

Is the Bible True?

The God Questions – Part 2

2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21

Why you shouldn't trust the Bible (according to skeptics)

- It has contradictions.
- Prophecies that were not fulfilled and other historical issues.
- We don't have the original copies and the manuscripts contain discrepancies.

Internal Evidence

Harmonization

- The Bible is a collection of 66 books, written by about 40 human authors, over the course of about 1500 years, in separate locations that were hundreds of miles apart, in three different languages.
- The Bible is completely consistent in what it teaches.

Prophecies

- The Old Testament contains more than 300 prophecies that Jesus fulfilled in his life.
 - One scholar concluded that the chance of someone fulfilling 8 of these prophecies is 1 in 10^{17} .
- Is it possible that the disciples knew the Old Testament prophecies and decided to lie about the events of Jesus' life in order to match up with these prophecies? Maybe. Is it likely? No.

Honesty about Its Authors and Characters

- The Bible honestly shares the failures, weaknesses, and sins of some of its main characters and even authors.

Accuracy in Scientific Claims

- The Bible was ahead of other cultures in terms of scientific understanding.
- The Bible accurately described the shape of the earth, the number of stars, the origin of the human race, and the worldwide flood before scientific discovery.

External Evidence

Manuscripts

- The Dead Sea Scrolls, which were found in caves at Qumran, contained manuscripts of the Old Testament dating as far back as the 3rd century BC.
 - The Great Isaiah Scroll is almost the whole book of Isaiah from 125 BC.
- About 24,000 New Testament manuscripts have been discovered.
 - About 6,000 are written in Greek.
 - Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus both contain large portions of the Greek OT and almost the complete NT and are from around 300-350 AD.
 - The earliest manuscript is a portion of John's Gospel from 125 AD.
 - Many scholars believe the autographs were in circulation for at least 150 years.
- Most other historical documents from around this same time contain less than 100 manuscripts and are at least 500 years removed from the autograph.

Archaeology

- The Tel Dan Inscription contains a reference to King David and is from the 9th century BC.
- A limestone block from the 1st century AD contains an inscription that states, "Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judea"
- There is archaeological evidence of 1st century crucifixions in Israel.

Extrabiblical Writings

- The records of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and others verify the existence of more than 50 persons in the OT and numerous events.
- Josephus, a 1st century Jewish historian, references John the Baptist, Herod the Great, Caiaphas, Pontius Pilate, James "the brother of Jesus", and Jesus.
- There are more than 30 sources within 150 years of his life that testify to the events of Jesus as recorded in Scripture.

The Life-Changing Power of Scripture

- There are countless testimonies of those who came to faith in Jesus simply by reading the Bible.