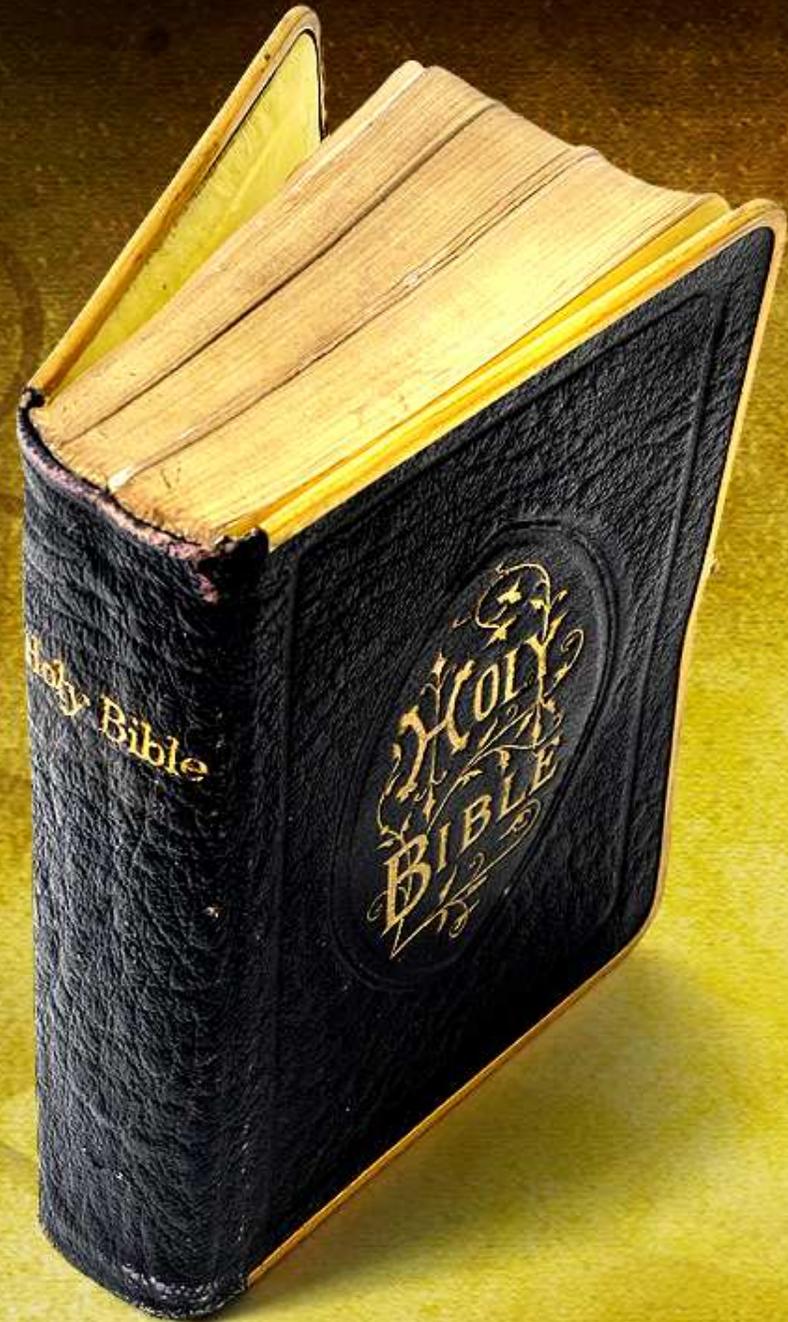


Why Believe the Bible is God's Word?

John 17:17, "Your word is
truth."



It Claims to Be God's Word

- The Bible makes repeated claims to be the word of God.
 - The phrase “Thus says the Lord” is found 413 times in the King James Version of the Old Testament.
 - The phrase “God said” is found 46 times.
- The Bible is filled with instances of God specifically saying, revealing or showing His will.
- For this reason, Paul writes,
 - “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable...*” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - “Inspiration” = divinely breathed in: - given by inspiration of God” (Strong’s).
- The Apostle Paul believed the Scriptures to be the revealed mind of God—His Word.

It Claims to Be God's Word

- If we believe in Jesus, we must believe in the inspiration of both the Old and New Testaments—Jesus did!
 - John 5:37-39, 45-47 refers back to the Old Testament Scriptures.
 - John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13 looks forward to the Spirit-inspired apostles of Jesus Christ!
- Both the prophets of old and the apostles claimed to speak and write by divine inspiration.
- Peter once wrote on this subject,
 - *“For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty...And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit”* (2 Peter 1:16, 19-21).
- Our faith is *“built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone”* (Ephesians 2:20).

It Claims to Be God's Word

God



Christ



Apostles



Scripture



Faith

- The Bible originates with God, who has inherent authority by His creation.
 - **Genesis 1:1**
- God delegated authority to Jesus Christ.
 - **Matthew 28:18**
- Jesus Christ delegated authority to His apostles to speak divine truth.
 - **John 14:26; 16:13; 20:21**
- His apostles wrote down God's will so we could understand it.
 - **Ephesians 3:3-5**
- True faith comes by God's revealed word.
 - **Romans 10:17**

Is a Claim Enough?

- While claiming inspiration is an important first step, is it enough?
- After all, other men and religious documents claim divine inspiration.
 - The Koran.
 - Book of Mormon.
 - “Latter-day prophets”
- Should we accept all documents claiming to be divine?
- Or, is it possible we have cases of divine identity theft?
- Consider some evidences with the Bible to help prove it is truly the word of God!

The Evidence of Uniqueness

- If the Bible is truly a book from God, we would expect it to have a unique quality.
- It is different than anything man has ever written and not “just another book.”
- Professor M. Montiero-Williams studied Eastern books for forty-two years and wrote of them...
 - “Pile them, if you will, on the left side of your study table; but place your own Holy Bible on the right side—all by itself, all alone—and with a wide gap between them. For...there is a gulf between it and the so-called sacred books of the East which severs the one from the other utterly, hopelessly, and forever...a veritable gulf which cannot be bridged over by any science of religious thought” (Collett, Sidney. *All About the Bible*, pp. 314-315).

The Evidence of Uniqueness

- The Bible is truly a unique book.
- It is unique in its continuity.
 - Written over a 1,500 year span.
 - Written by over 40 authors from all walks of life.
 - Written in different places and times.
 - Written on three continents and languages.
 - Written in various styles addressing a wide range of controversial subjects.
 - Yet, it does so while presenting one unfolding story—God’s redemption of mankind (Genesis 3:24; Revelation 22:2).
- It is unique in its circulation.
 - Rarely do books sell a million copies or more.
 - Yet, the book has sold billions of copies. It is always next week’s best seller!

The Evidence of Uniqueness

- It is unique in its translation.
 - “According to the United Bible Societies, the Bible...has been translated into more than 2,200 languages...these languages represent the primary vehicle of communication for well over 90 percent of the world’s population. Worldwide, no other book has been translated, retranslated, and paraphrased more than the Bible” (*The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, p. 8-9).
- It is unique in its survival.
 - Through time.
 - We have over 25,000 ancient manuscripts of the New Testament.
 - The closest # of manuscripts in antiquity=Homer’s *Iliad*, 693 copies.
 - Through persecution.
 - Through criticism

The Evidence of Uniqueness

- It is unique in its teachings.
 - Contains numerous examples of fulfilled prophecy.
 - Provides an accurate historical record of its peoples.
 - Portrays all characters in a well-balanced way.
- It is unique in its influence on literature.
 - Cleland McAfee wrote in *The Greatest English Classic*, “If every Bible in any considerable city were destroyed, the Book could be restored in all its essential parts from the quotations on the shelves of the city public library. There are works, covering almost all the great literary writers, devoted especially to showing how much the Bible has influenced them” (p. 134).
- It is unique in its influence on civilization.
 - Impacts morality, family life, government policy.
 - Motivates social reform, philanthropy, individual change...

The Evidence of Scientific Foreknowledge

- Since God is omniscient, possessing all knowledge, the Bible should demonstrate such.
- It does so in various ways...
 - Biblical prophecy (accurate prediction of events)
 - Biblical foreknowledge (knowledge of truth before actual discovery of truth).
- While many like to attack the Bible as being an unscientific book, the opposite is true.
- The Bible is, in fact, pre-scientific in a variety of fields.
- Such pre-scientific knowledge is sensible if the Creator was behind the Bible's authorship!
- Consider a few examples...

The Evidence of Scientific Foreknowledge

- Astronomy—study of the universe.
- The Earth is spherical.
 - The earth was commonly believed to be flat.
 - Aristotle was the first uninspired scientist to teach the earth was round (384-322 B.C.).
 - Yet, not until the 1500's, did the world believe in a spherical Earth after the sea voyages of Columbus and Magellan.
 - However, the Bible has always declared Earth's sphericity.
 - *"It is He who sits above the circle of the earth..."* (Isaiah 40:22).
 - Isaiah prophesied from 745-695 B.C.
- The Earth is not rigidly supported.
 - It was Newton who first taught the law of universal gravitation in A.D. 1687.
 - However, the Bible, in poetic language, taught...
 - *"He...hangs the earth on nothing"* in 2000 B.C.
 - Job's writing demonstrates a pre-scientific knowledge.
- The innumerability of the stars (Jeremiah 33:22).

The Evidence of Scientific Foreknowledge

- Geology—study of the Earth
- The Bible has long declared the entire Earth has been under water.
 - At the creation (Genesis 1:2,6, 9).
 - At Noah’s flood (Genesis 7:19-20,24).
- These passages were written in the 15th century B.C.
- Scientifically, these geologic facts were not observed in all countries until 1885 by Edward Suess.
- This is why...
 - all the world’s mountain ranges contain fossilized sea life.
 - Evidence of a sedimentary origin.
- Yet, David declared in 1033-975 B.C.,
 - *“You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At Your rebuke they fled; at the voice of Your thunder they hastened away. Then went up over the mountains; They went down into the valleys, to the place which You founded for them. You have set a boundary that they may not pass over, that they may not return to cover the earth”* (Psalm 104:6-9).

The Evidence of Scientific Foreknowledge

- Oceanography—study of oceans
- In the 1850's, Matthew Maury read the words of David penned in 1015 B.C.
 - “...*the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas*” (Psalm 8:8).
- Maury, a Bible-believer, said to his son, “If the Bible says there are paths in the seas, I will find them.”
- Sure enough, Maury was the first to chart the sea lanes in the Atlantic Ocean.
- At the Annapolis Academy, which he founded, a statue has been erected of Maury with the inscription...
 - “Path Finder of the Seas”
- Truth is...Maury found the paths God's Word declared existed long ago!
- Not only does the Bible confirm paths in the sea, it also...
 - Reveals there are canyons in the oceans (Job 38:16).
 - Declares there are springs in the sea (Job 38:16).
 - These are facts only recently verified with satellite imagery and submarine exploration.

The Evidence of Scientific Foreknowledge

- Physics
- The basic teaching of the First Law of Thermodynamics is “matter cannot be created or destroyed.”
 - Mayer revealed this ground-breaking law in 1841.
 - Yet, a study of God’s Word shows this is a moot point to those who believe.
 - After all, Genesis 2:1 states,
 - *“Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.”*
- The Second Law of Thermodynamics, established in 1850, teaches that energy is becoming less useful the more it is used.
 - This is a major reason our world is becoming more “energy-conscious” and pushing for “green” technology.
 - Yet, God already knew the earth was slowly wearing down.
 - *“Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look on the earth beneath. For the heavens will vanish away like smoke, **the earth will grow old like a garment**, and those who dwell in it will die in like manner; but My salvation will be forever, and My righteousness will not be abolished” (Isaiah 51:6).*

The Evidence of Scientific Foreknowledge

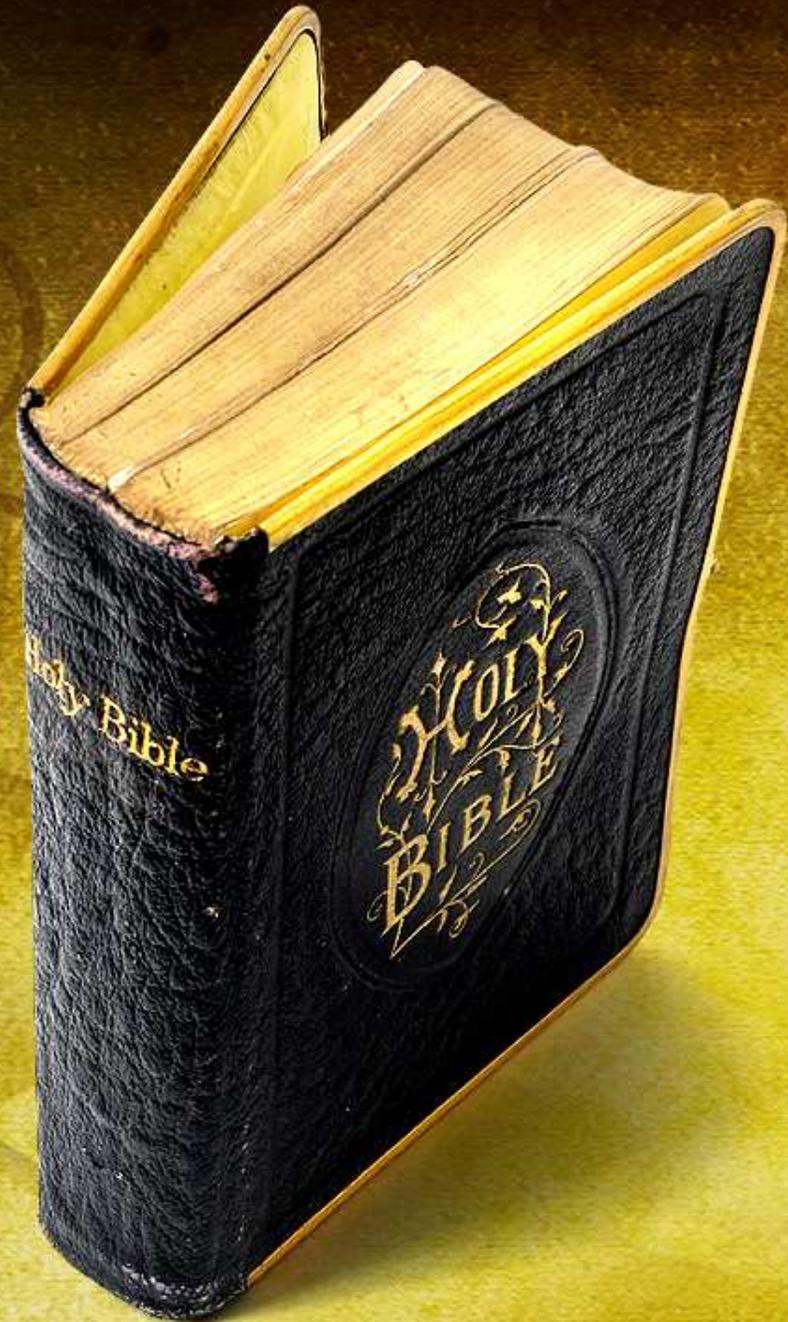
- Biology—study of life
- Man and woman each have the “seed of life.”
 - Scientifically, various theories abounded about reproduction.
 - Man holds all of reproductive life, implants it in woman.
 - Woman has the “germ” of life, man fertilizes it.
 - Yet, modern technology teaches that both the man’s sperm and woman’s ovum are necessary to produce a zygote.
 - God knew of this in the days of Moses (Genesis 3:15; Hebrews 7:9-10).
- “*The life of the flesh is in the blood*” (Leviticus 17:11).
 - God revealed the vital nature of blood in the Law of Moses.
 - Yet, until 1900 the practice of “bloodletting” was a medical practice performed to rid the body of disease.
 - In some cases, “bleeding” a patient killed the patient because it alters temperature control, waste removal and transportation of food, water, etc.

The Evidence of Scientific Foreknowledge

- The Bible is also pre-scientific in the realm of health and sanitation.
- The Law of Moses had restrictions concerning...
 - Food contamination (Leviticus 11:32-40; 7:19; 7:26).
 - Sanitation (Leviticus 17:13; Deuteronomy 23:12-13).
 - Sickness (Leviticus 13-15).
- Many of these same practices are employed in the most civilized countries.
- The failure to practice these restrictions has led to plague, disease and sickness.
- God, knowing this, gave these restrictions to Israel to keep his special nation from harm.
- Relevant to our discussion, God gave us a glimpse of His vast knowledge before microbiologists or bacteriologists discovered His wisdom.

Why Believe the Bible is God's Word?

John 17:17, "Your word is
truth."



The Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecy

- The fulfillment of prophecy was a verifiable check-up to determine if God had spoken through the prophet.
- As a prophet foretold things to come, it was not...
 - a mere guess.
 - a hopeful prediction.
 - a high-percentage forecast.
- Instead, prophecy is a prediction of an event man could never have the ability to foresee.
- If a prophecy was not fulfilled, it was evidence the prophet was not to be trusted as God's spokesmen.
 - *"...when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him"* (Deuteronomy 18:22).
- The Bible includes several examples of specific prophecies which verify God's foreknowledge.

The Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecy

- Consider the prophecy of Ezekiel with reference to Tyre made in approximately 592-570 B.C.
 - Ezekiel 26:3-14; Amos 1:9-10
 - Strongholds to be destroyed (26:4).
 - Many nations come up against her (26:3).
 - Scraped bare like the top of a rock (26:4).
 - Ruins a place to spread nets (26:5).
 - Nebuchadnezzar descend (26:7-8).
 - He will break walls, tread the streets and kill the garrisons (26:9-12).
 - Ruins would be dumped in water (26:12).
 - Tyre would be desolate and uninhabited (26:14).
 - Tyre would never be rebuilt (26:14).

The Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecy

- The testimony of history helps us realize Ezekiel's prophecies about Tyre came true.
 - The Babylonian Empire
 - Nebuchadnezzar took Sidon and then besieged Tyre for 13 years (585-572 B.C.).
 - The seafaring Phoenicians fled to the island city of Tyre once attacked.
 - Mainland Tyre remained in ruins until the time of Alexander the Great.
 - The Grecian Empire
 - Tyre opposed Alexander the Great in 332 B.C.
 - Alexander had difficulty attacking the island city of Tyre.
 - So, he built a causeway 200 feet wide from the mainland to the island using the ruins of old Tyre.
 - He obtained ships from several other nations.
 - After a siege of seven months the island city was taken.
 - Today, the island city of Tyre has a population of about 12,000 mostly fishermen.
 - The mainland city has never been rebuilt!
- This fulfilled prophecy, along with others, proves God was speaking through His prophets and His warnings must be heeded!

The Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecy

- Another Biblical prophecy of great interest concerns the ancient city of Babylon.
- Babylon,
 - “...covered an area of about 200 square miles on both sides of the Euphrates River. There were 17 miles of walls wide enough for chariots to pass on top of them. There were 250 towers on the walls and 8 gates, the most famous of which was the Ishtar gate. Babylon had a ziggurat with a temple of Marduk on top of it, a great procession street, and a network of canals. The hanging gardens were considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The Babylonian empire, of which the city was capital, maintained world supremacy between 626 and 539 B.C.” (Jenkins, Ferrell. *Introduction to Christian Evidences*, p. 103).
- Now, imagine prophesying the downfall of a city with the stature of Washington D.C.

The Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecy

- The prophecies about Babylon included...
 - The city would be completely overthrown by the Medes and be as Sodom and Gomorrah (Isaiah 13:17-19).
 - Babylon would not be inhabited or dwelt in from generation to generation (Isaiah 13:20-22; Jeremiah 51:26).
 - The Arab will refuse to pitch his tent there (Isaiah 13:20).
 - Wild beasts of the desert will lie down there (Isaiah 13:21-22).
 - The city would become as heaps (Jeremiah 51:37).
- Each of these prophecies has been fulfilled today.
 - The Medes conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. without even tearing down the walls...they diverted the water.
 - Due to famine, the Euphrates became quite saline and destroyed much of the land around Babylon making it uninhabitable.
 - Due to superstition about Babylon, the Arabs will not camp near the city.
 - Wild beasts do lie down there. At one point, serpents and scorpions had infested the ruins of Babylon.

The Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecy

- A.O. Schnabel writes in *God Has Spoken*,
 - “The city of Babylon is desolate except for wild animals seen living among the ruins. As the walls of the buildings in the city deteriorated, the mortar poisoned the soil with nitrous compounds. Due to the soil’s deterioration, and local superstition, the Arabs will not camp or graze flocks near the ancient city...The walls, some of which once stood 300 feet high and 80 to 120 feet thick, were made out of brick and have weathered down completely in places...Over the centuries, the rising water table in the plain has caused one-quarter of the city to be under pools of water and swamps, rendering much of the remains of earlier centuries inaccessible....The now-deposed ruler of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, had promised to rebuild Babylon and started the rebuilding by spending more than one billion dollars. Having become completely desolate, Babylon remains a monument of God’s providence in the affairs of men” (pp. 83-85).

The Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecy

Prophecy	Passage
City of Samaria	Micah 1:6
Cities of Edom	Jeremiah 49:13,17; Ezekiel 25:13; 35:3-9
Cities of Gaza and Ashkelon	Amos 1:8; Zephaniah 2:4-6; Jeremiah 47:5
City of Babylon	Isaiah 13:19-22; 25:12; Jeremiah 50:12-13; 51:36-42
City of Tyre	Ezekiel 26:4-15
City of Nineveh	Isaiah 10:12-14; Zephaniah 2:13-15, Nahum
Israel	Deuteronomy 28
Egypt	Ezekiel 19:14-15; 29:9-12; 30:12-13; Isaiah 19:5-6

The Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecy

- Another example of fulfilled prophecy are the hundreds of prophecies referring to the Messiah.
- At least 300 years before Jesus Christ, hundreds of prophecies were made about Him!
- These prophecies include details about everything from before His birth to after His resurrection.
- Peter Stoner, a mathematician, once wrote of the odds of such fine-tuned accuracy in only eight of the prophecies,
 - “We find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th power. That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000...suppose we take 10 to the 17th silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will 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 have 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 according to their own wisdom.”

The Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecy

<u>Prophecy</u>	<u>Old Testament</u>	<u>New Testament</u>
Tribe of Judah	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:23-28
Born of a virgin	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18-23
Born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1-6
Enter Jerusalem on donkey	Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:6-7
Betrayed by disciple	Psalms 41:9	John 13:18
Betrayal price stated	Zechariah 11:12	Matthew 26:14-15
Betrayal money returned	Zechariah 11:13	Matthew 27:3-7
False witnesses	Psalms 35:11; 27:12	Matthew 26:59-61
Messiah's silent suffering	Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 27:12-14

The Evidence of Fulfilled Prophecy

<u>Prophecy</u>	<u>Old Testament</u>	<u>New Testament</u>
Stripped	Isaiah 53:5	Matthew 27:28-29
Hands/feet pierced	Psalms 22:16	Luke 23:33; John 20:24-28
Numbered with criminals	Isaiah 53:12	Mark 15:27
Divide his garments	Psalms 22:18	John 19:23-24
No bones broken	Psalms 34:20	John 19:33-37
Crowds would rebuke	Psalms 22:6-8	Matthew 27:39-44
Darkness in daytime	Amos 8:9	Matthew 27:45
Buried with the rich	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60
Arise from the dead	Psalms 16:10	Matthew 28:6; Acts 2:22
Ascend to heaven	Psalms 68:18	Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9

The Evidence of Historical Accuracy

- If the Bible is divine, we would expect its most minute details to be accurate.
- Archaeologically, this is the case.
- Evidence of Bible peoples, cities and their possessions have been unearthed with the spade.
- Jack Lewis reported in his *Historical Backgrounds of Bible History*,
 - “...forty-four Old Testament figures have been identified with figures whose names occur in the various sorts of ancient records of the Middle East...Seventeen New Testament figures are known from coins or from other types of inscriptions...An additional eleven figures were known to Josephus, to Mishnaic sources, or to classical historians where these writers are not thought to have had New Testament books as one of their sources of information” (p. 177).
- Jewish archaeologist Nelson Glueck wrote,
 - “As a matter of fact, however, it may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible” (*Rivers in the Desert*, p. 31).

The Evidence of Historical Accuracy

- Not only is the Bible archaeologically accurate it is geographically accurate.
- After visiting Palestine, J.W. McGarvey wrote in his *Lands of the Bible*,
 - “That there is a general agreement between the Bible and geography of Palestine is a well-known fact. Its plains, mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes, cities, and deserts are in all parts of the Bible correctly named and correctly located. The political divisions known to exist are invariably recognized, as are also all the changes of government through which the country passed in the course of its long and varied history. In not a single known instance, from the beginning to the end of the book, is there a failure in any one of these particulars.”

The Evidence of Historical Accuracy

- This evidence, along with the observations of historians, confirm the Bible's accuracy.
- Sir William Ramsay, once a skeptic, wrote of Luke's historical accuracy,
 - “Luke is a historian of the first rank...this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians.”
- F.F. Bruce, professor of biblical criticism and exegesis at the University of Manchester said,
 - “Some writers may toy with the fancy of a ‘Christ-myth,’ but they do not do so on the ground of historical evidence. The historicity of Christ is as axiomatic for an unbiased historian as the historicity of Julius Caesar. It is not historians who propagate the Christ-myth theories.”
- Those who challenge the Bible's historical accuracy have always done so without evidence!

The Evidence of Historical Accuracy

- Above and beyond its historical accuracy, the Bible also is an accurate rendering of the ancient text.
- One of the most common myths about the Bible is it is filled with mistakes from years of copying.
- Yet, Josephus, a 1st-century historian, once wrote,
 - “We have given practical proof of our reverence for our own Scriptures. For although such long ages have now passed, no one has ventured either to add, or to remove, or to alter a syllable; and it is an instinct with every Jew, from the day of his birth, to regard them as the decrees of God, to abide by them, and, if need be, cheerfully to die for them” (Contra Apion, Book 1, Section 8, p. 158).
- Such a reverence has led to an accurate, ancient text and, thus, a trustworthy modern rendering!
 - “If comparative trivialities, such as changes of order, the insertion or omission of the article with proper names, and the like, are set aside, the words in our opinion still subject to doubt can hardly amount to more than a thousandth part of the whole New Testament” (Westcott and Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek*, p. 565).

The Evidence of Its Universality

- One of the most subtly powerful evidences of the Bible is its universality.
- It applies to man's biggest questions throughout every age.
- How did I get here?
 - *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...So God created man in His own image...”* (Genesis 1:1,27).
- What is my purpose?
 - *“All things were created through Him and for Him”* (Colossians 1:16).
- What happens after I die?
 - *“God who made the world...has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained...”* (Acts 17:24,31).

More Than Just A Claim!

- The Bible is no impostor of divine revelation.
- It has all the earmarks of a divine book from God, as seen by...
 - **Its scientific foreknowledge.**
 - **Its prophetic perfection.**
 - **Its historic accuracy.**
 - **Its universality.**
- Will you allow this book to do what Paul intended it to do for you?
 - *“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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16-17).*

