

THE HOLY BIBLE WHAT IF...?

The sole basis for our belief is the Bible (the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments). We believe it to be uniquely God-inspired and inerrant in the original writings. This means that all facts (i.e., theological, doctrinal, historical, numerical, chronological, scientific, etc.) that the Bible intends to affirm are exempt from error in whole and in part. The Scriptures are the supreme and final authority in faith and life. (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21)

Inspired: “God superintended the human authors so that they composed and recorded without error His message to mankind in the words of their original writings.” (CC Ryrie, Basic Theology, p. 71)

Infallible: True and authoritative

Inerrant: *that all facts (i.e., theological, doctrinal, historical, numerical, chronological, scientific, etc.) that the Bible intends to affirm are exempt from error in whole and in part.*

It’s amazing that the God who made the universe and all that is in it chose to reveal Himself to us, and that He has given us all the written revelation we need in the 66 books of the Bible. The Scriptures are inspired by God – literally “God-breathed”. This means God is the ultimate author of the Bible, but He worked through different people to put ink on paper. The original manuscripts, which we don’t have, were free of error. God, because He knows everything, is true and accurate on every issue addressed by the Bible.

How can a book written centuries ago be relevant today?

- The Author is still alive and promises to guide us as we read it.
- Countless stories of people converting to Christ after reading the Bible.
- Scripture, although written in the context of certain cultures, presents timeless truths and is not bound by the culture it was written in.
- Scripture gives us a standard to live by that doesn’t change with society’s whims.
- Scripture knows and describes the condition of our hearts. (Hebs 4:12; James 1:23-25)

Some Resources:

The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict, Josh McDowell

General Introduction to the Bible, Geisler and Nix

Reinventing Jesus, Komoszewski, et. al.

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Manuscripts

We have more than 14,000 manuscripts and fragments of the Old Testament of three main types: (a) approximately 10,000 from the Cairo Geniza (storeroom) find of 1897, dating back as far as about AD. 800; (b) about 190 from the Dead Sea Scrolls find of 1947-1955, the oldest dating back to 250-200 B.C.; and (c) at least 4,314 assorted other copies. The short time between the original Old Testament manuscripts (completed around 400 B.C.) and the first extensive copies (about 250 B.C.) — coupled with the more than 14,000 copies that have been discovered — ensures the trustworthiness of the Old Testament text. The earliest quoted verses (Num. 6:24-26) date from 800-700 B.C.

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The same is true of the New Testament text. The abundance of textual witnesses is amazing. We possess over 5,300 manuscripts or portions of the (Greek) New Testament — almost 800 copied before A.D. 1000. The time between the original composition and our earliest copies is an unbelievably short 60 years or so. The overwhelming *bibliographic* reliability of the Bible is clearly evident.

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➤ Hank Hanegraaf

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Archaeology

Werner Keller, a German journalist, published The Bible As History in 1956. After years of extensive research in the libraries of many lands, he concluded, 'In view of the overwhelming mass of authentic and well-attested evidence now available, as I thought of the skeptical criticism which from the eighteenth century onward would fain have demolished the Bible all together, there kept hammering in my brain this one sentence, "The Bible is right after all".' — Does God Believe in Atheists? John Blanchard, p. 403.

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Prophecy

Over 300 fulfilled in Christ alone! (McDowell, The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict, p. 201)

Why I believe the Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God

- It makes the claim for itself.
(2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21, "thus saith the Lord")
- It maintains a central theme (God's glory through redemption) and central character (Christ) in spite of being authored over a span of 2,000 years by approximately 40 people.
- Its authors come from many different walks. (Shepherd, fisherman, fig picker, king, priest, government official, etc.)
- It is unique in its message (grace, not human achievement).
- It includes the flaws of its heroes (e.g. Moses, David, Peter). Other religions tend to glorify or deify their leaders.
- It has no contradictions.
- Its historical accuracy has been verified many times through archeology.
- It contains specific fulfilled prophecy.