

12. Scriptures and more evidences

For the last two Sundays we've been learning the evidences of the trustworthiness of the Bible which is the Word of God and its Author is God. So far, we checked out the prophetic evidence, the archaeological evidence, the internal consistency of the Bible and the manuscript evidence in a logical and methodical way that even a serious atheist must admit that the evidences are good. However, accepting these evidences are strictly subjective due to an individual choice.

This morning we are going to go over three more evidences to build a concrete proof of the trustworthiness of the Bible and to leave no room for anyone to refuse that the Bible is anything but the truth if they can be objective about the evidences.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

A. SCIENTIFICALLY ACCURATE EVIDENCES IN THE BIBLE

By any means, the Bible is NOT a scientific Book, nor does it claim to be one. Yet when it speaks about science, it is completely accurate. It is an ancient writing of a minimum of almost 2,000 years old. But what it says in its content would blow away any non-biased, truth seeking scientists' minds.

With the exception of the Bible, every ancient religious writing has certain unscientific views of astronomy, medicine, hygiene, etc. The Qur'an says in Surah 18:86 that the sun sets in a murky water.

18:86 Until, when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it set in a spring of murky water: Near it he found a People: We said: "O Zulqarnain! (thou hast authority,) either to punish them, or to treat them with kindness."

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَغْرِبَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِي عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ ۖ وَوَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا

قَوْمًا فَلَمَّا بَيَّنَّا الْقُرْيَيْنِ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَعَدِبَ وَإِنَّمَا أَنْتَتَّخِذَ فِيهِمْ حُسْنًا ﴿٨٦﴾

Qur'an 18:86 "Until, when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it set in a spring of murky water..."

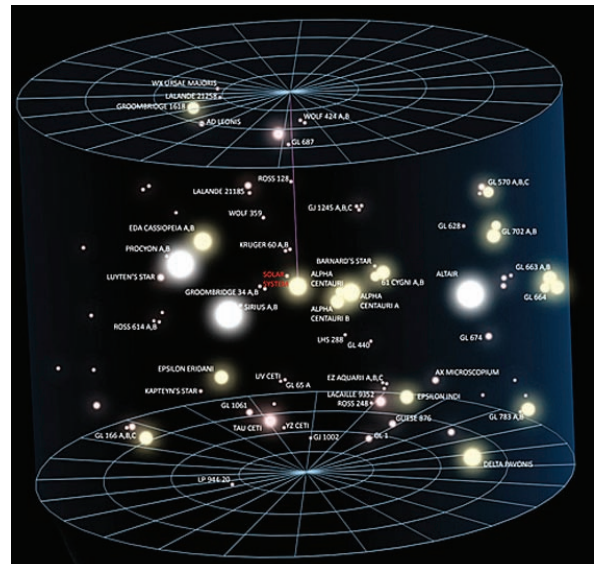
Not only is the Bible free from scientific errors, it miraculously makes known numerous, accurate scientific facts about the universe thousands of years before modern scientists caught up. There are lots of them. For time's sake I will give you seven quick examples.

The Solar System (Red) in the Milkyway >>>

1) The sun on its circuit

Psalm 19:6 Its rising is from one end of heaven, And its circuit to the other end; And there is nothing hidden from its heat.

In contrast to the Qur'an, the Bible teaches that the sun is actually on a



circuit through space. For many years critics scoffed at this verse, claiming that it taught that the sun revolves around the earth. Scientists at that time thought the sun was stationary. However, it has been discovered in recent years that the sun is in fact on a circuit through space, just like the Bible says.

2) The earth is round.

Isaiah 40:22 It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

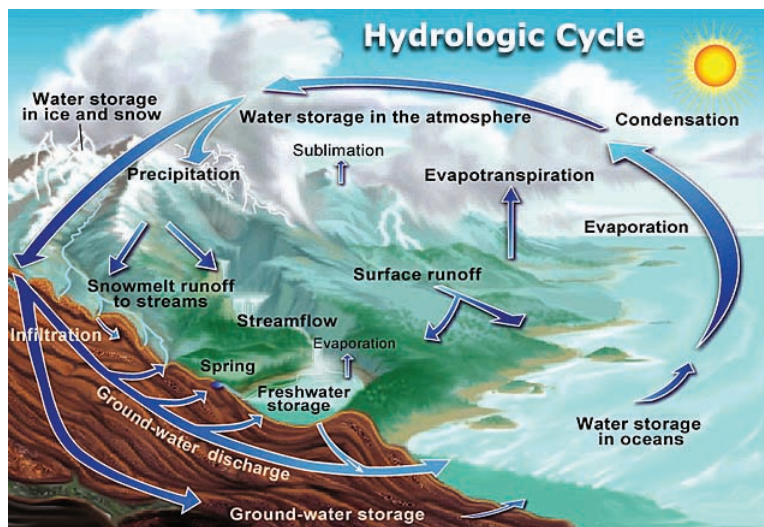
This is not a reference to a flat round disk, as some skeptics insisted, but to a sphere. When did Isaiah write these words? Between 740 and 680 B.C. Secular man discovered this 2,000 years later. At a time when science believed that the earth was flat, it was the Scriptures that inspired Christopher Columbus to sail around the world.

3) The Suspension of the Earth

Job 26:7 He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing.

Before Isaac Newton discovered gravity, Hindus believed that the earth rested on the back of an elephant who stood on the back of a turtle that was swimming in a great endless sea. The Greeks believed that the mythical god Atlas carried the earth on his shoulders. In one of the oldest books in the Bible, Job says that God hangs the earth on nothing. Scientists did not discover that the earth hangs on nothing until 1650.

4) Hydrology



Psalm 135:7 He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain; He brings the wind out of His treasures.

Job 36:27-29 For He draws up drops of water, Which distill as rain from the mist, 28 Which the clouds drop down And pour abundantly on man. 29 Indeed, can anyone understand the spreading of clouds,

The thunder from His canopy?

Hydrology is described in two Books of the Bible written before 1,400 B.C. - more than 3,000 years before their discovery by science.

5) The innumerable stars

Jeremiah 33:22 As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.'"

Before the telescope was invented, man was able to number the stars. The Greek astronomer and mathematician Hipparchus (190-120 B.C.) said there were exactly 1,026 stars. The astronomer, and mathematician Ptolemy said there were 1,056 stars. The German astronomer, Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), counted 1,006.

The whole thought of the stars being uncountable was contrary to modern science until the invention of the telescope. Since Galileo first pointed his telescope to the heavens in 1608, we discovered there were a lot more stars than anybody had ever imagined.



Today, with the help of powerful telescopes and modern satellite photographs, scientists estimate the universe contains approximately 100 billion galaxies containing approximately 200 billion stars each. If you are wondering the size of the galaxy we are in, it will take 150 million light years to go from one end to the other.



Dr. Mark Eastman

says, "Counting at a rate of ten stars per second it would take over 100 trillion years. Surely the stars cannot be numbered!"

6) Blood-clotting in a newborn

Medical science has only recently discovered that blood-clotting in a newborn reaches its peak on the eighth day, then drops. The Bible consistently says that a baby boy must be circumcised on the eighth day.

7) Life in the blood

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'

The great biological truth concerning the importance of blood in our body's mechanism has been fully comprehended only in recent years. Up until 120 years ago, medical doctors insisted that sick people needed to bleed to remove sickness out of their bodies and many died because of the practice. If you lose your blood, you lose your life. Yet Leviticus 17:11, written 3,000 years ago, declared that blood is the source of life.

B. EXTERNAL VERIFICATION OF THE BIBLE

Many people don't know this but there are dozens of writings outside of the Bible that verify the historical accuracy of many of the names of people, places and events mentioned in the Bible.

In fact, external sources verify that at least 80 persons were actual historical figures, 50 people from the OT and 30 people from the NT. Because of engravings and statues, etc., we even know what 18 (12 from the OT and 6 from the NT) of them looked like.

NEW TESTAMENT FIGURES CITED by NON-CHRISTIAN WRITERS AND/OR CONFIRMED THROUGH ARCHAEOLOGY

Person	NT Citation	Non-Christian Source(s)*
Jesus	Many citations	Josephus, Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, Phlegon, Thallus, Suetonius, Lucian, Celsus, Mara Bar-Serapion, The Jewish Talmud
Agrippa I	Acts 12:1-24	Philo, Josephus
Agrippa II	Acts 25:13-26:32	coins, Josephus
Ananias	Acts 23:2; 24:1	Josephus
Annas	Luke 3:2; John 18:13, 24; Acts 4:6	Josephus
Aretas	2 Cor. 11:32	Josephus
Bernice (wife of Agrippa II)	Acts 23:13	Josephus
Caesar Augustus	Luke 2:1	Josephus and others
Caiaphas	Several citations	ossuary, Josephus
Claudius	Acts 11:28; 18:2	Josephus
Drusilla (wife of Felix)	Acts 24:24	Josephus
Egyptian false prophet	Acts 21:38	Josephus
Erastus	Acts 19:22	inscription
Felix	Acts 23:24-25:14	Tacitus, Josephus
Gallio	Acts 18:12-17	inscription
Gamaliel	Acts 5:34; 22:3	Josephus
Herod Antipas	Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29; Luke 3:1; 23:7-12	Josephus
Herod Archelaus	Matt. 2:22	Josephus
Herod the Great	Matt. 2:1-19; Luke 1:5	Tacitus, Josephus,
Herod Philip I	Matt. 14:31- Mark 6:17	Josephus
Herod Philip II	Luke 3:1	Josephus
Herodias	Matt. 14:3; Mark 6:17	Josephus
Herodias's daughter (Salome)	Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29	Josephus
James	Several citations	Josephus
John the Baptist	Several citations	Josephus
Judas the Galilean	Acts 5:37	Josephus
Lysanias	Luke 3:1	inscription, Josephus
Pilate	Several citations	inscription, coins, Josephus, Philo, Tacitus
Quirinius	Luke 2:2	Josephus
Porcius Festus	Acts 24:27-26:32	Josephus
Sergius Paulus	Acts 13:6-12	inscription
Tiberius Caesar	Luke 3:1	Tacitus, Suetonius, Paterculus, Dio Cassius, Josephus

*Note: This is not an exhaustive compilation of non-Christian references. There may be additional citations of these New Testament figures in these and/or other non-Christian sources.

An excerpt from "I don't have enough faith to be an atheist" by Norman Geisler & Frank Turek

Many liberal scholars at one time put forth the false idea that Jesus never even existed that He was merely a mythological character. But, today the existence of Jesus is hardly even debated within informed scholarly circles. Because there are 39 external verification evidences and sources for the existence of Jesus' life, teachings, crucifixion and resurrection. I am going to present three of the first and second century historians and their works to you.

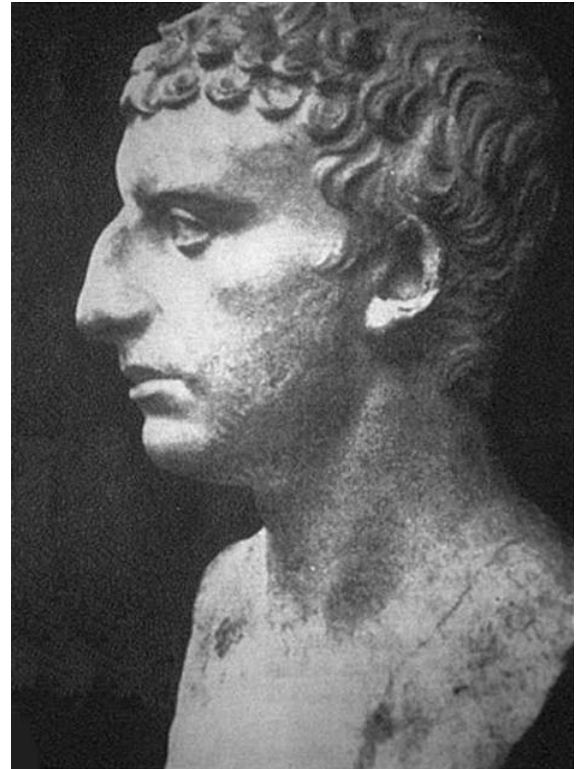


1) **Flavius Josephus** (A.D. 37-100)

In his writings Josephus verifies that Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, Caiaphas, Pontius Pilate, John the Baptist, James "the brother of Jesus," Felix, Festus and even Jesus, were all historical figures.

Listen to one of Josephus' statements about Jesus of Nazareth. I have purposely taken this from the Arabic text, of Josephus' writings called *Antiquities*, chapter 18:63-64, a text that is unchallenged by most critics of the Bible:

"At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And His conduct was good, and [He] was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and the other nations became His disciples.



Pilate condemned Him to be crucified to die. And those who had become His disciples did not abandon His discipleship. They reported that He had appeared to them three days after His crucifixion and that He was alive."

These are not the words of the Bible or a Christian, but a Roman historian writing outside of the pages of Scripture. Josephus wasn't the lone voice.

2) **Cornelius Tacitus** (A.D. 55-120)

Tacitus was another Roman Historian who wrote his work around A.D. 115. Although he was not a Christian but he did verify that Jesus lived, that He was from Judea, that He lived during the reign of Tiberius (A.D. 14-37), and was executed by Pontius Pilate, who governed the province of Judea from A.D. 26-36.

3) **Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus** (A.D. 69-130)

Suetonius was a prominent Roman historian and the chief secretary of Emperor Hadrian who recorded the lives of the Roman Caesars and the historical events surrounding their reigns.

Suetonius records the expulsion of the Christian Jews from Rome who were mentioned in Acts 18:2 and confirms the Christian faith being founded by Christ.

C. THE WILLINGNESS OF JESUS' DISCIPLES TO BE PERSECUTED

Thousands of communists died for their communism cause; millions died for the belief in Islam; and over one hundred thousand believers of Jesus Christ around the world still get killed and tortured for His name's sake every year. Many millions of people were willing to die for what they truly believed was true.

The critics of Christianity like Dan Brown, the author of *Da Vinci Code*, insist that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was nothing more than a hoax that was invented by His disciples to continue the fad which was created by Jesus, after His death. It is one thing to die for what you truly believe, but it is a completely different thing to die for a deception you created. I believe that just about everyone who lied and now face an imminent death would say, "Forget this. I've lied. Please don't kill me."

The disciples of Jesus had a unique position historically that allowed them to know whether what they were saying was true or not. They actually lived in Israel at the time Jesus lived and was with Him when He was crucified and met Him and talked with Him after He was resurrected. They were the eyewitnesses of Jesus Christ. No other proof can be better and stronger than that.

So whatever happened to those disciples at their death beds? Did they confess their deception and made themselves right? Too much of the Bible critics' dismay, they all got tortured and killed with the exception of apostle John, still believing Jesus as their Savior and God. Please allow me to list their death:

- Matthew was slain with a sword in a city of Ethiopia.
- Mark died in Alexandria, in Northern Egypt after having been cruelly dragged through the streets of that city.
- Luke was hung upon an olive tree in the land of Greece.
- James was beheaded in Jerusalem.
- James the Less (as he's called in Mark 15:40) was thrown from a lofty pinnacle of the temple.
- Philip was hung up against a pillar at Heiropolis in the province of Phrygia.
- Bartholomew was flayed alive.
- Andrew was bound to a cross, and left to die.
- Jude was shot to death with arrows.
- Matthias (the apostle chosen to replace Judas) was first stoned, and then beheaded.
- Barnabas was stoned to death by the Jews at Salonica.
- Paul, that former enemy of Christ, after a variety of tortures and persecutions, was finally beheaded in Rome.
- Peter was crucified in Rome.
- Thomas, the former skeptic of the resurrection, was run through the body with a lance at Coromandel in the East Indies for preaching the Gospel.
- John faced martyrdom when he was boiled in a huge basin of boiling oil during a wave of persecution in Rome. However, he was miraculously delivered from death. John was then sentenced to the prison island of Patmos. The apostle John was later freed and returned to serve as Bishop of Edessa in modern Turkey. He died as an old man, the only apostle to die peacefully.

These disciples sealed their testimony that Christ was alive with their own death. They went to their graves still affirming that the events which they had witnessed had actually occurred.

D. THE BIBLE'S TRANSFORMING POWER

If you've been here for the last two Sundays and today, you've heard my presentation of the trustworthiness of the Bible from seven different angles - the prophetic evidences, the archaeological evidences, the internal consistency of the Bible, the manuscript evidences, the scientific evidences, the external verifications and the eyewitnesses by Jesus' own disciples.

If you consider yourself as a true follower of Jesus Christ, you should have all the more faith in Him with these airtight evidences and eyewitnesses about Jesus and His Word the Bible. Dig into these studies and make them to be yours so that you can be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. It is the Bible's transforming power through the Holy Spirit.

If you consider yourself as a follower of Jesus Christ, yet you are not quite sure how the Bible this ancient Book is the Word of God and the manual for your life, I hope and pray that these studies have helped you understand the trustworthiness of the Bible and the Holy Spirit spoke to you. You don't ever need to have a doubt in the Word of God. Don't listen to the devil but listen to the Lord through the Bible. It is the Bible's transforming power in Him.

If you consider yourself as an unbeliever and never thought of the Bible as God's Word, now you have a serious challenge on your hand. Either Jesus is your God and Master of your life, or He becomes your ultimate enemy by your own choice. I hope that you are smart enough to choose Him to follow. It is the Bible's transforming power by the Holy Spirit.

There is no other book that transforms a person like the Bible. It is not the power of the Book itself. Rather it is the power that comes from the Author God Himself.