placed your faith in Jesus Christ, the Bible says that books will be opened that contain a thorough record of all the sinful things you have ever done, the lies you told, the things you stole, the immoral behavior, even those things you thought you got away with in secret, the things you thought no one else found out about (Matthew 12:36, Revelation 20:12).

Your guilty standing before God will result in your judgment, condemnation, and separation from God for all eternity (Romans 2:5; Revelation 20:11–15).

Is that what you want—an eternity of misery apart from God—the very source of love, hope, peace, joy and all that is good? If you are like most people I have met, the answer is No. You want to go to Heaven. And there is a good chance you think you *are* going to Heaven. Most people believe they are. They think they are going to Heaven because they are basically good people. Maybe you think that. And you may be a good person if you compare yourself to a murderer or the drug lord locked up in the state penitentiary. But how you measure up against other people does nothing to affect your standing before a holy, sinless, just God. How you compare to others does nothing to undo the thousands of sins you have committed over the course of your lifetime.

So, let's make sure you are going to Heaven, not on your terms, but on God's terms. Click here and I will share with you [three steps to peace with God](#).