

1. [1] I hold in my hand the best selling book of all time.

- a. This book has been fought over, died over.
- b. Martyrs have chosen death rather than recant their belief in what this book proclaims.
- c. Yet, it's become so **ubiquitous**, available in dozens of free translations on our smartphones that even many Bible-believing Christians have **ceased to read it**, let alone study it.
- d. What's more, in the last half century or so, the Bible has **fallen into cultural disrepute**. What was once seen as reliable and authoritative now is regarded with flippancy at best, and disdain at worst
- e. The prevailing view in our culture today is that the **Bible has been discredited as a reliable historical record**, and that therefore educated, thinking people cannot trust its claims because this involves resorting to "**blind faith**": Believing in spite of evidence.
- f. Unfortunately, **Christians often respond to objections in ways that are unhelpful**:
 - i. **"The Bible must be reliable because it claims to be God's Word."**
 - 1. This is **circular reasoning**: the conclusion is stated as a premise.
 - 2. Also, what about other scriptures which make the same claim, but which contradict the truth-claims of the Bible
 - ii. **"The Bible is reliable because it makes me feel close to God, it helps my life..."**
 - 1. But similar reports and conclusions are drawn about other scriptures which contradict the Bible.

2. So..... The Bible: IS IT RELIABLE? IS IT UNIQUE? IS IT TRUE?

3. **Last Sunday** we studied the story in Acts 8 of Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch:

- a. "Reaching out with Faith"
- b. We saw God's call for us to be reaching out to our neighbors, those both like and unlike us, with the good news of Jesus.
- c. Philip was able to help the Eunuch meet JC because **he was ready to answer his questions**. He knew the Bible and was **able to reason with him**, starting from where here was reading in Isaiah, to show how Jesus was the Messiah and that he could come to know him through Faith.

4. [2] **Today we're going to continue on, starting a 3 week miniseries on Reaching out with REASON** – reaching out with REASON(s) for the faith we have in Jesus and the Bible.

- a. **1 Peter 3:15 Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect**
- b. **Showing evidence** for the foundation of the Christian faith – and showing that it's actually quite reasonable to believe the claims of Jesus and his Word.
- c. **To help us grow** in our own faith and gain confidence through more evidence
- d. **And to help us be more ready and able to reach out effectively to our neighbors** and answer their questions, and help them come to know Jesus as the Savior of the World.
 - i. **If you were having conversations over the fence, or over coffee.**

5. [3] **Today we're going to seek answer the foundational question: WHY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?**

6. Today, we're going to address three common questions raised against the reliability of the Bible:

a. [4] Hasn't the Bible been changed?

b. Isn't it filled with contradictions and historical inaccuracies?

c. Isn't it just another holy book, like all the others?

7. And we're going to answer them without looking for scripture verses.

a. It's circular reasoning to try to prove the Bible by quoting its own verses that say it's reliable

b. So instead we're going to look for evidence outside the Bible.

8. PRAY

9. Today we're going to be covering a lot of important and detailed information that we want to be useful for you long term in your own faith and as you reason with your neighbors.

a. And toward that end, we have available a sermon outline with all the major facts and reasons for the reliability of the Bible for you to pick up, to remember, to use, after the service.

b. Just grab them on the black tables beside the sound booth on your way out.

c. They're there now if you prefer to take notes on them. Just go grab one now.

10.[6] So let's start by answering the foundational question: (Question 0): WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

a. It's an ancient text that's actually a collection of 66 different books (divided into 2 main sections, the old and new testaments)

b. Written by more than 40 authors from all walks of life

i. Politicians, kings, poets, generals, shepherds, philosophers, fishermen, rabbis, tax collectors

c. Written over 1500 yr span, from ~1400 BC – 100 AD

d. Over 3 continents (Africa, asia, Europe)

e. 3 languages

i. Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek

f. Varied literary styles

i. Poetry, narrative, song, romance, satire, biography, autobiography, law, prophesy, parable, allegory, etc

g. Wide variety of topics and controversial subjects, yet all with an amazing degree of harmony

h. ONE SINGLE UNFOLDING STORY

i. About the one loving creator God and his great and sacrificial work to win back his wayward children through the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus, God incarnate, and the hope of eternal resurrected life.

ii. It's about God doing for us what we could never do for ourselves, and at incredible cost to himself.

iii. And it claims to be true.

• Really actually true.

11. So that brings us to our first big question to the Bible's reliability:

12.[6] Q1) Hasn't the Bible been changed?

a. It's been edited and translated so many times, it's like a giant game of telephone.

b. There's no way to know if what we have today is anything close to the originals.

c. Quick note about translations

- i. NOT A GAME OF TELEPHONE!
 - 1. Common misunderstanding.
 - ii. When we translate into a new language (or new English translation with slightly varied philosophy of translation), we DON'T translate on down the line,
 - iii. INSTEAD each time we go back to the earliest source material.
 - iv. Instead of a long circle, instead it'd be a long line of people, each talking to the original person, then doublechecking with everyone else!
- d. So what ARE those earliest source materials?

e. [7] Let's talk about Manuscripts

- i. As with other ancient documents, no known currently existing originals.
- ii. Fortunately, we have so many handwritten, manuscript copies that we can reconstruct the original with virtually complete accuracy!

f. Manuscripts of New Testament

- i. [8] Around 25,000 manuscript copies of portions of the NT today (HAVE!)
- ii. No other ancient document comes close
- iii. NT stands ALONE in ancient literature in recency.
 - 1. Both in overall number of manuscripts AND
 - 2. In Time interval between original writing and earliest existing copies.
- iv. Bible Examples:
 - 1. [9] We HAVE a scrap from John, written c 100-125!, less than 50ish years after the original!
 - a. Rylands Papyrus
 - 2. [10] In general though, most of our earliest NT copies are from approx. +100yrs after originals
- v. Seems like a long time right? 50 years? 100 years?
- vi. LATE you say? Other Examples:
 - 1. [11] Homer's Iliad: 643 copies, 500 years between original and earliest manuscript, and 1st complete set not until 13th Century! (1,600 yrs later!)
 - 2. [12] Tacitus, 20 copies, +1000
 - 3. [13] Plato, 7 copies +1200
 - 4. [14] Sophocles plays, 193 copies, +1400 later
 - 5. [15] Aristotle = 49 copies, 1400 years later
- vii. Yet no one questions the Authenticity of these historical books of antiquity
- viii. Again, compare this to the New Testament!
 - 1. [16] NOT EVEN CLOSE!
- ix. Additionally, there are MOUNTAINS of quotations of the NT from other early writings, like the Church fathers.
 - 1. over 1 million quotations!
 - 2. If you were to destroy all the NT, and all manuscripts, you could reconstruct it ENTIRELY from quotations from early church fathers in the 2nd and 3rd centuries except for 11 verses.

- x. [17] “There is no body of ancient literature in the world which enjoys such a wealth of good textual attestation as the New Testament.” (FF Bruce) – Biblical Scholar

xi. [18] MANUSCRIPT TEXT of OT

1. Before 1947 (SO RECENTLY), the earliest complete manuscripts of the OT were from the 10th century AD.
 - a. Many had wondered how accurate our modern OT was!
 - b. Then, In March 1947 a shepherd boy in Israel, at a site called Qumran, accidentally discovered a cave in a cliff wall near the Dead Sea, littered with pots filled with sealed scrolls
 - c. [19] THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS
 - d. Turned out to be filled with ancient documents, MOSTLY OLD TESTAMENT!
 - e. One of them a complete scroll of Isaiah
 - i. Dated to more than 100 years BEFORE CHRIST! (125BC)
 - f. Other fragments, including some from Samuel from 3rd century BC!
 - g. In all, manuscripts from all OT books except Esther were found.
 - h. That pushed back the earliest manuscripts of OT +1000 years!
2. FINALLY, we were able to actually see how accurate our Old Testament text was!
 - a. And what’s more, it’s nearly identical to what we had.
 - i. 95% identical
 - ii. Last 5% simple variations in spelling and obvious slips of the pen – NONE OF WHICH were of any significance to the meaning of passages.
 - b. The Qumran Dead Sea Scrolls are considered one of the most important archaeological discoveries of all time!
3. Shows the impeccable quality of transmission through the centuries by Jewish rabbis
4. Jews since antiquity have been FASTIDIOUS about transmitting and copying their scripture (what we call the Old Testament).
 - a. Even the number of words and letters for each passage and page were recorded so that errors could be caught immediately.
5. [20] Of the OT, Hebrew Scholar William Green says “it may be safely said that no other work of antiquity has been so accurately transmitted.”
6. Cambridge Librarian Dr B.F.C. Atkinson calls it “little short of miraculous.”

g. IN SUMMARY:

- i. Sir Frederic Kenyon (a Greek manuscript scholar who worked at the British Museum):
“The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true word of God, handed down without essential loss from generation to generation throughout the centuries.”

h. SO, HASN’T THE BIBLE BEEN CHANGED? →

- i. [21] A1 = NO!

13.[22] Q2) Isn't the Bible filled with contradictions and historical inaccuracies?

- a. This idea has become pretty widespread. But I've found that most folks have this vague idea, but no specific examples.
- b. So if someone tell me everyone knows the Bible is full of errors, I often respond by asking "Oh, which ones in particular?"
 - i. To which I'm most often responded with a blank stare
- c. But since it's such a widespread conception, we'd do well to know if it's true!

d. [23] What about Alleged Contradictions in the Bible:

i. Most every one is attributable to Ignorance in context/interpretation/or presuppositions

- 1. I'm aware of no purported contradiction in the Bible that isn't relatively easily solved by looking at context, archaeology, and reason

ii. A few common examples:

1. [24] Simply taking passages out of context

- a. [25] Ecclesiastes 7 says that humans are upright, while Psalms 51 says that we are sinners.
- b. Simple context shows
 - i. [26] Ecclesiastes talking about Adam and eve before the Fall
- c. And Psalm 51 is King David talking about his sinful nature after committing adultery with Bathsheba and murdering her husband.

2. [27] Presuppositional Discrepancies

- a. It's only an alleged contradiction against assumptions and beliefs the questioner brings to the text
- b. [28] Ex: *The Bible says the world is only 6,000 years old and was created in six 24-hour days, but science has proved that the earth is billions of years old.*
- c. In fact the Bible NEVER says the earth is 6K yrs old, and even the days of the creation account leave lots of room for faithful interpretation (literal, figurative, etc).

3. [29] Limited Reference -- Number of people present

- a. [30] Ex: At Jesus' tomb on Easter morning
 - i. John 20 says Mary Magdalene went to the tomb
 - ii. Mat 28 says Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went
 - iii. Mark 16 says it was Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James, and Salome went
 - iv. Luke 24 says it was Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Joanna, and other women
- b. NO CONTRADICTION, just incomplete descriptions
- c. If I say Kayla was here this morning,
 - i. Then tell someone else Kayla and Nathan were here this morning
 - ii. And someone else Kayla, Nathan and others were here

- iii. No contradiction, all true, just limited in reference

e. [31] Others solved easily with archaeological discovery

- i. Archaeology as a modern systematic science has only been around for 150 years or so.
- ii. Pioneered in no small part by a desire to find evidence for and against the Biblical accounts.

f. [32] Old Testament Archaeology

- i. Before the 19th century, Biblical critics rejected the Bible on archaeological grounds claiming such and such a place or peoples never existed, no evidence.
- ii. But modern archaeology has now shown corroboration between Archaeology and Bible

iii. Some examples:

1. City of Ur

- a. Home city of Abraham, 2000 BC
- b. Long disputed, no evidence
- c. Until excavated in 1920s
- d. Confirmed to be large thriving global trade city in the area of modern Iraq
- e. More than 60,000 people at time of Abraham
- f. Now in desert, was once bustling port on Euphrates River! With merchant ships, warehouses, weaving factories and a massive step pyramid ziggurat
- g. Just as the Bible described it

2. [33] Sodom and Gomorrah

- a. No evidence! Claimed biblical myth
- b. proved not only to have existed – all cities mentioned shown to be commerce centers—and located where Bible said
- c. What's more their Biblical destruction seems verified:
 - i. Evidence of earthquakes, disrupted rock layers, rock layers tossed into air, lots of bitumen. Rock molded together by intense heat on top of Mt Sodom.
 - ii. Likely an oil basin beneath the Dead Sea ignited and erupted in the distant past.

3. [34] King David

- a. No evidence for the existence of King David!
- b. 1914 discovered this inscription from 9th century BC referring to both the House of David and to the King of Israel!
- c. Oldest extra Biblical reference to both Israel and the Davidic Dynasty.

4. [35] Belshazzar

- a. No evidence ever for a king Belshazzar of Babylon mentioned in Daniel (writing on the Wall) – a story we'll be studying in a few months
 - i. Only Nabonidus as final king of Babylon
- b. Nabonidus Cylinder – discovered 1881, dated back to ~550 BC
- c. Royal record of King Nabonidus and his accomplishments and works

- i. INCLUDES REFERENCE TO my eldest son, my offspring Belshazzar

g. [36] Archaeological Evidence for the New Testament

- i. For the sake of time we'll just pick one example, since the NT is filled with even MORE archaeological corroboration that the OT.
- ii. **[37] Sir William Ramsay, one of the greatest archeologist to ever have lived began** his work in late 1800s trying to disprove the Bible. Especially focused on Luke-Acts which he thought garbage, historically. He thought it was written by someone else more than 300 yrs later. Thought Luke wrong about people, names, places, times, customs, etc.
 - 1. But Dig after dig the evidence without fail supported Luke's accounts. Governors mentioned by Luke that many historians never believe existed were confirmed by the evidence excavated by Ramsay's archaeological team.
 - 2. In addition, without a single error, Luke was accurate in naming 32 countries, 54 cities, and 9 islands. Many of which had been lost to modern knowledge.
 - 3. After 30 years of work Ramsay wrote:
 - 4. **[38] "Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy...this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians. ...Luke's history is unsurpassed in respect of its trustworthiness."**
 - 5. Ramsay became so overwhelmed with the evidence he eventually converted to Christianity.
- iii. **[39] Nelson Glueck, Archaeologist: "It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical reference."**
- h. **[40] So in summary, we've looked at allegations of contradictions in the Bible, and allegations of historical inaccuracies in the OT and NT vs the archaeological record.**
- i. And we can reasonably see that the answer to this question is
 - i. **[41] NO and NO!**
- j. that it's reasonable to conclude the Bible is NOT filled with contradictions and historical inaccuracies
 - i. In fact, the Biblical accounts hold up amazingly well under scrutiny!

14. [42] Q3) Finally, Isn't the Bible just one of many equally-valid Holy Books?

- a. Just one of many holy books, not unique
 - i. There's no way to know if it's really true, right?
- ii. **[43] Claims to be God's words to us**
 - 1. (see Jer. 26:2; 2 Pet. 1:21).
 - 2. Most all holy books NEVER MAKE CLAIM TO BE GOD'S WORD
 - a. Most all claim to be merely the enlightened sayings and discoveries of men
 - b. One of the best kept secrets is the fact that very few "scriptures" even claim to be God's revealed Word.
 - i. The "scriptures" of Hinduism and Buddhism never claim to be a revelation from God for the obvious reason that the eastern god is not a Person who

speaks. Rather, they claim only to be human speculation.

- ii. Likewise, the sacred Chinese books claim no supernatural inspiration or authority, Confucianism being less a religion than a venerable moral tradition
- 3. In fact, only the Bible and those religions rooted in the Bible (including Islam and the Christian sects, like Mormonism) claim to have books that are actual revelation from God.

4. So, in claiming to be God's word,

1. [44] the Bible is already nearly unique!

- iii. **[45] We've already found the manuscript evidence for the Bible to be unrivaled against all ancient literature of any kind**

1. [46] The Bible is Unique

2. [47] We find historical and archaeological corroboration

- a. Why is this important?
 - b. Because the Bible makes some very important truth claims – spiritual truth claims – and these aren't directly testable.
 - c. But if that same text made factual assertions about areas we could test—like, say, scientific or historical matters—then we could indirectly test their spiritual truth claims.
 - d. If they interface inaccurately in these areas we can test, why should we trust them in the areas we can't test? On the other hand, if they do interface accurately in these testable areas, we have a basis for taking them seriously in their spiritual truth claims.
- iv. **We've already seen how the Bible interfaces with incredible accuracy with history**
 - 1. When we look at other "scriptures," we find they do not interface with history at all, or they interface inaccurately.
 - 2. The eastern "scriptures" have no interest in history, because this is the world of illusion from which we are to be delivered.
 - a. Ancient polytheistic religions likewise had no interest in history. Their gods acted only in myths, removed as far as possible from real history.
 - 3. **The Koran** is almost entirely assertions of Allah. It has very little historical interface, and what there is contains clear inaccuracies.
 - a. **Sura 26:55-60** says that the Israelites under Pharaoh were but "a scanty band" (in contrast to the multitude mentioned in Ex. 1:9) and that in leaving Egypt they forsook "their gardens and fountains and splendid dwellings" (in contrast to their slavery and hardship mentioned Ex. 1:11-14). This renders the whole motive for Israel's deliverance obscure.
 - 4. **The Book of Mormon** makes many historical references, but it too is full of historical anachronisms and geographical inaccuracies.
 - a. **1 Nephi 2:5-8** states that the river Laman emptied into the Red Sea. But there has never been any river that emptied into the Red Sea, either in historic or prehistoric times.
 - b. **Alma 46:15** states that believers were called "Christians" back in 73 BC—fully seven decades before Jesus was even born!

- c. **The BOM** tells of great cities and vast numbers of peoples in the ancient Americans
 - i. None of which has ever been corroborated by ANY shred of evidence!
 - a. A fact they will admit to!

d. [48] Again, when it comes to historical corroboration: the Bible is Unique

b. [49] Fulfilled Predictive prophecy

- i. We CAN know if this one is right
 - 1. Bible stands alone in world literature – even among those holy books that claim divine inspiration
 - a. None of them contain predictive prophecy
 - 2. The Bible has LOTS of SPECIFIC predictive prophecy. Many with names, dates, independently verifiable!
 - 3. God Himself says this is how he'll self-authenticate his Word – Deut 18
 - c. Hundreds of predictions have been literally fulfilled, many hundreds of years prior!

d. [50] Examples

i. Babylon's Gates will open for "Cyrus"

- 1. Isaiah 45:1
- 2. Written around 700 BC
- 3. Nearly 200 years later, happened – 150 years before CYRUS WAS BORN
- 4. Josephus (ancient historian) records King Cyrus actually read this prophecy about himself in the book of Isaiah (likely shown by Daniel, whom he knew well). And he was so impressed by this that he benevolently and enthusiastically released the Jews from his captivity and gave them materials to rebuild their homeland
- 5. BELIEVING HE HAD BEEN PREDESTINED TO DO IT

ii. Destruction of cities:

- 1. **Destruction of Tyre** (Ezk 26) – 250 years before
 - a. Even referring specifically to Tyre's Stones, Timber, and Soil will be cast into the sea – exactly what Alexander the Great did in 333 BC

iii. Accurately predicted world Empires succession (hundreds of years before, with insane specificity)

- 1. Book of Daniel, During Babylonian time.
 - a. Before Greeks or Romans even thought of as world powers.
- 2. Medo-Persian (14 yrs later)
- 3. Greek
 - a. Including Alexander Great and division among 4 generals
- 4. Roman
 - a. Read Daniel
 - b. So accurate and clear that naturalist/atheist scholars concluded Daniel MUST have been written MUCH MUCH later since he got so many minute details right!

- c. Now shown that this late dating has NO EVIDENCE other than the accuracy of the prophecy!

15. Lots of Messianic Prophecies (more than 100!)

- a. aspects of Jesus's life/lineage
 - 1. Family line : David - Psalm 132:11 and Jeremiah 23:5,6; 33:15,16
 - 2. Birthplace: City of Bethlehem (Mic 5:2)
 - 3. Virgin birth: Isaiah 7:14
 - i. Crucifixion: Psalm 22 approx 1000BC
 - 1. Hundreds of years BEFORE crucifixion even invented!
- ii. Even the exact DATE of Messiah's crucifixion
 - 1. Daniel 9, written 538BC
 - 2. Time Christ's coming (Dan 9)
 - 3. The year, likely even the exact day the Messiah would be revealed, killed
 - 4. Nearly 600 years beforehand predicted.
 - 5. And it all calculates to 33 AD
 - 1. The best date we have for Jesus' triumphal entry, crucifixion, resurrectn
 - 6. Daniel 9 likely the most stunning and provocative fulfilled prophecy in Bible.
 - a. We'll talk more about this April as we study the Book of Daniel!

b. Some prophecies Being fulfilled IN OUR LIFETIME!

- i. Regathering of Israel from whole world
 - 1. Return of Israel to their land (Is 11:11)
 - 2. One of the most frequently prophesied events in scripture, happened in 1948 w/ establishment of Jewish state
- ii. Never before in history of the world has this happened to any people group!

c. Cool, but, how does Biblical prophecy compare with other religious texts?

- i. In the vast majority, there is no prophecy at all, or any comparably unique means of self- authentication.
 - 1. Muhammad acknowledged that the biblical prophets were confirmed by miraculous signs (Surahs 3:184; 17:103; 23:45)—including prophecy, but when he was asked for similar confirmation that his message was from God, he refused (Surahs 2:118; 4:153; 6:8,9,37) and regarded the request as impious.
- ii. The predictions of other so-called prophets are unworthy of being comparison to the biblical prophets.
 - 1. **This is not to mock or belittle these writings! But to show the facts.**
 - 2. They usually lack context and the syntax is so general that any specific interpretation (and therefore, any verification) is impossible. EXAMPLES:
 - 3. **[51] NOSTRADAMUS (Century II Q 34, about 1555): "The senseless ire of the furious combat will cause steel to be flashed at the table by brothers: To part them death, wound, and curiously, The proud will come to harm France."**
 - 4. One author claims this was a prediction of the Camp David peace agreement in 1978. The "table" refers to the bargaining table, the "proud duel" refers to international terrorism, and the "harm" to France

refers to the result of de-stabilization in the Near East since the assassination of Sadat, the Egyptian President, in 1981.

a. Completely arbitrary, no way to figure out truth, no references

5. **[52] BAHA'U'LLAH (Gleanings, p. 142): 'In the days to come, ye will, verily, behold things of which ye have never heard before. Thus hath it been decreed in the Tablets of God, and none can comprehend it except them whose sight is sharp. In like manner, the moment the word expressing My attribute "The Omniscient" issueth forth from My mouth, every created thing will, according to its capacity and limitations, be invested with the power to unfold the knowledge of the most marvelous sciences, and will be empowered to manifest them in the course of time at the bidding of Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Knowing.'**

a. This is so general that it has no verification value.

- d. **[53] Clearly: When it comes to fulfilled predictive prophecy: THE BIBLE IS UNIQUE!**

- i. Truly, the Bible stands utterly alone in terms of this kind of clear, verifiable predictive and fulfilled prophesy!
- ii. The Bible does in fact uniquely verify itself as true and reliable by verifiable fulfilled prophecy!

e. [54] A3: Just another holy book? NO!!!!

15. Ending Conclusion:

a. [55] WHY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?

- i. It has NOT been changed
- ii. It Isn't filled with contradictions and historical inaccuracies
- iii. And it isn't just another holy book, like all the others

b. SO, IT IS REASONABLE TO CONCLUDE THAT:

i. [56] Bible IS reliable

c. It IS reasonable to read and believe what it says

d. Many of its claims cannot be proven,

e. But if it's reliable in the claims it makes that ARE provable, it gives greater confidence to trust its claims for what cannot be evidentially verified

- i. Claims that, if true, are completely and profoundly important for our lives and our neighbors!
- ii. Claims like there is a supernatural world. The material world isn't all there is.
- iii. Claims like There really is a God who made us, and we really do have souls.
- iv. Claims like all people have gone astray from God, each has fallen into sin and tried to make life work on their own
- v. Claim like the just punishment for human sin is spiritual death
- vi. Claims like God loved us so much that even while we were sinners, God became a man, lived a perfect life, and died as a sacrifice for us.

1. So that whoever would believe in Him could be forgiven and be restored to right, intimate relationship with God himself, both now, and for eternity

- 2. Not just floating as ghosts in the clouds of heaven,
- 3. But resurrected to eternal life in physical bodies, on a real, physical New Earth.
- vii. And that all one needs to do to receive these free gifts from God is to believe they are true, and accept Jesus as your rightful authority.
- f. **This entire book points to Jesus (whom we'll talk more about next Sunday).**
 - g. And what you do with this book, and Jesus, whom this whole book points to, will be the most important decision of your life.
 - i. So why not lean in, consider more deeply the evidence for the reliability of THIS book. And investigate its claims.
 - h. And I invite you who already do believe, to increase the confidence you have in your faith.
 - i. [57] SO you can become more effecting in **REACHING OUT to your neighbors with REASON**

16. ENDING Qs:

- a. Which evidence for the Bible's reliability has struck you?
- b. What's a next step you could take to learn and remember some of these reasons for the Bible?
 - i. Sermon Notes, NEW EVIDENCE THAT DEMANDS A VERDICT by McDowell
- c. Who could you share some piece of this with?

17. PRAY

Bibliography:

- (A) Most from the new "Evidence that Demands a Verdict" by Josh McDowell
- (B) Other details from "Common Objections to Christianity: Does it Matter if the Bible is Historically Accurate?" by Gary DeLashumtt - <https://www.dwellcc.org/teaching/2061>
- (C) Other Details from "Common Objections to Christianity: How is the Bible Different from Other Scriptures?" by Gary DeLashumtt - <https://www.dwellcc.org/teaching/2057>



Reaching Out with REASON



Reaching Out with REASON



Why Believe the Bible?

WHY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?

1. Hasn't the Bible been changed?
2. Isn't the Bible filled with contradictions and historical inaccuracies?
3. Isn't the Bible just another holy book?



Q0: WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

66 books

40 authors

1500 year span

3 continents

3 languages

Varied literary styles

Wide variety of topics

ONE COHERENT UNFOLDING STORY

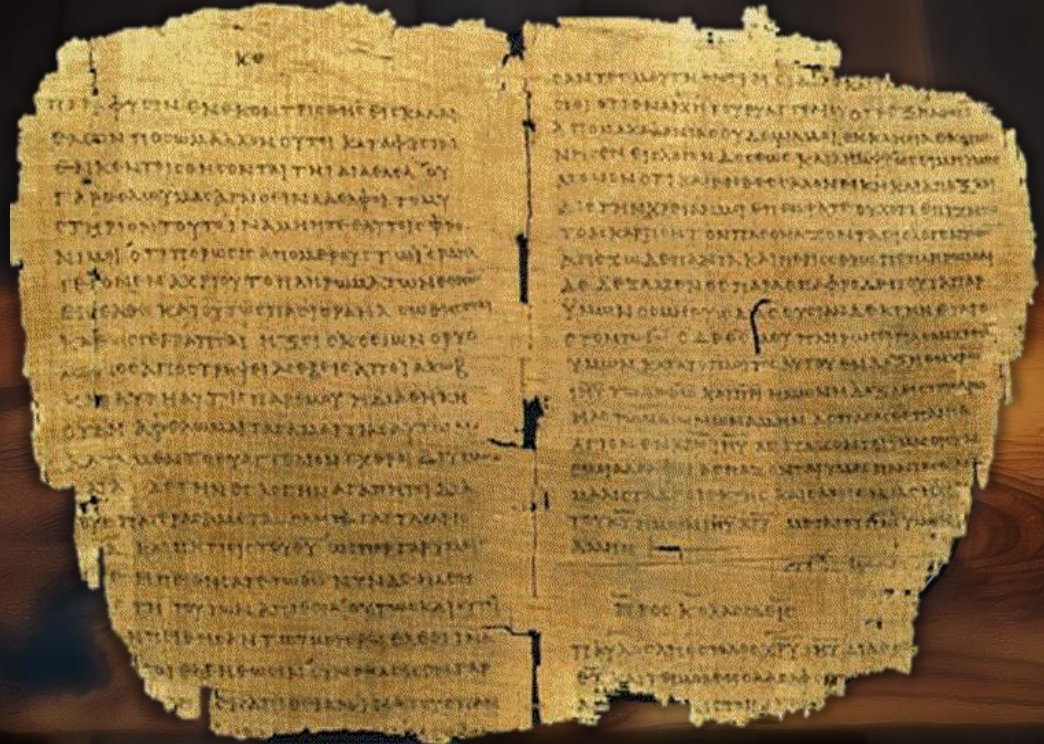


Q1: HASN'T THE BIBLE BEEN CHANGED?



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1. Manuscripts: The New Testament



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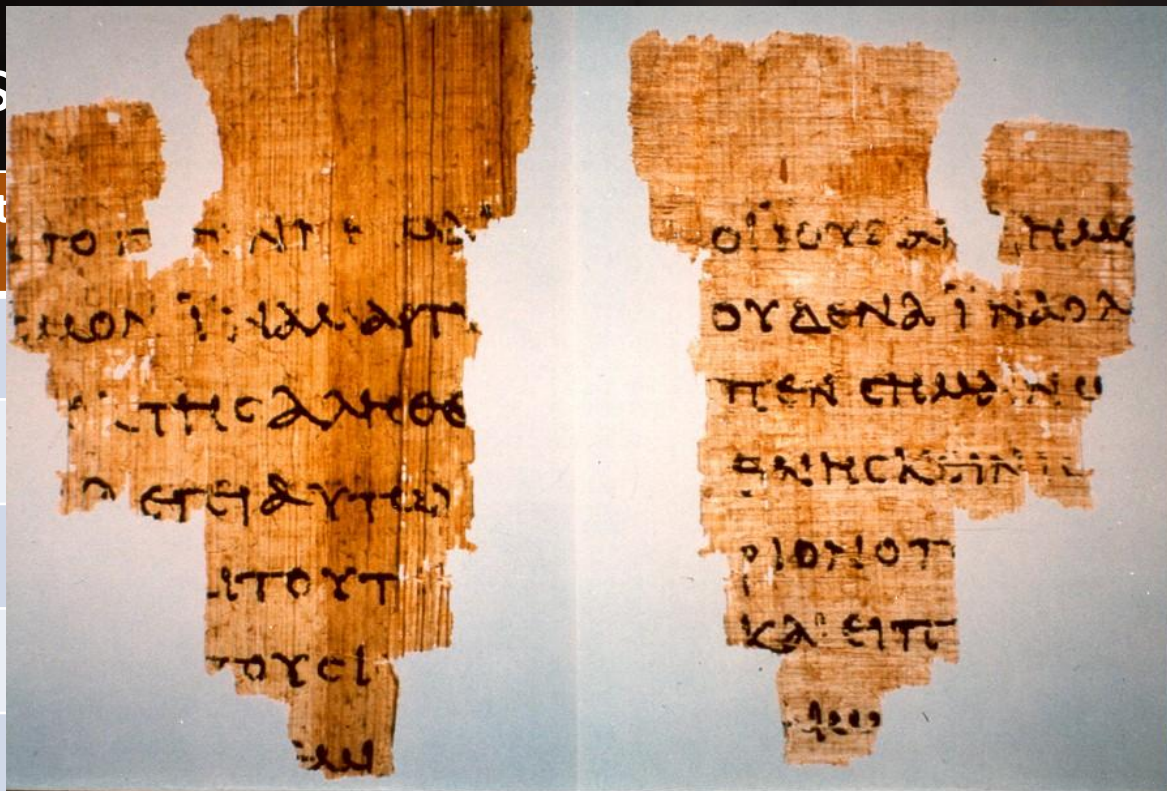
Ancient Document	# Manuscripts	Gap from Original to Earliest Manuscript
The New Testament	~25,000	

Q1: HASN'T THE BIBLE BEEN CHANGED?

1. Manuscripts

Ancient Document

The New Testament



Raylands Papyrus

Q1: HASN'T THE BIBLE BEEN CHANGED?

1. Manuscripts: The New Testament

Ancient Document	# Manuscripts	Gap from Original to Earliest Manuscript
The New Testament	~25,000	50-150 years

Q1: HASN'T THE BIBLE BEEN CHANGED?

1. Manuscripts: The New Testament

Ancient Document	# Manuscripts	Gap from Original to Earliest Manuscript
The New Testament	~25,000	50-150 years
Homer's Illiad	643	500 (1,600*)

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“There is no body of ancient literature in the world which enjoys such a wealth of good textual attestation as the New Testament.” - F.F. Bruce

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Q1: HASN'T THE BIBLE BEEN CHANGED?

2. Manuscripts: The Old Testament



Q1: HASN'T THE BIBLE BEEN CHANGED?

2. Manuscripts: The Old Testament

The Dead Sea Scrolls

השם המפורסם והנודע ביותר של כתבי יד העתיקים הוא כתבי יד המדבר. כתבי יד אלו, שנמצאו בשנות ה-40 וה-50 של המאה ה-20, הם קבוצה של כתבי יד עבריים, ארמיתיים ויווניים, שנכתבו בין המאה ה-3 לפנה"ס למאה ה-1 לספירה. הם נמצאו בקבוצה של חדרים סודיים, הנקראים 'החדר הסודי', במערת קומראן, במדבר יהודה, ליד יריחו. כתבי יד אלו הם מהעתיקים ביותר שנמצאו, והם מכילים את כל ספרי התנ"ך, כולל ספרים שנחשבו כ'ספרים חסידים' (ספרים שנחשבו כ'ספרים חסידים' או 'ספרים חסידים') וספרים שנחשבו כ'ספרים חסידים' (ספרים שנחשבו כ'ספרים חסידים' או 'ספרים חסידים'). כתבי יד אלו הם מהעתיקים ביותר שנמצאו, והם מכילים את כל ספרי התנ"ך, כולל ספרים שנחשבו כ'ספרים חסידים' (ספרים שנחשבו כ'ספרים חסידים' או 'ספרים חסידים') וספרים שנחשבו כ'ספרים חסידים' (ספרים שנחשבו כ'ספרים חסידים' או 'ספרים חסידים').

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- “It may be safely said that no other work of antiquity has been so accurately transmitted.” (William Green)
- “...little short of miraculous.” (Dr. B.F.C. Atkinson)
- “The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true word of God, handed down without essential loss from generation to generation throughout the centuries.” (Sir Frederic Kenyon)



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A1: NO!

Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?



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1. Alleged Contradictions?



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A. Out of Context



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Ecc. 7:29 - God made man upright

Ps. 51:5 - I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

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Ecc. 7:29 - God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.

Ps. 51:5 - I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

1. Alleged Contradictions?

- A. Out of Context
- B. Presuppositional Discrepancies



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

1. Alleged Contradictions?

A. Out of Context

B. Presuppositional Discrepancies

The Bible says the world is only 6,000 years old and was created in six days, but science has proved that the earth is billions of years old.



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

1. Alleged Contradictions?

- A. Out of Context
- B. Presuppositional Discrepancies
- C. Limited Reference (number of people present ...)



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

1. Alleged Contradictions?

A. Out of Context

B. Presuppositional Discrepancies

C. Limited Reference (number of people present ...)

A. John 20: Mary Magdalene

B. Matthew 28: Mary Magdalene and the other Mary

C. Mark 16: Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James, and Salome

D. Luke 24: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Joanna, and other women



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

1. Alleged Contradictions?

- A. Out of Context
- B. Presuppositional Discrepancies
- C. Limited Reference (number of people present ...)
- D. Archaeological Solutions



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

2. Archaeology: The Old Testament



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

2. Archaeology: The Old Testament

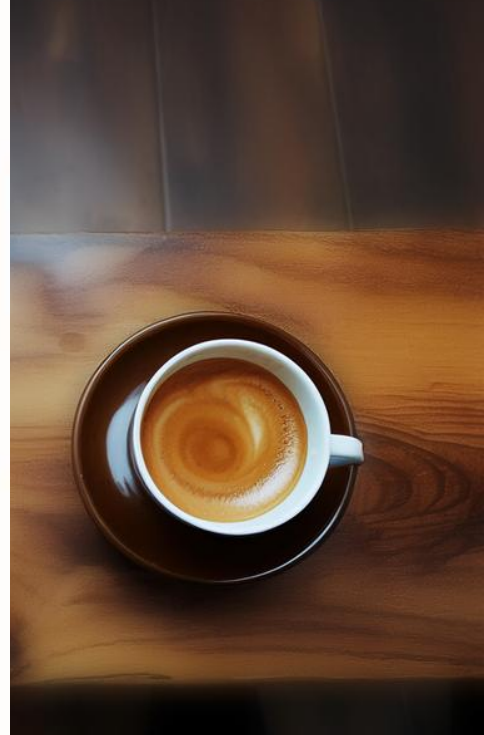
Sodom & Gomorrah



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

2. Archaeology: The Old Testament

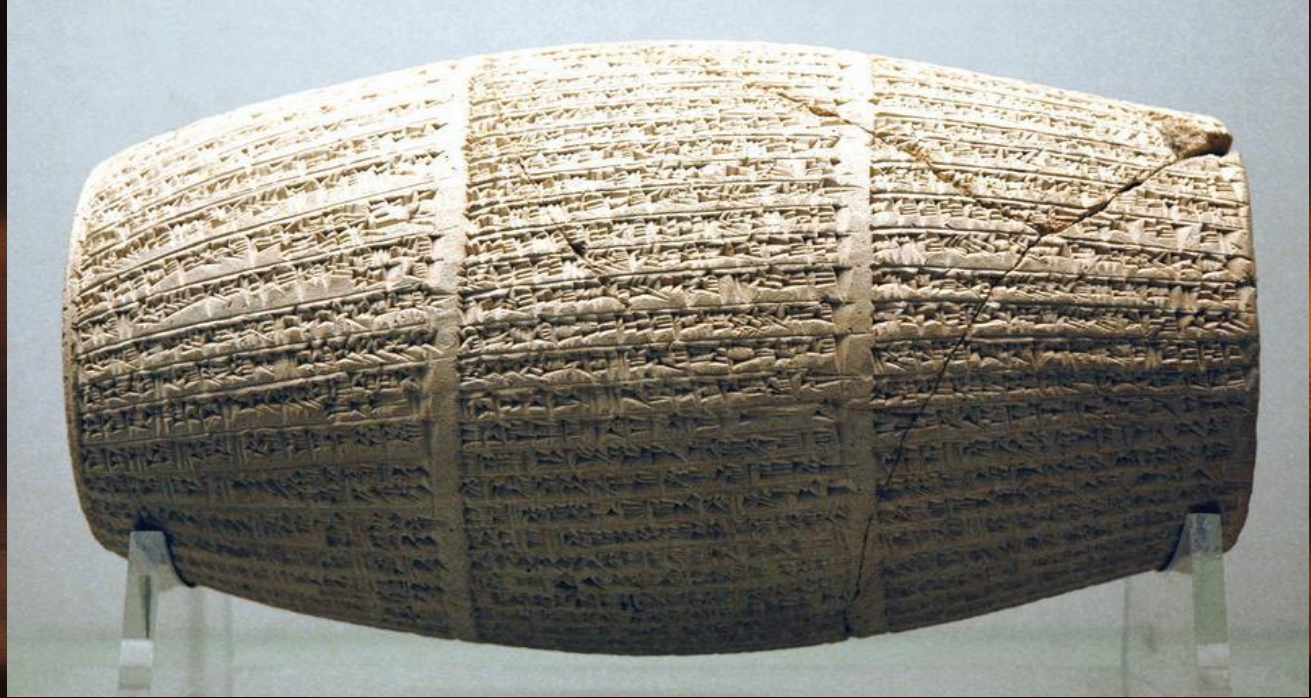
King David



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

2. Archaeology: The Old Testament

Nabonidus
Cylinder
- *Belshazzar*



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

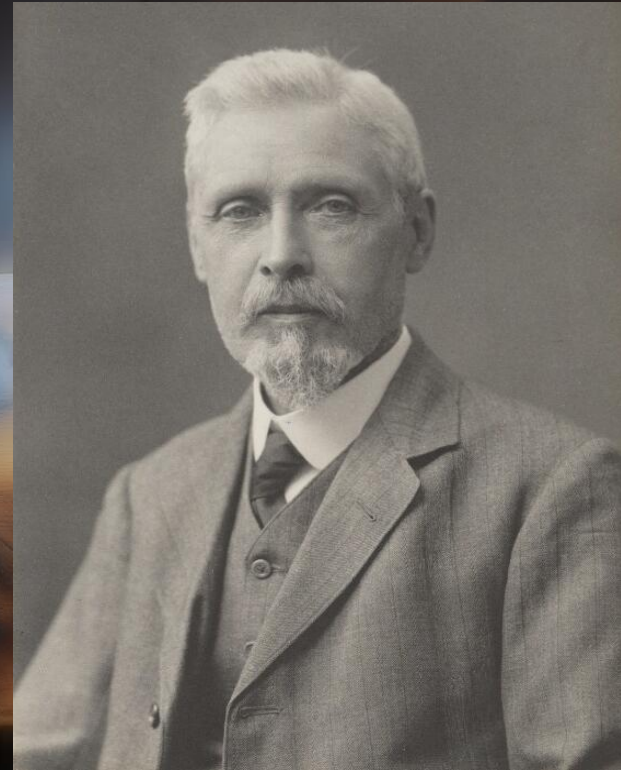
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Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

3. Archaeology: The New Testament

Sir William Ramsay

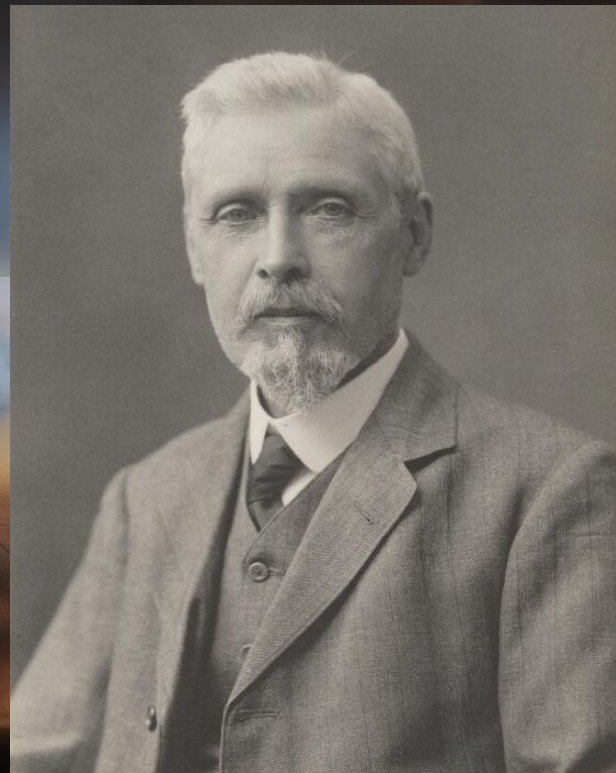


Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

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Sir William Ramsay

"Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy... this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians. ...Luke's history is unsurpassed in respect of its trustworthiness."



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

3. Archaeology: The New Testament

Nelson Glueck

“It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical reference.”



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1. Alleged Contradictions?
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3. Archaeology: The New Testament



Q2: CONTRADICTIONS & INNACURACIES?

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A2: NO and NO!

Q3: JUST ANOTHER HOLY BOOK?



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1. Claims to be God's Word



Q3: JUST ANOTHER HOLY BOOK?

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3. Historical Corroboration



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3. Historical Corroboration: **Bible is Unique!**
4. Fulfilled Predictive Prophecy



Q3: JUST ANOTHER HOLY BOOK?

4. Fulfilled Predictive Prophecy

Prophecy	Reference	Written	Fulfilled	Years Before
Babylon's gates will open for "Cyrus"	Isaiah 45:1	720BC	Oct. 539 BC	180
Tyre's destruction: her stones, timber, and soil will be cast into sea	Ezekiel 26	580BC	333 BC	250
Progression of World Empires after Babylon: Medo-Persian, Greek, Roman	Daniel 2, 7, 8	600BC	586BC, 331BC, 197BC	14, 269, 403
Jesus's family line	Psalms 132	1051BC	~5-1BC	1,050
Jesus' birthplace	Micah 5:2	700BC	~5-1BC	700
Jesus' virgin birth	Isaiah 7:14	720BC	~5-1BC	720
Jesus' crucifixion description	Psalms 22	1000BC	33AD	1033
Jesus' crucifixion exact date	Daniel 9	600BC	33AD	633
Regathering of Israel into a nation	Isaiah 11	720BC	May 14, 1948	2,668

Q3: JUST ANOTHER HOLY BOOK?

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Babylon's gates will open for "Cyrus"	Isaiah 45:1	720BC	Oct. 539 BC	180
"The senseless ire of the furious combat will cause steel to be flashed at the table by brothers: To part them death, wound, and curiously, The proud will come to harm France." <i>NOSTRADAMUS (Century II Q 34, ~1555AD)</i>				
Regathering of Israel into a nation	Isaiah 11	720BC	May 14, 1948	2,668

Q3: JUST ANOTHER HOLY BOOK?

4. Fulfilled Predictive Prophecy

Prophecy	Reference	Written	Fulfilled	Years Before
“In the days to come, ye will, verily, behold things of which ye have never heard before. Thus hath it been decreed in the Tablets of God, and none can comprehend it except them whose sight is sharp. In like manner, the moment the word expressing My attribute ‘The Omniscient’ issueth forth from My mouth, every created thing will, according to its capacity and limitations, be invested with the power to unfold the knowledge of the most marvelous sciences, and will be empowered to manifest them in the course of time at the bidding of Him Who is the Almighty, the All-Knowing.” <i>BAHA’U’LLAH (Gleanings, p. 142)</i>				
Regathering of Israel into a nation	Isaiah 11	720BC	May 14, 1948	2,668

Q3: JUST ANOTHER HOLY BOOK?

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2. Manuscript Evidence: **Bible is Unique!**
3. Historical Corroboration: **Bible is Unique!**
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3. Historical Corroboration: **Bible is Unique!**
4. Fulfilled Predictive Prophecy:
Bible is Unique!

A3: NO!



WHY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?

1. Hasn't the Bible been changed? **NO!**
2. Isn't the Bible filled with contradictions and historical inaccuracies? **NO!**
3. Isn't the Bible just another holy book? **NO!**



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THE BIBLE IS RELIABLE!



Reaching Out with REASON

