

4

EXPLORING THE HISTORY, RELIABILITY,
AND NECESSITY OF SCRIPTURE

reasons you can trust the Bible



Introduction:

Exploring the Bible Canon

The importance of God’s Word in our daily lives cannot be underestimated. We should long for it like a tall glass of water. It is food for the soul and gives us power for living. But how did the Bible come to be? How did God orchestrate the creation of this authoritative, infallible, divinely-inspired text—what we call the Bible canon?

Millions of Christians around the world trust this Holy Book, but often struggle to explain to others why it is trustworthy. This resource will both arm and encourage you with information that testifies to the Truth of the Bible. We hope that the next time someone asks, “Isn’t the Bible just a bunch of old writings that aren’t relevant to anything today?” you will be ready to give clear answers for the hope and confidence you have in Scripture.

can•on

noun

- an authoritative list of books accepted as Holy Scripture
- the authentic works of a writer
- a criterion or standard of judgment

Greek word origin: “rule” or “measuring stick”

“There is no more authentic book, there is no more tested book, than the Bible. It’s been scrutinized upside down and sideways, looked at critically by countless people through the years—and yet, there it stands.”

– DR. MICHAEL YOUSSEF
FOUNDER & PRESIDENT, *LEADING THE WAY*

4 Reasons You Can Trust the Bible

There is no book in the world like the Bible. In pride, humanity may mock its claim to divine inspiration, but the evidence for this Truth is both clear and profound. Consider these incredible facts that set the Scripture apart as a definitively reliable text:

1

TRUSTWORTHY AUTHORSHIP

Despite its diverse authorship, the Bible's message is consistent—from beginning to end.

2

FULFILLED PROPHECY

The Bible includes hundreds of precise predictions that were fulfilled in detail after they were proclaimed.

3

RELIABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

The Bible is the most well-substantiated historical document in history; no other text comes close.

4

UNCHANGING NATURE

The Bible is the most scrutinized book of all time, and yet it has remained unchanged for 1,600 years.

REASON #1: TRUSTWORTHY AUTHORSHIP

*Despite its diverse authorship,
the Bible's message is consistent—
from beginning to end.*

- ▶ God chose to reveal Himself through **66 different books** written over a span of **1,600 years** that all tell the **story of our redemption**.
- ▶ He inspired approximately **40 different people from various time periods and socio-economic backgrounds**, including kings, shepherds, prophets, priests, and musicians; a scribe, a doctor, a courtier, a tax collector, a fisherman, and a tentmaker. They wrote in different languages and locations and in different literary forms—law, history, poetry, wisdom, prophecy, gospel, and letter.
- ▶ **The vast majority were eyewitnesses** (or colleagues of eyewitnesses) to the historical accounts about which they wrote.
- ▶ **This kind of expansive, wide-ranging text should not be a model of precision and accuracy, and yet it is.** The Scriptures contain not many subjects, but one subject. Not many themes, but one theme: Jesus Christ, the Redeemer.
- ▶ **One of its most prolific authors was once its enemy—and that is the best kind of person you can have on the witness stand.** The apostle Paul, who wrote 28 percent of the New Testament, was a persecutor of Christians and enemy of the Christian faith until he encountered Christ on the road to Damascus. His transformation from an adversary to a disciple who recorded the foundational doctrines of the Christian faith is further proof of the validity of Scripture.

“The Bible was written in a timespan of more than 1,600 years and by different men from different professions and different times, and yet they all say the same thing. The only way to make sense of this is that there’s only one Author who used all these men to write the book.”

– DR. MICHAEL YOUSSEF



CONSIDER THE EVIDENCE:

One Message from Beginning to End—Jesus Christ

The Bible features 66 books penned by 40 different authors over a span of 1,600 years, and yet they all tell the same story—God’s plan for salvation and redemption through Jesus Christ:

- ▶ The Old Testament tells us to **look forward to the coming of the Messiah** (Mal. 3:1); the New Testament tells us, “He’s here!” (John 1:14-18).
- ▶ The Old Testament tells us that **sin requires a perfect sacrifice** (Lev. 17:11); the New Testament tells us that Jesus is the sinless Lamb of God who paid it all (John 1:29).
- ▶ The Old Testament provides a **law to follow** (Ex. 24:3-12); the New Testament reveals the fulfillment of the law in Jesus—and calls us to follow Him (Matt. 5:17).
- ▶ The Old Testament chronicles Moses and Aaron **leading God’s people out of slavery** and into freedom (Ex. 3:7-10); the New Testament chronicles Christ and His disciples leading the lost from spiritual slavery to eternal salvation (Gal. 5:1).
- ▶ The Old Testament chronicles the **building of a temple** for the Lord (2 Sam. 7:4-16); the New Testament chronicles Christ’s followers becoming the temple of the Lord (Eph. 2:20-22).
- ▶ In the Old Testament, **manna came down from heaven** to sustain the people (Ex. 16:4); in the New Testament, Jesus, the bread of life, came down from heaven to save the people (John 6:32-38).
- ▶ In the Old Testament, the **veil of the Holy of Holies** separated sinful people from entering the presence of God (Ex. 26:31-33); in the New Testament, the veil was torn, enabling anyone to enter in by the sin-forgiving blood of Christ (Matt. 27:51).
- ▶ In the Old Testament, the **high priests offered sacrifices to atone for sins** (Lev. 1:3-9); in the New Testament, Jesus Christ, the ultimate high priest, offered Himself to atone for our sins (Heb. 2:17, 10:10-14).
- ▶ In the Old Testament, God wrote the law on **tablets of stone** (Ex. 31:18); in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit came to write God’s commands on the tablets of our hearts (Heb. 10:16).

The symbolism of the Bible—how the Old points to the New—is simply stunning. What is prophesied in the Old Testament is fulfilled in the New. From beginning to end, the Bible contains the story of God’s redemption through Christ Jesus. Only the Maker of heaven and earth could preordain the creation of such a collection of sacred texts that are “fixed in their number, divine in their origin, and universal in their authority.”¹

REASON #2: FULFILLED PROPHECY

The Bible includes hundreds of precise predictions that were fulfilled in detail after they were proclaimed.

- ▶ **Twenty-seven percent of the Bible is prophecy, meaning pre-written history.** It is this divine revelation of the future written hundreds of years before Jesus was even born that the disciples used as key arguments and supernatural evidence for the Truth of the Gospel—that Jesus is the promised Messiah (i.e. Acts 17:2-4, 26:27, 28:23-25).
- ▶ **About 300 messianic prophecies found in the Old Testament are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.** Their detailed accuracy testifies to the historical reliability of the Bible. For example, prophecy proclaimed the Savior would be born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2); of a virgin (Isa. 7:14); preceded by a prophet (Isa. 40:3); rejected by His people (Isa. 53:3); betrayed by a friend (Ps. 41:9); sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12-13); spit upon and scarred (Isa. 50:6); pierced, even though crucifixion hadn't yet been invented (Ps. 22:16, Isa. 53:5); buried with the rich (Isa. 53:9); and raised from the dead (Ps. 16:10). The likelihood of one person fulfilling 8 prophecies, such as these, is 1 chance in 10 to the 17th power.² Yet Jesus fulfilled these and hundreds more!
- ▶ **Scripture also foretold who would rule long before they came to power.** Consider: God named Cyrus as the ruler who would subdue nations and free God's people to rebuild Jerusalem in Isaiah 45:1, 13—over 100 years before Cyrus was even born! No other book makes such claims with such accuracy.
- ▶ **Many of Scripture's prophecies are still being fulfilled today.** For example, the Holy Spirit is at work in our world today, leading and guiding the church, just as Jesus promised (John 16:13); many are defecting from Biblical Truth, just as Scripture foretold (1 Tim. 4:1, 2 Tim. 3:1-5, 4:3-4); and Israel continues to be one of the most besieged nations in existence (Zech. 12:3).

“At least 20 Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled within 24 hours at the time of the crucifixion of Christ. So let no one tell you that the Bible is not the Word of God.”

– DR. MICHAEL YOUSSEF



CONSIDER THE EVIDENCE:

Prophecies Fulfilled in Christ

According to Bible scholars, Christ fulfilled roughly 300-400 (and possibly even more!) Old Testament prophecies declared as far back as 1,400 years before His birth.³ Just consider these 38 specific predictions about Christ fulfilled with stunning precision.

PROPHECY		FULFILLMENT
Gen 3:15	The Messiah will be born of a woman	Matt. 1:18
	The serpent will strike His heel and He will crush its head (speaking of Christ's victory over Satan)	Gal. 4:4-6; Rom. 16:20; Heb. 2:14
Gen. 22:15-18, 26:1-5, 28:13-14, 49:10; Isa. 11:1-10	The Messiah will be a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Jesse, and David	Matt. 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38
Mic. 5:2	He will be born in Bethlehem	Matt. 2:1-5
Zech. 9:9	He will enter Jerusalem on a donkey	Matt. 21:6-9
Ps. 22:1-18	He will be forsaken and will cry out to God	Matt. 27:46
	He will be mocked	Matt. 27:43
	He will be stripped of His clothing	Luke 23:34-35
	He will thirst	John 19:28
	He will be pierced	John 19:37
	They will cast lots for His clothing	Matt. 27:35
Isa. 7:13-16	He will be the solution to Israel's rebellion	Matt. 15:24
	He will be born of a virgin	Matt. 1:20-21
	His name will be Immanuel	Matt. 1:22-23
	He will exhibit wisdom from a young age	Luke 2:45-52
Isa. 9:6-7	He will be born as a baby	Matt. 1:20-25
	The government will be upon His shoulders	Luke 1:33
	He will be a wise comforter	John 14:26
	He will be God	John 8:58, 10:30
	He will be the Everlasting Father	John 10:30, 14:8-11
	He will bring peace	John 14:27; Rom. 5:1
	There will be no end to His reign	Luke 1:31-33
	He will come from the line of David	Matt. 1:1-6

Isa. 42:1-7	God will delight in Him	Matt. 3:16-17
	He will be a servant	John 13:12-17; Luke 22:27
	He will not shout or cry out	Matt. 12:15-21
	He will be meek	Matt. 11:29; Luke 23:34
	He will establish justice	Matt. 23:23; John 2:16
	He will be a light to the Gentiles	John 10:16, 12:46; Luke 2:25-32; 1 John 2:2
	He will open blind eyes and deliver those in darkness	John 9:6-7, 10:9-11
Isa. 53:1-12	He will be despised and rejected	Luke 23:21-23
	He will bear our suffering and be pierced for our sins	John 19:37
	His punishment will bring us peace	Col. 1:20
	He will not defend Himself	Matt. 27:12
	He will be buried in a rich man's tomb	Matt. 27:57-61
	He will be sinless	Matt. 26:59-60; John 19:4; Luke 23:41, 47; 1 Pet. 2:22-25
	He will be numbered among sinners	Luke 23:32
	After His suffering, He will see life	Luke 24:5-8

REASON #3: RELIABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

*The Bible is the most well-substantiated
historical document in history;
no other text comes close.*

- ▶ The New Testament has 23,986 manuscripts with the earliest dating to AD 130—just 100 years after the actual events took place. After the New Testament, Homer’s Iliad has the most manuscripts available, around 1,800. Most documents of antiquity have only a few dozen existing manuscripts, while others have a couple hundred—these dating 400-2000 years from their originals.⁴ To give you a visual picture of how the New Testament stacks up with other ancient writings, consider that the average classical writer’s manuscripts piled up would measure about four feet high, and the New Testament manuscripts would measure more than one mile high!⁵
- ▶ Discovered from 1946-1956 in the Qumran caves near the Dead Sea, the Dead Sea Scrolls include 941 ancient scrolls, 240 of which are Biblical (dating from 250 BC – AD 68).⁶ This incredible archaeological find produced texts drastically closer to their originals than we had previously known—the Qumran copy of Isaiah (dated 125 BC) predates the next earliest copy available by 1,000 years. The discovery highlights the astonishing accuracy of Bible copying methods.⁷
- ▶ As time goes on, historians and scientists are finding more—not less—evidence of the Bible’s accuracy and reliability. If something is truly unreliable, over time it becomes more clearly false, not more trustworthy.

“All of modern
archaeology is
confirming, over
and over again,
the accuracy of
the Bible.”

– DR. MICHAEL YOUSSEF



CONSIDER THE EVIDENCE:

The Bible's Unparalleled Reliability

More ancient manuscripts exist of the Greek New Testament than of any other work—and we accept the historical reliability of texts with far less evidence than the New Testament provides. That the New Testament was copied with greater frequency than any other book in history affirms that the events recorded in the Bible were important. That it was transmitted accurately from copy to copy affirms that it was genuine and not corrupted over time. That the time gap between its copies and its original was only 50 years shows that its accounts were as close to the actual events as possible.

The Reliability of the New Testament Compared to Trusted Works of Other Ancient Historians⁸

AUTHOR	WORK	DATE WRITTEN	EARLIEST EXISTING MANUSCRIPT(S)	TIME GAP BETWEEN ORIGINAL & COPY	NUMBER OF COPIES
Homer	Iliad	800 BC	400 BC	400 years	1,800+
Herodotus	History	480-425 BC	AD 1-100	1,350 years	109
Plato	Tetralogies	400 BC	AD 895	1,300 years	210
Caesar	Gallic Wars	100-44 BC	AD 800-900	950 years	251
Tacitus	Annals	AD 100	AD 850, 1050, 1400-1500	750-950 years	33
Pliny, the Elder	Natural History	AD 49-79	1 fragment: AD 400-500 Remaining: AD 1300-1500	1 fragment: 400 years Remaining: 750 years	200
Thucydides	History	460-400 BC	200-300 BC	200 years	96
Greek NT Manuscripts		AD 50-100	AD 125	50	5,838

Biblical Manuscripts, Scrolls, and Translations Available⁹

New Testament Greek Manuscripts	5,838
New Testament Early Translations	18,524
Old Testament Manuscripts	42,000
TOTAL BIBLICAL MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCES	66,362

REASON #4:

UNCHANGING NATURE

The Bible is the most scrutinized book of all time, and yet it has remained unchanged for hundreds of years.

- ▶ In the course of the early church, lists of Christian literature were compiled in the third to fourth centuries to record what was considered divinely inspired as God's Word—and time and again the same 27 books were confirmed as Scripture.¹⁰ Early church fathers documented what particular books were widely used in the church and councils met regularly to carefully consider what should be included in the New Testament. Led by the Holy Spirit, they did not weigh all literature equally, and their tendency was to exclude rather than include.¹¹ Today, the Bible as we know it has remained unchanged for more than 1,600 years.
- ▶ Despite intense opposition, the Bible has endured. Though emperors like Diocletian and Julian attempted to destroy it, countries like North Korea have attempted to forbid it, and many philosophers have attempted to refute it, the Bible has always come out unscathed.
- ▶ The Bible is as relevant today as it was the day it was written—from its timeless wisdom and enduring Truths to its still-unfolding story of redemption as we await the return of Christ. A book can become irrelevant in months or years, but our centuries-old Bible has an answer to the most important questions we could possibly ask. It also bears witness, through our own personal lives, that it is accurate, authoritative, and true.

“Some have tried to destroy it by argument. Others have tried to destroy it by force. Some have passed laws forbidding it. And yet the Bible has remained intact.”

– DR. MICHAEL YOUSSEF



CONSIDER THE EVIDENCE:

The Bible's Endurance Amid Opposition

Over the last 1,600 years, the Bible has withstood incredible opposition. Powerful people who once claimed to be its friends turned out to be its enemies. Ancient manuscripts were hidden with little hope of being discovered. Wayward church leaders sought to modify its message.

Yet the 66 books of the Bible have remained preserved despite these and many other hindrances:

- ▶ **Violent opposition** from some of history's most powerful political leaders—like Roman emperors Nero and Diocletian, who pushed for the extinction of Christianity
- ▶ The introduction of **dozens of forgeries and unbiblical texts**—like the Gnostic gospels discovered in 1945
- ▶ **Intense persecution** of Christians—including the martyrdom of nearly every apostle
- ▶ **Heresy and apostasy** in the church—like Marcion of Sinope's revisionist canon
- ▶ The **degradation of ancient documents** over time—from the brittleness of their scrolls to their fragmented pieces
- ▶ Hostility toward the Bible's **translation into modern languages**—including the persecution of Bible translators Wycliffe and Tyndale
- ▶ **Ever-changing cultures** and philosophical movements—whether the decline of Western civilization during the Dark Ages, the intellectual Age of Enlightenment, or today's postmodern world

It has also passed the test of reliability time and again:

- ▶ Written by **eyewitnesses** or colleagues of eyewitnesses
- ▶ **Accepted** by those closest to the events
- ▶ **Consistent** with the rest of Scripture
- ▶ Written in a timeframe **close to the events recorded**
- ▶ **Authentic** and unaltered

Furthermore, its message is not a self-help message or a get-rich-quick scheme; it's a call to die to self. How could such a book possibly survive such violence and rigor? It must be God's book! For if God is truly God, then His Kingdom cannot be shaken, dismantled, or destroyed. This was His plan all along.

“The reason the Bible is like no other book is because it is the very breath of God. That is why it still penetrates deep into the hearts of men and women today.”

– DR. MICHAEL YOUSSEF

How Was the Bible Formed?

How Was the Bible Formed?



The **Old Testament canon** began to form roughly 3,500 years ago. The Ten Commandments were some of God's first instructions to His people, and as God's relational history with Israel continued to unfold, the canon grew. The first five books of the Old Testament (also known as the Pentateuch, or Torah) were written by Moses, who led God's people out of slavery to the promised land of Canaan. The rest of the Old Testament features other historical accounts, prophecy, prayers, proverbs, and poetry that all provide remarkable insight into the character of God. Many of the books begin with lineages or authorship, which provide a solid basis for the background, context, and validity of Scripture. They also remind us that God is a relational God who interacted (and still interacts) with real people throughout history.

The **New Testament canon** began to form just 15 years after the events of Christ's death and resurrection with the writings of the

apostolic letters and histories. Churches circulated these early apostolic documents (accounts from eyewitnesses or colleagues of eyewitnesses) to bolster their faith and learn to live for Christ, considering them the very Word of God. For example, 2 Peter 3:16 (written AD 60) describes Paul's letters as Scripture, and 1 Timothy 5:18 (written in the mid-60s AD) quotes Luke as Scripture.

Over time, lists were created by **early church fathers**, and **councils** were convened to delineate which Christian writings had the authority of Holy Scripture. Remarkably, as early as AD 250, church leaders were already regarding the 27 books of the New Testament as Scripture¹²—and in AD 367, the New Testament canon on which we feast today was affirmed with finality by the church. **Then time and again—despite disputes and disagreements—the same 27 books were affirmed as the New Testament canon, generally using these three attributes:**

1 APOSTOLIC

Did the literature originate from an apostle or a colleague of an apostle? This determination was of chief importance as the canon emerged. Christians held fast to the teachings of those who had walked with Jesus and could testify to the wondrous mystery of the Gospel. In fact, all of the New Testament books we have today originated in the first century from apostolic sources—no other Christian writings were even around at this time.¹³ And having been written so soon after the events, they are staunchly reliable.

2 ACCURATE

Were the teachings doctrinally correct and sound according to the teachings of Christ and His apostles? Obviously, Scripture must align with the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. So if any writing veered from what Jesus had taught His disciples, it was inexorably excluded. For example, the Gnostic gospels found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945, were written mostly in the fourth century and incorporate false teachings about nearly every key doctrine of Christianity¹⁴, such as the idea that Jesus was not God incarnate.¹⁵ Conversely, though the author of Hebrews is unknown, Hebrews (like Luke's records) is written in accordance with Christ's disciples—the eyewitnesses of His teachings (see Heb. 2:3), making it apostolic. And because it was written around AD 65, in the lifetime of other eyewitnesses, its Truth could be easily corroborated.

3 AUTHORITATIVE

Did the churches of early Christianity continuously and universally accept the material as accurate, trustworthy, and relevant? The 27 books that we have today as our New Testament canon were used regularly and continuously throughout the early church in worship services. This demonstrates that the early Christians, filled with the Holy Spirit, trusted these books as authoritative for their lives and cherished them as God's very Word.

The Authority of Scripture

In discussing the role of the church councils, we must acknowledge one key fact about Scripture's authority: **The early church didn't create, compile, or stand as the final authority on the Bible.** Early Christians simply recognized the legitimacy of the 66 books, measuring each one against the most logical standards of Truth: Is it reliable? Is it consistent? Is it corroborated? The Bible is, therefore, not a man-made construct contrived by a council or determined by men. Rather, its authority rests on God.

It's important to note that the confirmation of the canon of Scripture did not come without disagreements. For instance, some councils rejected certain books that were canonical, while others added in books that were not canonical. Yet, the 66-book Bible

as we know it has always won out in the end. God, in His sovereignty, has protected His Word throughout the ages—despite disagreements and schisms. If man had been the ultimate orchestrator of the canon, it would have fallen apart.

Ultimately, Jesus taught the full authority of the Old Testament (see Matt. 5:17-19, 12:40). He affirmed His words were equally authoritative (see Matt. 5:21-44)—which is why we can trust the gospels. The events and teachings of His earthly ministry were also penned by those who encountered Him themselves while other eyewitnesses were still alive to refute them—which is why we can trust the letters to the early church. Any documents that fell outside of these boundary lines never made it into the lasting canon of Scripture, and rightly so.

Why Did God Give Us a Definitive Bible Canon?

Throughout the Old Testament, we see that God's covenant with His people has always been written down (see Ex. 34:27, Deut. 4:13, 29:21). He knows that we are a forgetful people. In His grace, He gave us written documentation of His works, instructions, and covenants throughout history—trustworthy accounts penned by

those who had seen and encountered His works themselves.

God is just and holy. He Himself is Truth. He is not flippant with His Word. This is why He has established it, confirmed it, and protected it throughout the ages—from the days of Moses to the early church to today.

The Cost of Scripture

Many believers in Christ Jesus have given their blood, their freedom, and their very lives for the Word of God. Because of their desire to follow Christ and make the Gospel available to everyone, these brave believers have faced great opposition from political tyrants and even church leaders:

► **AD 303**

In an attempt to end Christianity, the Roman **Emperor Diocletian** orders the burning of every Bible his men can find—and the burning of every Christian, too.

► **AD 1377**

John Wycliffe, who translated the first English Bible, is accused of heresy and placed under house arrest.

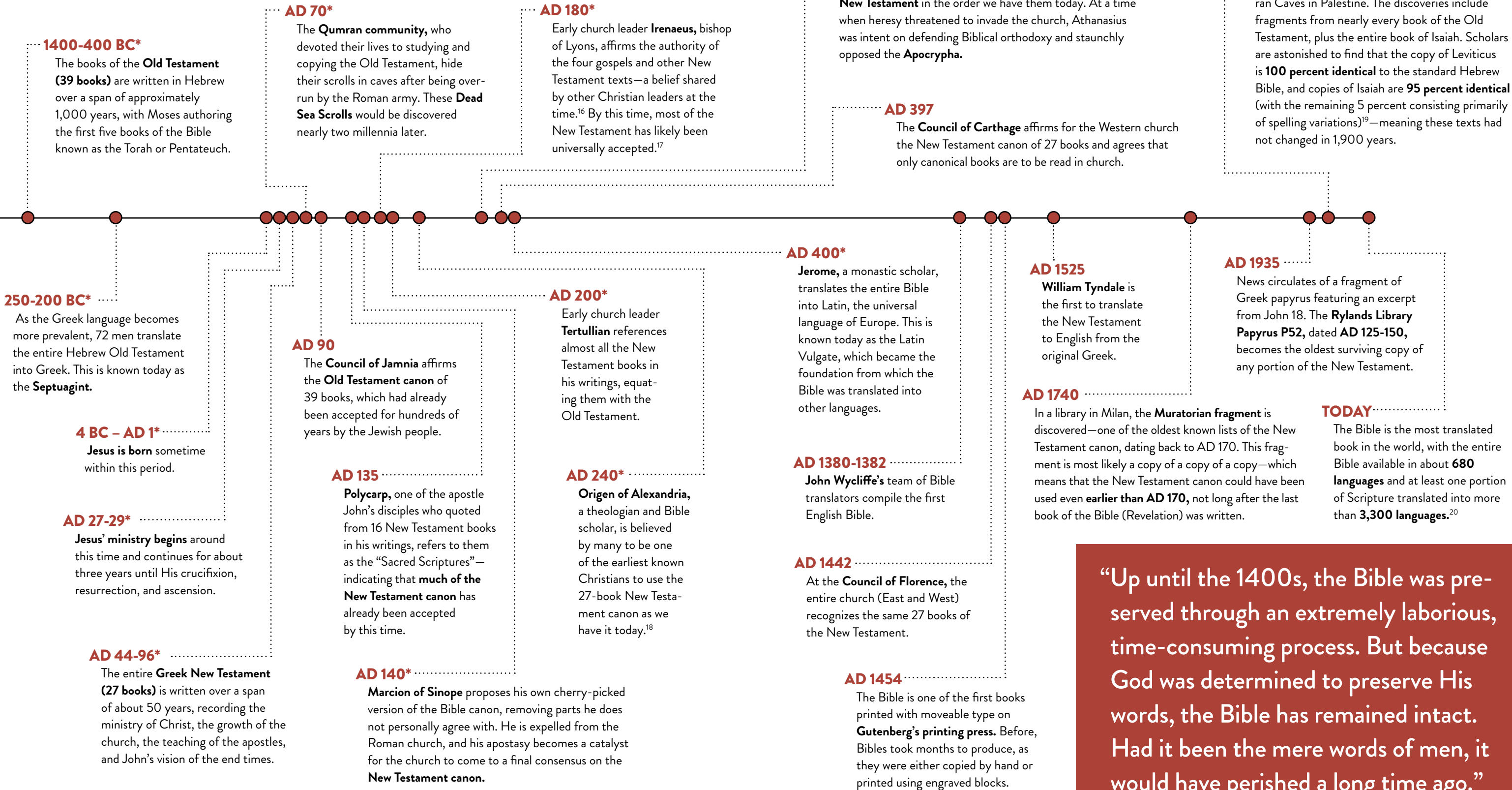
► **AD 1536**

William Tyndale, the first person to translate the New Testament from Greek to English, is strangled and burned at the stake. In England, it was forbidden to translate the Bible, for fear of the spread of Protestantism and the dissemination of the Bible to common people—for only the highly-educated could understand the Latin Bible. Many of Tyndale's associates were also killed, whether for supporting Tyndale, reading his translation, or smuggling them into the country.

And many are still giving their lives for the Gospel today.

It's crucial to remember the sacrifices our forefathers have made not only for Christ Himself, but for the preservation and dissemination of His words. How can we distort and disregard the Bible when we see the cost our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ have paid to advance its message?

A Fascinating Look at the History of the Bible



*Note: Dates are approximate.

“The unity of the Bible
is one of the greatest
evidences that the Holy
Spirit is its author.”

– DR. MICHAEL YOUSSEF

Why We Can Trust the Bible Over Other Religious Books

Why We Can Trust the Bible Over Other Religious Books

When compared to other religious books, the Bible proves to be more reliable, relatable, and authentic—from the volume of its original manuscripts to the consistency of its message to the historical eyewitness accounts of events. Even across translations, it remains remarkably consistent. That’s because, as Isaiah 40:8 and 1 Peter 1:25 tell us, “[T]he word of the Lord endures forever.” If something is truly God’s Word, it will stand on its own.

Examining Other Religious Texts

As we consider the reliability of other texts, we must ask four crucial questions:

1. What are its origins?
2. Is it reliable?
3. Is it internally consistent?
4. Is it corroborated?

In answering these questions, the Bible stands, while other religious texts do not.

RELIGIOUS TEXT	ORIGINS	MAIN MESSAGE	FAST FACTS
Book of Mormon (Mormonism)	Joseph Smith claimed to have translated the Book of Mormon from engravings on golden plates he found in Manchester, NY.	Salvation can be earned by a combination of faith and good works. We can even achieve equal status with Jesus, who is considered one of many sons of God.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Published by Joseph Smith in 1830▶ Believed to be the writings of ancient prophets living in America from 2200 BC-AD 421▶ The Mormon Church offers it as an extension of the Bible, although it includes many blatant departures from Biblical theology—for example, that children do not have a sin nature (compare Mor. 8:8 with Ps. 51:5); that our works save us (compare 2 Ne. 25:23 with Eph. 2:1-9); that the purpose of the Fall was for Adam and Eve to bear children (compare 2 Ne. 2:23-25 with Rom. 9:22-24); and the prophecy that “many plain and precious parts” would be removed from the Bible (compare 1 Ne. 13:26-28 with Mark 13:31, Matt. 5:18).

Quran (Islam)	The Angel Gabriel is believed to have appeared to Muhammad in a cave near Mecca and given him its first verses.	God is the creator and sustainer of all things. He alone is worthy of worship, and all will be held accountable to him. Therefore, the best chance of being rewarded in the hereafter is by practicing the Five Pillars of Islam: Tawheed—declaring that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger; Salaat—praying five times a day; Zakat—giving alms to the poor; Sawm—fasting during Ramadaan; and Hajj—making pilgrimage to Mecca.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Written from AD 609-632 ▶ Within just 20 years of Muhammad’s death, multiple canons existed ▶ In the seventh century, Muslim leader Caliph ‘Uthman decided to create a new, standardized Quran to eliminate any differences, so after finishing and distributing his version, he told Muslims to burn all other copies ▶ Some refused, so Quran “variants” persisted ▶ Today, more than 20 Arabic versions of the Quran exist, of which seven are recognized as authentic by Islam ▶ Encourages readers to read the Bible, which it directly contradicts—for example, it claims that Jesus was not crucified (Quran 4:157-158) and that there is no such thing as original sin (Quran 30:30).
Shruti and Smriti (Hinduism)	Diverse origins, with an almost unlimited volume of texts	All life is interconnected. Through meditation, good deeds, and other noble practices, we can accumulate good karma and move up to a higher caste in the next life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The more authoritative Shruti includes the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, and others ▶ The less authoritative Smriti includes many other epics and revered texts from sages ▶ Were composed and passed down orally for more than a millennium before being recorded in Sanskrit ▶ Hinduism is believed to have formed around 2300-1500 BC ▶ Uncertain origins, with no specific founder or author ▶ Considered more a “family of religions” than a single religion ▶ Gandhi reportedly called the Bhagavad Gita his “spiritual dictionary” ▶ Many different interpretations of the various texts
Tao Te Ching (Taoism)	Laozi, ancient Chinese philosopher	We can achieve perfection by becoming one with the ways of the universe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Published in the fourth century BC ▶ The world’s second most-widely translated book after the Bible ▶ Has 81 chapters and is only 5,000 words long ▶ Known for using ambiguous language ▶ Significant debate exists over whether the text’s author, Laozi, ever actually existed

Tripitaka (Buddhism)	Sermons and doctrines from its founder, Buddha, recorded by his followers	Life is full of suffering, and suffering is caused by our desires. If we can be freed from these desires, we will be freed from suffering. The Eightfold Path (right speech, livelihood, action, mindfulness, understanding, concentration, effort, and thought) is the way out of suffering and the gateway to nirvana, or enlightenment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 11 times larger than the Bible ▶ Passed down orally from the 5th-1st centuries BC, then recorded in the 1st century BC ▶ Includes Buddha's teachings, rules for the monastic community, meditation techniques, songs, and poetry ▶ Little is known and recorded about the life of Buddha, but he is believed to have lived sometime within the 6th-4th centuries BC ▶ Buddha's biography, the Buddhacarita, came nearly five centuries after he died
----------------------	---	--	--

Important Observations about Other Religious Texts

With every other religious book, we see some crucial commonalities:

- ▶ They are written either by one person whose visions or teachings were not corroborated by others or by multiple men with an inconsistent message.
- ▶ Some claim present-day revelations from God that are equal to the Bible, despite being in direct conflict with Scripture.
- ▶ Some do not even claim that they are divine or authoritative.
- ▶ The core message is essentially the same: Through right living, you can earn your way to heaven.

With Christianity, we see something vastly different:

- ▶ Jesus is a historical figure of epic proportions, with widely documented proof of His life and ministry.
- ▶ The message of the Bible is consistent, the sources are reliable, and the accounts are corroborated by both eyewitnesses and, in many cases, secular history.
- ▶ Instead of man working to save himself, God sends His Son to save man.

“For the God of the universe to save sinners by grace alone goes against every human instinct. For the God of the universe to love freely and expect nothing in return runs contrary to every other religious system in the world.”

Trusting the Evidence

What Does the Evidence Say?

As we consider what we believe and why, we should apply the same critical thinking used in the court of law to our own belief systems. If something is true, the evidence will speak for itself. To this end, we can conclude that Christianity is not a blind faith based on the random claims of a random person. It is a reasonable faith based on objective evidence:

- ▶ The Bible is the most **historically substantiated** document in human history.
- ▶ Its message is **completely consistent** despite diverse authorship.
- ▶ It was written by **eyewitnesses** and eyewitnesses of eyewitnesses, and one of its primary writers (Paul) was once an enemy.
- ▶ It contains **hundreds of specific predictions** fulfilled with precision.
- ▶ Its message has remained **unchanged** for hundreds of years.
- ▶ **History supports** that Jesus lived and then died on a cross and that His body was never found.
- ▶ Only the Creator Himself could **defy the laws of creation**, silencing a storm, turning water into wine, and defeating death by rising from the grave.
- ▶ The disciples had nothing to gain from following Christ; instead, they endured **intense persecution**.
- ▶ The beauty and order of creation point to a **Creator**—from the grandness of the universe to the tiniest cells in our bodies.
- ▶ Every year, scientists and archaeologists discover **more evidence** for Christianity, not less.
- ▶ God is still **radically transforming lives** today.

God, in His grace, has given us ample evidence to believe that the claims of Christianity are trustworthy and true—that Christ lived, died, and rose again, all because He loves you and wants you to spend eternity with Him (John 3:16).

But following Christ still takes faith. It requires a complete surrender of your life to the powerful and loving Creator who made you. It requires a deep work of God's Holy Spirit stirring your heart to follow Him.

If you are a Christian, do you know why you believe what you believe—enough to confidently share it with others? If you are not a Christian, have you ever asked, “Why don't I believe?” and then studied the Bible to see if those reasons are actually unfounded?

God wants to reveal Himself to you. He promises that “those who seek me will find me” (Prov. 8:17). Seek Him today, and you will find Him.

“For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.”

– 2 PETER 1:16

Why We Need the Bible

The Power of God's Word

Jesus said, “You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. . . . yet you refuse to come to me to have life” (John 5:39-40). The ultimate purpose of Scripture is not just to teach us facts about God, but to lead us into a living relationship with God Himself.

Today, less than 18 percent of professing Christians read the Bible on a daily basis. Many believers have given up reading the Word of God, understanding its power, and finding the treasure in its pages. May it not be the case for you!

When God's Word enters your heart and mind, it will change your life. As you read it with a willing heart, you'll find that God:

- ▶ **Reveals** the state of your heart (Heb. 4:12)
- ▶ **Nourishes** you spiritually (Matt. 4:4)
- ▶ **Cleanses** and **sanctifies** you (John 17:17, Eph. 5:26)
- ▶ **Guides** you with wisdom (Ps. 119:105, 130)
- ▶ **Builds** your faith (Rom. 10:17)
- ▶ **Dismantles** the lies (Jer. 23:29)
- ▶ **Teaches, rebukes, and corrects** you (2 Tim. 3:16)
- ▶ **Trains** you in righteousness and **equips** you for God's work (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- ▶ **Warns** you and **convicts** you (1 Cor. 10:11, Acts 2:37)
- ▶ **Renews** your hope (Rom. 15:4)
- ▶ **Strengthens** you for battle (Eph. 16:17)
- ▶ **Fills** you with peace (Ps. 85:8)
- ▶ **Shows** you the voice of the Shepherd (John 10:24-28)
- ▶ **Points** you to Christ (John 20:31)

What we cannot do for ourselves, Scripture does for us. Through the power of the Holy Spirit working in us, God's Word heals and restores us. It gives us strength to stand up against the current of culture rather than go with the flow of the world. It fills us to overflowing and gives us power for living.

So open your Bible every day. Read, believe, and obey the Word of God. As you feast upon the Scriptures, He's going to speak to you, guide you, and grow you. This is the work of God's Spirit in your life!

“Lord, give us hunger
for Your Word, that
we could not go a day
without it. Give us
thirst, that we would
drink deeply and not
only ourselves be
transformed, but also
transform the world
around us.”

– DR. MICHAEL YOUSSEF

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the Catholic Bible different from the Protestant Bible?

The 14 disputed Old Testament books of the Apocrypha were written in Greek, so Jews didn't even consider them part of authentic Hebrew Scripture. It's also important to note that Jesus cited the Old Testament more than 295 times²¹, but not once did He cite the books of the Apocrypha. Seven of those books are still included in the Catholic Bible, even though, during the Reformation, they were excluded from the Old Testament canon. Martin Luther called the Apocrypha "books which are not considered equal to the Holy Scriptures" because of their unclear origins, uncertain authorship, historical errors, and theological inconsistencies with the rest of Scripture.

What about new discoveries of ancient texts?

Several additional "ancient" texts have been discovered in Egypt over the past 125 years. Scholars continue to measure these texts with the attributes for canonicity (apostolic, accurate, authoritative) and have rightly excluded them on these grounds.

How can we really know that the Bible is inerrant?

God's Word makes frequent claims that it is, indeed, God's Word (see 2 Kin. 17:13, Num. 23:19, Isa. 55:11, 1 Cor. 2:13, 2 Tim. 3:16-17, et al.), and if it is God's Word, then it can be trusted. Furthermore, its authorship, fulfilled claims, and historical evidence confirm that it is reliable. Ultimately, if we say that the Bible is not inerrant, then we claim that God cannot be trusted. We make ourselves the judges of Truth, and we give ourselves a way out of any doctrine with which we do not agree.

What is "progressive revelation"?

Progressive revelation is the idea that God has revealed Himself to His people over time rather than all at once. We see from the Old Testament to the New that this is true, with God ordaining an old covenant (relating to God on the basis of the Law) that would be a shadow of the new covenant (relating to God on the basis of Christ's atoning work on the cross). The new covenant was not a contradiction, but rather, a fulfillment of the old. This is important to note because, in today's postmodern culture, some professing Christians are using progressive revelation as an excuse to disregard certain passages of Scripture they don't agree with—in other words, "This portion of Scripture does not align with our culture; therefore, it is irrelevant." It's crucial that we remember that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever," and what He says in His Word, He will never contradict (Heb. 13:8).

How can the Bible be infallible when it was written by men?

One could argue that this is the reason we know it is infallible! The Bible was written across a timespan of more than 1,600 years and by different men from different professions and different times, and yet they all say the same thing. The only way to make sense of this is that there's only one Author who used all these men to write the book.

It's interesting that we don't apply this question in other areas of scholarship. For instance, nobody says, "A man wrote that math book—that means I can't trust it!" The more important question to ask is: Is it consistent, accurate, and corroborated? And the Bible always passes the test.

What about the discrepancies in the Bible—like who was at the tomb when Christ rose from the dead, or “Blessed in the poor in spirit” in Matthew 5 vs. “Blessed are the poor” in Luke 6?

There are several places in Scripture where one author says something in a different way than another author or certain details are included or excluded. When you come across these seeming inconsistencies in Scripture, consider: (1) Do these differences change the meaning, theology, or message of the passage? (2) Are these details truly irreconcilable?

We invite you to look into such passages with a critical eye. In nearly every case, you'll find that the answer to both of these questions is no.

Do we really need to take the Bible literally?

There are certainly many figures of speech in the Bible that are not meant to be taken literally. For instance, when Jesus said, "I am the vine," He was not saying that He was a plant. However, semantics aside, we should certainly interpret the Bible at face value; we should assume it means what it says. For instance, when Jesus said, "The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom . . . all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 41-42), we should assume that hell is a real place where real people will go.

Jesus took the Bible literally (see Matt. 4:7-10, Matt. 15:1-9, Matt. 19:4-6, Matt. 22:31-32, Luke 4:17-21, et al.), and the disciples took Christ's commands literally (see Matt. 4:19, 1 Cor. 11:23-26, Jas. 1:22, et al.). So should we. When we make ourselves the judges of what should be taken seriously in Scripture, we elevate ourselves above God—and chaos and sin ensue.

If God is unchanging, why does He seem so different in the Old Testament versus the New Testament?

When we look at isolated events in Scripture, such as the flood or the annihilation of Sodom and Gomorrah, we may feel a sense of doubt about God's compassion. But God's wrath is just, and His choice to patiently withhold it in its full measure throughout the Old Testament testifies to the depths of His merciful love (Ps. 78:38, Jer. 4:27, Ex. 32:11-14). Conversely, those who see the New Testament as divulging only God's love and grace overlook God's wrathful acts and Jesus' harsh words and warnings in the New Testament (Acts 5:1-11, Matt. 11:20-24, Rev. 22:18-19). In reality, throughout Scripture, the all-wise God holds these two attributes—His wrath and His love—in perfect balance. We must therefore be wary of pitting the Old Testament against the New, for it is all one singularly woven story of God's love toward a wayward people. God does not change, and this simple Truth gives us hope, for it means we can know and trust Him.

Don't all religious texts essentially teach the same thing—to be good people?

No. What sets the Bible—and the Christian faith—apart from every other world religion is the foundational belief that we cannot earn our way to heaven; only by trusting in Jesus Christ can we spend eternity with Him. This flies in the face of every other belief system, which all teach essentially the same thing: that works can earn our way to heaven. In every other belief system, man must work his way toward God; in Christianity, God came down to man.

How can the Bible be reliable when there are so many different translations?

Many Hebrew and Greek words do not have exact English equivalents, which is why there is reasonable variation across the different translations. Language also evolves over time—for instance, few people today speak with the “thees” and “thous” of King James English.

Bible translations typically fall into three categories depending on how the words are translated from the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts: word-for-word, thought-by-thought, and paraphrased. Reliable, time-tested translations in the first two categories—like the NIV and ESV—are compiled by scholars intent on providing the most accurate reads of the original text. Their message remains the same, and variations in vocabulary and sentence structure do not change the meaning of the text. However, Bibles that fall into the “paraphrased” category take more creative liberties in their translations, and readers should be cautious if they are using these as their primary Bible translation.

Why were there 400 years of silence—400 years where no words of Scripture were written—between the Old Testament and the New Testament?

The Bible does not record every single event that ever happened in the life of God's people (see John 21:25—“the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written”), but it does record the most important information we need to understand God's redemptive plan throughout history. In this case, the Old Testament concludes with the anticipation of the coming Messiah (see Mal. 3:1), which leads perfectly into the next most important chapter in God's plan: the fulfillment of this prophecy—the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, as laid out in the beginning of the New Testament.

What is the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls?

The Dead Sea Scrolls are ancient manuscripts featuring copies of Old Testament texts. Discovered in the Qumran Caves near the northern shores of the Dead Sea, these scrolls reveal the accuracy of early Bible-copying methods. For instance, the fragment of Leviticus was 100 percent identical to the standard Hebrew Bible we have today, which is astonishing given that the Dead Sea Scrolls were penned somewhere in the 300s-400s BC. They are the oldest-known Bible manuscripts ever discovered.

Why aren't the books of the Bible in chronological order?

When the Old Testament was first translated from Hebrew to Greek (also known as the Septuagint), the 70 men who translated it grouped the books strategically rather than chronologically, with the historical books followed by the wisdom books and, finally, the prophets. The New Testament, therefore, is grouped similarly—with the historical books (the gospels) followed by the epistles and then the book of Revelation. The Bible is still largely chronological, and its first and last books (Genesis and Revelation) are very intentional. Ultimately, it's the Word of God no matter the order in which you read it!

How do we know the Bible canon is closed?

One of the key attributes of canonicity has always been apostolic authorship—that only the accounts of those who were eyewitnesses to the life of Christ are trustworthy. As we now live 2,000 years after the life of Christ—with no eyewitnesses still living today—we can now say, understandably, that the Bible canon is closed. What God has revealed through Christ is both sufficient and complete.

We should be wary of those who claim a brand-new revelation from God not found in Scripture or who equate anything to the Scriptures that has no basis in apostleship. We can also be assured that anything God speaks to us personally will always line up with the words He has already given to us through the Bible—for “God is not a human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind” (Num. 23:19).

Why did it take so long for the books of the New Testament to come together?

It took roughly 150-250 years for the New Testament canon to solidify. In the days of the early church, the original New Testament Scriptures were written in different locations and copies were labored over by hand, letter-for-letter. There wasn't a project manager making sure everyone met their deadlines and sent their manuscripts to the same publisher. There wasn't an office copy machine to print and distribute copies, either. It took years to circulate the Scriptures, and time had to reveal which documents were authoritative. In addition, the apostles were focused on obeying Christ's command to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” (Mark 16:15).²² Only when heresy began to abound was the need for the canon fully acknowledged.

In this digital age where events are reported in real-time, it's hard to comprehend the labor that went into compiling the New Testament. But as we consider all these factors, the wonder is not how slowly the New Testament came together, but how quickly each book was accepted as authoritative.

Additional Resources

Chronology & Authorship of the Books of the Bible

It is fascinating and encouraging to study the history of Scripture—whether the people involved or those divinely inspired to record it. Such study can bring to life the subjects and stories of the Bible as you make different historical connections.

As you to dive into the history of Scripture, may this chart serve to enliven the events of the Bible as you consider when they likely took place, when they were recorded, and by whom. The date of the earliest existing manuscript of each book is also provided to demonstrate the remarkable reliability of the documents. *Please note: All dates are approximate.*

The Law	Poetry	History	Major Prophets	Minor Prophets	Gospels	Paul's Letters	General Letters	Prophecy
BOOK OF THE BIBLE (IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)		DATE OF HISTORICAL EVENTS RECORDED		AUTHOR		DATE COMPOSED		DATE OF EARLIEST EXISTING MANUSCRIPT
OLD TESTAMENT								
Genesis		Creation to Middle Kingdom Period of Egypt		Moses – prophet who led Israel from slavery in Egypt to the promised land		1446-1406 BC		332-63 BC
Job		At or before the patriarchal period, 2166-1660 BC (Job is a Gentile patriarch—much like Abraham)		Job or Moses		Considered the earliest; date unknown		332-63 BC
Exodus		Middle Kingdom Period of Egypt to 1446 BC		Moses		1446-1406 BC		332-63 BC
Leviticus		1446-1445 BC		Moses		1446-1406 BC		332-63 BC
Numbers		1444-1406 BC		Moses		1446-1406 BC		37-4 BC
Deuteronomy		1406 BC		Moses		1446-1406 BC		332-63 BC
Psalms		1531-444 BC (probable occasions for which each Psalm was composed)		Various – but primarily David, the shepherd-turned-king who defeated many of Israel’s enemies		1410-450 BC		168-63 BC

Joshua	1406-1350 BC	Unknown	1405-1385 BC	168-63 BC
Judges	1350-1078 BC	Unknown	1043 BC	37-4 BC
Ruth	1302-1213 BC	Unknown	1030-1010 BC	168-63 BC
1 Samuel, 2 Samuel	1100-970 BC	Unknown	931-722 BC	332-63 BC
Song of Songs	1000 BC	Solomon – son of David who became king of Israel; known for his practical and poetic writings	971-965 BC	332-63 BC
1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles	1000-488 BC	Unknown – traditionally attributed to Ezra	450-430 BC	37-4 BC
Proverbs	971-686 BC	Various – but primarily Solomon	971-686 BC	37-4 BC
Ecclesiastes	970-931 BC	Solomon	940-931 BC	37-4 BC
1 Kings, 2 Kings	970-562 BC	Unknown – traditionally attributed to Jeremiah	561-538 BC	168-63 BC
Obadiah	840 BC	Obadiah – prophet	840 BC	50-1 BC
Joel	835 BC	Joel – prophet	835-796 BC	50-1 BC
Jonah	790 BC	Jonah – reluctant prophet God sent to warn Nineveh of judgment	775 BC	50-1 BC
Amos	780 BC	Amos – shepherd from Judah whom God called to prophesy against the king of Israel	750 BC	50-1 BC
Isaiah	760-698 BC	Isaiah – prophet whose influence spanned four generations of Judean kings	700-681 BC	168-63 BC
Hosea	750 BC	Hosea – prophet whom God called to marry an unfaithful wife, symbolic of God's relationship with Israel	750-710 BC	50-1 BC
Micah	735 BC	Micah – prophet	735-710 BC	50-1 BC
Nahum	700 BC	Nahum – prophet	650 BC	50-1 BC
Jeremiah	630-580 BC	Jeremiah – prophet	630-580 BC	200-1 BC

Zephaniah	630 BC	Zephaniah – prophet and descendant of King Hezekiah	635-625 BC	50-1 BC
Habakkuk	610-605 BC	Habakkuk – prophet	615-605 BC	50-1 BC
Daniel	606-534 BC	Daniel – prophet	536-530 BC	168-63 BC
Ezekiel	595-574 BC	Ezekiel – prophet	595-574 BC	37-4 BC
Lamentations	586 BC	Jeremiah – prophet	586 BC	332-63 37-4 BC
Ezra	538-440 BC	Ezra – scribe who led a group of Israelites from exile back to the promised land	460-440 BC	168-63 BC
Haggai	520 BC	Haggai – prophet	520 BC	50-1 BC
Zechariah	520-490 BC	Zechariah – prophet and priest	520-470 BC	50-1 BC
Esther	483-473 BC	Unknown	450-331 BC	AD 100
Nehemiah	444-430 BC	Nehemiah – cup-bearer to the king of Persia who led the rebuilding of Jerusalem's broken city walls	424-400 BC	168-63 BC
Malachi	432 BC	Malachi – prophet	432-424 BC	50-1 BC
NEW TESTAMENT				
Matthew	4 BC- AD 30	Matthew – apostle	AD 60-65	AD 250
Luke	4 BC- AD 30	Luke – colleague of Paul	AD 60	AD 250
Mark	AD 26-30	Mark – colleague of Paul	AD 57-59	AD 250
John	AD 26-30	John – apostle	AD 85-95	AD 125
Acts	AD 30-64	Luke – colleague of Paul	AD 60-62	AD 250
James	AD 45-49	James – half-brother of Jesus	AD 45-49	AD 300
Galatians	AD 49	Paul – apostle	AD 49	AD 200
1 Thessalonians	AD 51	Paul – apostle	AD 51	AD 200
2 Thessalonians	AD 51	Paul – apostle	AD 51	AD 300
1 Corinthians	AD 55	Paul – apostle	AD 55	AD 200
2 Corinthians	AD 56	Paul – apostle	AD 56	AD 200

Romans	AD 57	Paul – apostle	AD 57	AD 200
Philemon	AD 60-61	Paul – apostle	AD 60-61	AD 200
Ephesians	AD 60-61	Paul – apostle	AD 60-61	AD 200
Colossians	AD 60-61	Paul – apostle	AD 60-61	AD 200
Philippians	AD 61-62	Paul – apostle	AD 61-62	AD 200
1 Timothy	AD 63	Paul – apostle	AD 63	AD 300
Titus	AD 63	Paul – apostle	AD 63	AD 300
1 Peter	AD 64	Peter – apostle	AD 64	AD 300
2 Peter	AD 64-66	Peter – apostle	AD 64-66	AD 300
Hebrews	AD 64-69	Unknown – believed to be Paul	AD 64-69	AD 200
2 Timothy	AD 67	Paul – apostle	AD 67	AD 300
Jude	AD 67-80	Jude – half-brother of Jesus	AD 67-80	AD 300
1 John	AD 90	John – apostle	AD 90	AD 300
2 John	AD 90	John – apostle	AD 90	AD 300
3 John	AD 90	John – apostle	AD 90	AD 300
Revelation	AD 95 – Second Coming	John – apostle	AD 95	AD 250

Jesus in Every Book of the Bible

From beginning to end, the Bible tells the story of the coming Messiah, providing deep insight into His character. These names and attributes of Christ are just a glimpse into the countless ways the Savior is on display throughout Scripture.

BOOK	CHRIST PORTRAYED	VERSE REFERENCE
Genesis	Seed of a Woman	Gen. 3:15
Exodus	Passover Lamb	Ex. 12:13, 21
Leviticus	High Priest	Lev. 16:32a
Numbers	Smitten Rock That Brings Forth Living Water	Num. 20:8
Deuteronomy	Prophet	Deut. 18:17-20
Joshua	Captain of the Lord of Hosts	Josh. 5:13-15
Judges	Great and Final Judge	Judg. 2:16, 18
Ruth	Heavenly Kinsman	Ruth 3:9
1 & 2 Samuel	Anointed One	1 Sam. 24:6
1 & 2 Kings	King of kings and Lord of lords	1 Kin. 3:9, 9:5
1 & 2 Chronicles	Glory and the Temple of God	2 Chron. 5:13-14
Ezra	Teacher from God	Ez. 7:10
Nehemiah	Rebuilder of Broken Lives	Neh. 2:5
Esther	Protector of His People	Esth. 4:14
Job	Comforter	Job 42:10-17
Psalms	Good Shepherd	Ps. 23:1
Ecclesiastes	Preacher of the Kingdom of God	Ecc. 12:9
Song of Songs	Bridegroom	Song 2:4
Isaiah	Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace	Isa. 9:6
Jeremiah	Potter	Jer. 18:5-6
Lamentations	Weeping Prophet	Lam. 1:16
Ezekiel	Wheel in the Middle of the Wheel	Ezek. 1:15-21, 28b
Daniel	Son of Man and the Fourth Man in the Fiery Furnace	Dan. 7:13, 3:25
Hosea	Love of God to the Backslider	Hos. 14:4
Joel	Baptism of the Holy Spirit	Joel 2:28
Amos	Restorer of the Ruins	Amos 9:11-15

Obadiah	Judge of All Who Do Evil	Obad. 1:15
Jonah	Salvation of Our Lord	Jonah 2:9
Micah	Ruler Over Israel	Mic. 5:2
Nahum	Stronghold in the Day of Trouble	Nah. 1:7
Habakkuk	God of Mercy	Hab. 3:2
Zephaniah	Mighty Warrior Who Saves	Zeph. 3:17
Haggai	Desire of All Nations	Hag. 2:6-7
Zechariah	Branch of Jehovah; the Son Pierced for Us	Zech. 6:12, 12:10
Malachi	Refiner's Fire and Sun of Righteousness	Mal. 3:3, 4:2
Matthew	Kingly Messiah and Suffering Servant	Matt. 21:1-9
Mark	Miracle Worker	Mark 6:2
Luke	Savior for All	Luke 2:25-32
John	Lamb of God Who Takes Away the Sin of the World	John 1:29
Acts	Risen Lord; Spirit Who Dwells Within Us	Acts 1:4-11
Romans	Our Justification	Rom. 4:25
1 & 2 Corinthians	Our Sanctification	1 Cor. 1:30, 6:11
Galatians	Our Liberation	Gal. 5:1
Ephesians	Our Perfection	Eph. 4:13
Philippians	Our Joy	Phil. 4:4
Colossians	Head of the Body, the Church	Col. 1:18
1 & 2 Thessalonians	Coming Lord	1 Thess. 5:23
1 & 2 Timothy	Judge of All Men	2 Tim. 4:1
Titus	Redeemer of the World	Titus 2:13-14
Philemon	Friend Who Sticks Closer Than a Brother	Philem. 1:9b-12, 15-16
Hebrews	Author and Finisher of Our Faith	Heb. 12:2
James	Power of Our Faith	Jas. 2:26
1 & 2 Peter	Chief Shepherd and the Overseer of Our Souls	1 Pet. 5:4; 1 Pet. 2:25
1 & 2 & 3 John	Word of Life	1 John 1:1-2
Jude	Coming One	Jude 1:14
Revelation	Alpha and Omega, Beginning and End, Lion and the Lamb, King of kings, Lord of lords!	Rev. 5:5-8, 19:16, 22:13

Endnotes

1. Ham, Ken. The New Answers Book 2. Master Books, 2008. Google books. Web. 30 May 2019. <https://books.google.com/books?id=ZjZiV5xxI54C&printsec=frontcover&dq=the+new+answers+book+2&hl=en&sa=X&ved=oahUKEwjdsf_UosPiAhVIs1kKHxhTDc4Q6AEISDAG#v=onepage&q=the%20new%20answers%20book%202&f=false>.
2. Reagan, Dr. David R. "Applying the Science of Probability to the Scriptures." Lamb and Lion Ministries. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://christinprophecy.org/articles/applying-the-science-of-probability-to-the-scriptures/>>.
3. Wolfmüller, Bryan. "456 Old Testament Passages considered Messianic by the Rabbis." World Wide Wolfmüller. 1 April 2019. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://wolfmüller.co/456-old-testament-passages-considered-messianic-by-the-rabbis/>>.
4. McDowell, Sean. "What is the most recent manuscript count for the New Testament?" Sean McDowell. 13 March 2018. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://seanmcdowell.org/blog/what-is-the-most-recent-manuscript-count-for-the-new-testament>>.
5. Ibid.
6. Stetzer, Ed. "A Closer Look: The Significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls." Christianity Today. 29 February 2012. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2012/february/closer-look-significance-of-dead-sea-scrolls.html>>.
7. Slick, Matt. "Dead Sea Scrolls." Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://carm.org/dead-sea-scrolls>>.
8. McDowell, Dr. Josh D. "The Bibliographical Test." Josh McDowell Ministry. 13 August 2014. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://www.josh.org/wp-content/uploads/Bibliographical-Test-Update-08.13.14.pdf>>.
9. Ibid.
10. The Gospel Coalition. "Why You Can Rely on the Canon." YouTube, commentary by Michael Kruger. 23 March 2014. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWm2Sg-qRrg>>.
11. Licona, Mike. "How the Canon of the Bible Was Formed." YouTube. 31 March 2016. Web 30 May 2019. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=soBCm2cRx9w>>.
12. Kruger, Michael. "What is the Earliest Complete List of the Canon of the New Testament?" Canon Fodder. 19 October 2015. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://www.michaeljkruger.com/what-is-the-earliest-complete-list-of-the-canon-of-the-new-testament/>>.
13. The Gospel Coalition. "Why You Can Rely on the Canon." YouTube, commentary by Michael Kruger. 23 March 2014. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWm2Sg-qRrg>>.
14. Got Questions. "What are the Gnostic gospels?" Got Questions. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://www.gotquestions.org/Gnostic-gospels.html>>.
15. Carpenter, Chris. "The Missing Gospels: Unearthing the Truth Behind Alternative Christianities." CBN. Web. 30 May 2019. <<http://www1.cbn.com/missing-gospels-unearthing-truth-behind-alternative-christianities>>.

16. Kruger, Michael. "Ten Basic Facts about the NT Canon that Every Christian Should Memorize #5: 'The Four Gospels are Well Established by the End of the Second Century.'" Canon Fodder. 4 April 2013. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://www.michaeljkruger.com/ten-basic-facts-about-the-nt-canon-that-every-christian-should-memorize-5-the-four-gospels-are-well-established-by-the-end-of-the-second-century/>>.
17. Edwards, Brian H. "Why 66?" Answers in Genesis. 3 June 2010. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://answersingenesis.org/the-word-of-god/why-66-books/>>.
18. Kruger, Michael. "10 Misconceptions about the NT Canon: #10: 'Athanasius' Festal Letter (367 A.D.) is the First Complete List of New Testament Books.'" Canon Fodder. 11 December 2012. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://www.michaeljkruger.com/10-misconceptions-about-the-nt-canon-10-athanasius-festal-letter-367-a-d-is-the-first-complete-list-of-new-testament-books/>>.
19. Zukeran, Dr. Patrick. "The Dead Sea Scrolls Shed Light on the Accuracy of our Bible." Probe Ministries. 17 April 2006. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://probe.org/the-dead-sea-scrolls/>>.
20. "Scripture & Language Statistics 2018." Wycliffe Global Alliance. 2018. Web. 30 May 2019. <<https://www.biblica.com/resources/bible-faqs/how-many-different-languages-has-the-bible-been-translated-into/>>.
21. See Roger Nicole, "New Testament Use of the Old Testament," in *Revelation and the Bible*, ed. Carl F. H. Henry (London: Tyndale Press, 1959), pp. 137-41.
22. Latorre, Vince. "Did the gospel writers have 'memories like elephants?' Could they accurately remember what Jesus said and did 25-30 years later when the gospels were finally written down?" Vince Latorre. Web. 30 May 2019. <<http://thebiblecanbeproven.com/did-the-gospels-writers-have-memories-like-elephants/>>.