

The Bible CLAIMS to Be God's Word

“But that is Circular Reasoning!” someone will cry out. “You cannot prove that the Bible is God's Word because it CLAIMS to be God's Word! The Book of Mormon, the Koran, and other books also stake that very same claim!”

And it is true, you know. The Bible is not the only book that claims to be God's Holy Word. So, how can we know the difference? How can we tell which one(s) are revelations from God to man, if ANY?

This is what we will be discovering in the next few pages. No one proof will be sufficient by itself. We will be looking at the evidence, and YOU will need to decide whether or not God has spoken to man and then protected His Word along the way. And if so, God's Word becomes the standard for truth, by which we measure everything!

One question which must be asked in the very beginning of the search is, “Does the Bible ever claim to be God's Word?” The answer is a resounding, “Yes!” Consider just one passage from the Apostle Paul (II Timothy 3:14-17):

Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Because of this claim and others like it, we have three options: 1. **Yes, it is** God's Word, 2. **No, it is not** God's Word, or 3. **Some of it is** God's Word. The choice you make will determine the life you live... choose wisely.

The Bible CLAIMS to Be God's Word ~Part II

Peter gives us some insight into how God used man to carry His truth to the world (*II Peter 1:19-21*):

And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

God used each man's distinctive personality as a writer of God's Word. But they were also, "*carried along by the Holy Spirit.*" The same image is used in Greek literature of a ship whose sails are up high on the mast and is catching the wind, driving the ship along. The Holy Spirit was the power which guided these men to record the truths of God.

Scripture's origin was in God Himself and not, "*in the will of man*". Man did NOT just do his best to remember past events or to pass on what he thought about the mind of God. **They were driven** by the wind of God, His Holy Spirit. This is in complete agreement with II Timothy 3:16, when Timothy asserts, "*all Scripture is God-breathed.*"

But how is it that, "*the word of the prophets*" were, "*made more certain*"? When things are in print, they can be checked for validity for as long as time continues.

Our faith has good solid evidence in God's unchanging, dependable Word, making our faith even more certain!

Read it! Check it out! You will see that it is unlike any other book ever written throughout the history of the world.

The Bible CLAIMS to Be God's Word ~Part III

People have asked, “Did the writers of the Bible know what they were doing at the time? Did they know that God was using them to form His Holy Word? Did they recognize each other’s writings as being from God?” I believe the answer to all of these questions is, a resounding, “Yes!”

I want you to consider one passage of Scripture, coming from the pen of Peter (II Peter 3:15, 16):

*Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother **Paul** also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain **some things that are hard to understand**, which ignorant and unstable people distort, **as they do the other Scriptures**, to their own destruction.*

I want you to notice several things in **bold print** above:

1. Peter knew about the writings of the apostle Paul.
2. Even Peter had a tough time understanding everything that Paul was writing. Paul could speak to the intelligentsia (having a college education himself), while Peter was well versed in the world of the common man (being a fisherman). Some people in the early days were using the ‘hard parts’ as an opportunity to distort the truth and push their own ideas. (Nothing new, right? The same thing still happens today!)
3. Peter compared the writings of Paul with the writings of “*the other Scriptures*”. The Greek word for Scripture is the same word used of the Old Testament writings and is intended to show that Paul’s letters were already being accepted alongside those of the undisputed Word of God.

Peter bore witness that Paul was writing the New Testament.

The Bible CLAIMS to Be God's Word ~Part IV

God has warned us down through the ages about those who would invoke His name in order to gain authority for their own ideas. Whether it's the written Word or the spoken Word, wicked men will try to gain power by using His name.

Standing like guards throughout Scripture, the warnings ring clearly. In the Book of Moses, “Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you” Deuteronomy 4:2. A few chapters later, “*But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, must be put to death*” Deuteronomy 18:20.

God wants us to know the truth, because it is the truth that sets us free. And God hates to have His authority abused by those with selfish motives. Proverbs 30:5,6 says, “Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.”

And we all have heard the warnings from the last book, Revelation 22:18, 19:

I warn everyone who hears the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

The Bible definitely claims to be the Book from God. Whether we believe it or not, whether we add to it, take from it, or trust it as it is... this can make the difference for all of eternity. Trust God's Word, which is “*able to make you wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus*” II Timothy 3:15.

Because Jesus Christ Said So ~ Part I

The testimony of Jesus Christ is crucial when it comes to the Bible. If Jesus is God, then He can not be wrong ~ at all! If He is wrong one time, then He is not perfect. And if He is not perfect, He can not be anyone else's Savior, because He would need one for Himself! And so it is, the testimony of Jesus Christ to the Bible is most critical.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus gave His complete approval, even to the smallest portions of Scripture. *"I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished"* Matthew 5:18.

He said basically the same thing in John 10:35 when He declared as a matter of fact, "... *scripture cannot be broken.*" When Jesus said this, He gave His approval to the complete Old Testament, which was just as we have it today.

In fact, when the Sadducees (those who did not believe in the resurrection) challenged Jesus, He replied, *"You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God"* Matthew 22:29.

If the Son of God thought so highly of Scripture, why is it that mankind wants to diminish its origin and its authority? The Bible says that this is because they want to continue in their sin, in their pride. To accept the Bible as God's revealed word to man is to also accept its laws and its promises. And while some of those promises are absolutely wonderful, there are others which declare the wrath of God for the sins of man.

The choice is simple. We either change our lifestyle to fit God's Word... or we change God's Word to fit our lifestyle.

Because Jesus Christ Said So ~ Part II

There's a very interesting passage of Scripture found in Luke 16:19-31. Jesus told about two men who had died. One was a rich man who went to hell in torment, while the beggar was carried by the angels to "*Abraham's side*".

The first request of the rich man was for himself. He asked God to let Lazarus dip the tip of his finger in water to cool his tongue; but he was refused. Do you remember?

The second request, however, was for someone else. He had five brothers and he did NOT want them to end up in the same place of torment! Instead, he wanted God to send Lazarus from the dead to warn them. That would be pretty convincing, right? This man did NOT want those he loved to be where he was, spending all of eternity in hell.

As serious as the situation was, however, God refused this request, also. His answer was, "*They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.*" In essence God was saying, "They have the Word of God. If they read it with an open heart, they will see, know, and be saved!"

The rich man thought otherwise. He believed it would be more impressive if someone were to raise from the dead and warn them. But the answer came back again, just as firm as the first time, "*If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.*"

It is NOT a miracle that sets men free... it's the Truth!! And when mankind reads the truth, and recognizes it as being from God Almighty, he will turn from sin, and he WILL be saved. **THAT'S the power of God's Word** according to Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God!

It is Unique ~ Part I

Do you realize just how Unique the Bible really is? There is no other book like it! Consider the following facts:

- Over 40 different authors
- Over 1500 years in writing
- On 3 different continents (*Africa, Asia, Europe*)
- In 3 different languages (*Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic*)
- Occupations include shepherd, king, cupbearer, prophet, doctor, fisherman, tax collector, and more

How well do you think 40 different authors would agree with each other today!?!? (... *even if they were of the same occupation and from the same country, but living over 1500 years*)? THAT would be one tough order to fill, having to agree with itself through all kinds of topics and in all ways.

By comparison the Koran is said to have come from Mohammed through revelations over a period of ten years (*one person, a brief period of time*). The Book of Mormon is said to have been found by Joseph Smith and translated over a brief period of time ~ an angel giving him a special pair of glasses so he could translate the books. Like the Bible it claims many writers over many years. However, of the 8 ‘witnesses’ recorded in the front of the book as having seen the golden plates, only 3 continued. The other 5 abandoned the Mormon Church altogether. And there are NO copies of ANY of the books before this time!

There is truly no other book like this one in the world! But then, what else would you expect from God, Who has no equal? Even as **our God is unique** (*one of a kind*), His Word of revelation to mankind is just as unique. No wonder God’s Word is simply called The Bible ~ Biblos ~ **The Book!**

It is Unique ~ Part II

Have you ever considered how the Word of God has stood the test of survival through persecution? Many have undergone the effort of trying to extinguish both Christianity and the Bible, only to see it flourish BECAUSE of persecution. Such were the days of Acts when Stephen was stoned for the faith. *“In those days a great persecution broke out against the church.”* Acts 8:1. *“Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.”* Acts 8:4.

As the wind brings life and scattering to the fire of hot coals, so persecution provides an avenue which has spread Christianity around the world!

In the year 303 it was Diocletian, the Emperor of Rome, who ordered that everyone throughout the empire stop all Christians and burn their Scriptures. But within 25 years the new Emperor Constantine ordered 50 handwritten copies be produced **at the expense of the government!**

The great philosopher Voltaire boasted in 1778 that Christianity and the Bible would be extinct within 100 years. Yet, 50 years after his death the Geneva Bible Society **used his press and his house to produce stacks of Bibles!**

God has preserved His Word throughout the ages! God has determined to both **create and protect** this standard of truth **against all who would want to destroy it and on behalf of all who would want to know it.** The merits of the Bible will stand on their own. The Bible does not need to be defended so much as to be read! It does not need our approval so much as our obedience!

The Word of God ~ The Book for All Generations!!

It is Unique ~ Part III

How was this book actually put together? Men wrote it as they were “*carried along by the Holy Spirit*” II Peter 1:21. But how do we know that they did it correctly? How do we know that the right books are in the Bible? What about the mechanics of all these things?

If God is the Author of the Bible, then certain things **MUST** be true. God cannot lie, be wrong, or contradict Himself. Therefore, the Bible cannot lie, be wrong, or contradict itself either, or it cannot be the product of God.

*“I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him... But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, **must be put to death**... If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken”* Deuteronomy 18:17-22.

When the books were being chosen to enter into the Old and New Testaments, great pains were taken in order to be sure that they were of proper origin and that they contained absolutely no errors. If there was any doubt whatsoever, the writings were left out. For it was better to err on the side of caution, than to allow questionable writings to claim the authority of God.

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would guide them “*into all truth*” John 16:13. Each time a new discovery is made, the Bible is re-confirmed as to its accuracy. Coins, tombs, garbage dumps, entire civilizations... when these are discovered, they continue to prove that the Bible is correct in all things. (More evidence will come in the next few pages.)

God has kept His Word. And His Word will keep you.

It is Unique ~ Part IV

On the last page we looked at the accuracy of God's Word. Now we will look briefly at the **inaccuracy** of other books... leading to the conclusion that these other writings should not be included as the Word of God.

The Apocrypha (15 books accepted in the Catholic Bible as late as 1550 in the Council of Trent) has many dubious parts. *Two examples would include:*

1. II Maccabees 12:45, 46 advocates praying for the dead. This is in direct contradiction of Luke 16:25, 26 and Hebrews 9:27, and is never encouraged in the Old Testament.
 2. Tobit 1:3-5; 14:11 says that Tobit was alive when Jeroboam staged his revolt (931 B.C.) and still living at the Assyrian captivity (722 B.C.), which is a total of well over 200 years. Yet, the Book of Tobit later records him as living a total of 158 years. God's Word cannot have contradictions.
- **Note:** Jesus and the N. T. writers never quote or make reference to the Apocrypha.

The Book of Mormon is accepted by Mormons as God's Holy Word, as well as other writings. Joseph Smith says, "I told the brethren that The Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth..." First published in 1830 The Book of Mormon has **undergone more than 4000 changes in today's version!**

King Benjamin was changed to King Mosiah (21:28), because Benjamin had been dead for some time already. Alma 46:15 calls believers Christians, 73 years before Christ was born! Steel and breakable windows are recorded in Ether 7:8, 9 before they were ever invented! And it goes on and on.

Many historical sites have been found using the Bible. But NOT ONE name, event, or place in The Book of Mormon has ever been verified through archaeological discoveries.

The Bible ~ God's Holy Word Is Trustworthy & True *Because of Fulfilled Prophecy ~ Part I*

How would you like to have witnessed the miracle of the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ... and then be told that you **cannot tell a soul until after** Jesus raises from the dead?! It would be sheer torture! And yet, Peter (who was one of the 3 who was privileged to see Jesus with the prophets Moses and Elijah) said that there is something even more important than a person's eyewitness account. After describing this life-changing event of the Transfiguration, this is what Peter says, *"We have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it."* II Peter 1:19.

All the way **from the beginning** of the O.T. (Genesis 3:15) where it talks about the great battle which will happen between Satan and Jesus **to the end** of the O.T. (Malachi 4:5, 6) where the coming of John the Baptizer is foretold, God's Word is abounding with the fulfillment of prophecy. And it makes the word of the prophets all the more certain!!

Q. ~ Why is that the case? **A.** ~ Simply because we can check it out! We will always find others to be skeptical when sharing our personal experiences with God. While some evidence is available, there must be a great deal of weight placed on the credibility of the person sharing the experience.

However, **prophecy lends itself to intense investigation**, which bears witness to the fact that God knows what will take place even before it happens. We would expect as much from a God Who claims to be all-knowing, right?

There are literally hundreds of prophecies fulfilled in the O.T., **with over 300 of these being in reference to Jesus Christ alone! Fulfilled prophecy is huge!!** Over the next few pages we will take a look at several of these, serving to strengthen our faith in God's Word and in His Son.

Because of Fulfilled Prophecy ~ Part II

When looking at fulfilled prophecy, one must be certain that what was prophesied was actually in print BEFORE the event. While this may seem to be a very elementary point, it is still a very important piece when making the case for the Bible being the very Word of God.

In the fairly recent discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (1947), people wondered how close today's Scriptures would be to those found in these ancient documents. Until this find, the earliest Old Testament manuscripts were dated at A.D. 1008. Most of the books found in the Qumran Caves, however, are dated before Christ, bridging a time gap of over **1000 years**. Just how close ARE the copies we have today? Do they match those found before the time of Christ?

Over 500 books were found ~ over 50,000 fragments! Several handwritten copies of the **Book of Isaiah** were found, **dated at 125 B.C.** Isaiah is particularly important because it is quoted by name in the N.T. more than all the other O.T. books combined! And the prophecies deal with everything from the virgin birth of Jesus, to His treatment on the cross, to His burial among thieves! **In regard to accuracy Isaiah has passed all the tests with flying colors!!**

The Miracle of the **creation** of God's Word was followed by the miracle of His **preservation** of the Word. **We can** verify that **prophecies were recorded ahead of time**; and they are now available for our study.

The Bible ~ Mankind has tried to ban it and burn it, but God has kept it safe for all generations. God's imprint is all over it! It's His love letter to all mankind. Open it! Read it! See the very heart of God Himself!! It's pure love!

Because of Fulfilled Prophecy ~ Part III

Millions of people read their horoscopes every day ~ some, for amusement; and others, for a jump on the day. Psychics, ouija boards, E-Ching, and other avenues promise you a ‘heads up’ and maybe a ‘head start’ on what is coming your way. But there’s one problem... they are not 100% accurate. “No one can be THAT accurate,” one might protest. But under the old law the death penalty was to be enacted, if a person missed even once (Deuteronomy 18)! That’s because... if it’s coming from God, **it will be 100%**.

Josh McDowell identifies over 300 prophecies about Jesus Christ, 61 of which he calls the ‘major prophecies’. In working out the probability of just 8 of these prophecies coming true, Peter Stoner in Science Speaks says: “We find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all 8 prophecies is 1 in 10x17.”

Stoner then suggests, “We take 100,000,000,000,000,000 silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark **one** of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one.” **What are his chances?** The exact same chance of having all 8 of these prophecies come true!

Care to work the probability of all 61 major prophecies about Jesus Christ? Or of the 300+ prophecies of Christ? Or of the hundreds more prophecies found in Scripture?

Every prophecy is 100% correct. You would expect that from the only book authored by God Himself.

Are you reading it?

Because of Fulfilled Prophecy ~ Part IV

Did you know that there is still one more prophecy yet to be fulfilled? **It's the big one!** It's the one Jesus said would take place! It's the one that makes all things worthwhile. It's the **Second Coming of Jesus Christ!** Oh, sure there are differences of opinions on *how* He will return and *when* He will return. But there is no doubt THAT He will return or of WHY He will return. These are clear in the Holy Scriptures.

We believe in a loving Lord, Who still lives and guides. We believe in a Savior Who takes up residence in the bodies of His believers. Jesus said that *"He would make His home in us"* (John 14:23) and *"be with us always"* (Matthew 28:20)! And the Apostle Paul boasted about, *"The glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory!"* Colossians 1:27.

But even beyond this, we believe that Jesus will one day return in all of **His glory!!** *"He will ride on His white horse and His name will be Faithful and True. He will be dressed in a robe dipped in blood and His name is the Word of God. On His robe and on His thigh He has this name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords."* Revelation 19:11-16.

Jesus Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead. He will take to glory those who have loved Him and lived for Him. He will throw into the lake of fire those who have rejected the love of the Almighty. And while *"He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked"*, **His holiness and justice** demands it. **Heaven must be pure.** It will be a place of peace and rest for the children of righteousness.

That's why we can live by a different standard, accepting loss for His sake. For Jesus will come with His reward in His hand. I believe it! I stake my life on it! **Jesus IS coming again!!** Are you ready? *"Even so, Lord, come quickly."*

Does Archaeology Substantiate the Bible? ~ Part I

It's a good question! Since God created all things, and all things continue to exist because He so wills it, then it is no small thing that history and the Bible tell the same story. God has always been involved in the lives of mankind. We are His greatest work! We know this because He gave us the greatest gift... Jesus Christ, His Son. Archaeology, then, is the 'unearthing of the past' so we can see just how God has dealt with mankind throughout the ages. We want the truth of the past as much as anyone... and maybe even more so!

Memories come and go. The further removed from an event we become, the more difficult it is to remember the details of what really took place. Ask any man who was an athlete 40 years ago; today's stories usually tell of a better, faster, stronger athlete than the truth might really reveal. But how would we know for sure? We would need to go to eyewitnesses, and track records, and rushing records, and... digging up the past. That's how we verify the story.

So the Christian anxiously looks to the ground to verify what he knows to be true in his heart. What is found in the dirt helps to solidify our faith. And so, we do not fear archaeology... we welcome and embrace it!

Did you know that "more than 25,000 sites showing some connection with the Old Testament period have been located in Bible lands"? The famed director of the British Museum, Sir Frederic Kenyon said, "Archaeology has not yet said its last word, but the results already achieved confirm what faith would suggest ~ that the Bible can do nothing but gain from an increase in knowledge."

For the next couple of pages, we will look to the past, to discoveries which validate our trust in God's Word.

Archaeology ~ Part II

While archaeology does not prove the Bible to be God's Holy Word, it does give evidence of its credibility. At times mankind has been left to wonder: Are the stories in the Bible really true or are they fiction? Take for example the story of **Sodom and Gomorrah**.

These two cities for many years were considered to be mythological... a nice story, with an important moral, but not to be taken literally. "However, recent excavation at Tell Mardikh... uncovered about 15,000 tablets. Some of these have been translated, and mention is made of Sodom and Gomorrah" (Josh McDowell). Although we have not actually found these two cities, they are authenticated through artifacts and literature from other historical sites.

The **Hittites** were described in the Bible as a vast and powerful empire; and yet, scholars questioned its legitimacy until archaeology began to find proof in the 1850's. Both in Egypt and in Assyria, tablets and sculptures were found, showing that the empire was indeed of world renown.

McDowell continues, "One cannot stress too strongly the importance of the Bible giving an accurate historical picture. Christianity is a historical faith which claims that God has broken into history with many mighty acts... If the biblical writers were incorrect in their historical picture, serious doubt would then be cast upon their trustworthiness in areas which couldn't be verified."

Because we can trust the Bible in matters of history, it helps us to trust the Bible in matters which cannot be seen ~ such as sin, forgiveness, and the promise of eternal life. Our God is an awesome God Who can and does work in both worlds... our earth and His heaven. We Can Trust Him!

Archaeology ~ Part III

The Word of God will always be under attack. Satan attacked the truth in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-3). King Jehoiakim cut out the parts he didn't like and burned them (Jeremiah 36:23). Satan tried to misuse the Word when tempting Jesus (Matthew 4:6). And recently it came dressed as The Da Vinci Code. Why? Because the Bible is "*able to make you wise unto salvation*" and is "*useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness*" II Timothy 3:15, 16. Satan does not want us to have any part in the righteous life.

One of the most telling discoveries happened around 1947 by the Dead Sea. Scrolls, dating back to 100 years before Christ, were found by a shepherd boy. These scrolls were 1000 years older than any others we had at the time. People were anxious to see just how accurate the Bible was. And it was right on! Here's an example of what was found:

"A comparison of Isaiah 53 shows that only 17 letters differ... Ten of these are mere differences in spelling. Four more are very minor differences, such as the presence of a conjunction, which is often a matter of style. The other three letters are the Hebrew word for 'light' which is added after 'they shall see' in verse 11. Out of 166 words in this chapter, only this one word is really in question, and it does not at all change the sense of the passage. **This is typical of the whole manuscript.**" R. Harris, "How reliable Is the Old Testament Text?" Can I Trust My Bible?

The Word of God will be distorted and ridiculed as long as Satan is still on planet Earth. But it is God's standard of truth and will never be vanquished from our world. Trust it!

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away" Matthew 24:35.

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