

## INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE

### INTRO:

- Do you believe that this book is the very Word of God?
- Do you really believe it is God's Word? Are you convinced?
  
- How will respond when a professor, a friend, a preacher begins to argue with logic and fact that while this is a great book, great literature, wise teachings, it is not the inspired word of God?
  
- Do you know why you believe what you profess?
  
- How important is it to believe this anyway? For a believer it is:
  - Your salvation itself is based on what it teaches.
  - Your entire worldview as a believer is based on this book.
  - How you live your life, how you relate to other people, what you do with your time, your money, your life itself is based on this Book.
  - There is really no more fundamental a question one can answer than what is your view of the Bible.
  
  - My testimony. I grew up in a denomination that 200 hundred years ago was known around the world for their passion for Jesus and heart to tell others about Him. They started the modern missions movement 100 years before Williams Carey, one in 4 members went out as missionaries, some even sold themselves into slavery in the West Indies in order to share the gospel with them. They started an around the clock prayer vigil that lasted over 100 years. They were devout. Yet when I grew up in this denomination, I never really heard the Bible taught. I learned the Bible stories, the Bible was respected, but not held up as the very word of God. The authority of the Scriptures had begun to be eroded even from within the seminary. Some of it was the word of God, some of the ideas were God's words. Man become the critic of God's Word. Man sat in judgment on what was authoritative and from God and what was not.
  
  - The Jesus seminar – major magazines report on their findings each year around the holiday seasons. Organized in 1985, group of NT “scholars” who twice a year get together to vote on the accuracy of Jesus' sayings. The result: 2% of Jesus' sayings are really His words, 82% are not authentic, 16% are questionable. They reject the supernatural.
  
  - Christianity in the West is moving increasingly in this direction.
  
- If you begin to believe that this book is not the inspired Word of God than you will not live your life based on it's teaching, especially when the going gets rough.
  
- Don't let anyone tell you otherwise!

- Acts 17:11 “Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”
  - o A cut above
  - o The Scriptures are our standard of truth.
- "Defend the Bible? I would just as soon defend a lion. Just turn the Bible loose. It will defend itself." Charles H. Spurgeon
- Purpose: Scripture is the basis of all we believe. It is our view of Scripture that will determine our theology and life-style. It's what separates Bible believing Christians from the rest and majority of Christendom.

### Can we trust the Bible?

Internal Evidence and External Evidence – we will look at both.

- o INSPIRATION defined: "God superintended the human authors of the Bible so that they composed and recorded without error His message to mankind in the words of their original writings." Charles Ryrie
- “The mysterious process by which God worked through human writers, employing their individual personalities and styles to produce divinely authoritative and inerrant writings” Geisler
- Theories of Inspiration - Verbal Plenary Inspiration:
  - o God gave men the very words to use as they wrote.
  - o Plenary means full inspiration as opposed to partial inspiration.
  - o Inspired 2 Pet 1:20,21
    - o Man is not the source of Scripture. Men were carried along by the Holy Spirit as they wrote. The word carried along is the same as is used in Acts 27:15 in reference to a ship being driven along by a storm.
  - o 1 Pet 1:10-12 - the prophets spoke of Christ by the Spirit of Christ as they wrote the Old Testament, yet they did not even fully understand what they were writing.
- The Bible itself defines inspiration in 2 Tim 3:16 where it says that all Scripture is inspired by God.
  - o The word inspired literally means the strong, conscious out breathing of God into men. It is God speaking through men.

## Authors' Claims to Inspiration

- The Law All make explicit claims to inspiration except Genesis. These books are always grouped together as a whole. Law of Moses was the same thing as the Law of God. This is affirmed throughout the OT books.
  - Moses - Ex 4:10-15, Deut 4:2, Dt 28:1-2, Ex 32:16, Lev 1:1, Dt 31:24-26
- Prophets – the latter prophets show a high regard for the writings of earlier prophets.
  - The phrase, The Lord said, spoke, word of the Lord came etc found 3808 times in the Old Testament.
  - Jeremiah - Jer 1:7-9
  - Ezekiel - Ez 3:4 “He then said to me, “Son of man, go now to the house of Israel and speak my words to them.”
- The vast majority of the books of the OT (18 out of 24) explicitly claim that they are God’s word to men.
- The NT quotes the OT 250 times. All OT books are quoted from except for Esther, Ecc and Song of Solomon.

## NT claims to inspiration

- Galatians 3:8 high view of Scripture
  - The Scripture preached the gospel to Abraham. We can understand the gospel only through the Scripture.
  - Quote Gen 12:3 God speaks to Abram. No Scripture at this time yet. A voice brought truth to Abram. The Scripture preached the gospel to Abram.
  - Plenary inspiration, infallible, sufficiency
    - Plenary – all Mt 19:4,5 quotes Gen 2:24 God says = author of Genesis says it. Moses says = what God says
      - Acts 2 Peter quotes Ps 2 mouth of David but God said it. David’s writings are God’s/
      - Only trust David or Jesus’ words but not Paul. Scripture has revelatory power even before it was written down. It has a being, Divine even before it was written down. What God says = what Scripture says. Scripture all parts are God’s words.
  - Infallible – even before written down.
  - Sufficiency – foresaw, it is a living thing. Heb 4:12 alive. Sword for the Spirit is the Word of God Eph 6. Scripture is alive with power by the Spirit who is it’s author.
    - Alive.

- Neo orthodoxy said that Scripture. Word of God and Scripture not the same.
  - As much revelatory power for us today as Abram had when he heard it with his ears.
- The OT prophets put on equal footing to NT writings.
  - Heb 1:1,2 and 2:1-4 The message of Christ as given by His disciples is God's voice today just as much as the message of the prophets was in times past.
    - We are even warned to pay even more careful attention to this message than the one given to Moses by angels. 2:2
    - This message came from Jesus to us through eyewitnesses and was confirmed by miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit.
  - Eph 2:20 Church is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets."
    - These 2 offices are equated. From the prophets we received the OT and from the apostles the NT.
    - Not just 12 apostles – Paul, Barnabas
    - The Apostles - 2 Pet 3:1,2 - the commands of Jesus given through the Apostles.
  - 2 Pet 3:16 Peter refers to Paul's writings as "Scripture"
    - "His (Paul's) 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."
  - 1 Tim 5:18 Draws quotes from both Luke 10:7 and Dt 25:4 and equates them both as Scripture, "For the Scripture says." Early date – around 63-65 AD.
  - Paul claims his writings are equal with the commands of Christ.
    - 1 Corth 14:37 "...let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command."
    -
  - 1 Thess 2:13 words heard from men are equal to the word of God

### Jesus' view of the Scriptures

- "Christ is the key to the inspiration and canonization of the Scriptures. He confirmed the inspiration of the Hebrew canon of the OT and He promised that the Holy Spirit would direct the apostles into "all truth", resulting in the NT." Geisler
- Jesus refers to the Bible as:
  - Word of God Mk 7:13, Jn 10:35

- Scripture Lk 4:21, Jn 5:39, Jn 10:35
- Commandment of God Mk 7:8

Jesus believed that the Bible was inspired and accurate in every detail.

- Gal 3:8 Keller
  - Plenary Dr Nicole professor Jesus' view of Scripture. Every single piece is inspired.
    - Jn 10:35 Ps 82 one word "gods" In the Law, Ps 82, not written by David, Asaph, deity based on one word, in a secondary clause, in a Psalm, by an obscure figure, in poetry.
    - Every piece of Scripture is important.
  - Sufficiency
    - Rich man and Abraham parable. They have Moses and the prophets to listen to. Gal 1:8 Gospel in the Bible, not from an angel. Moses and the prophets are our sure reliable source of truth.
  - Infallible – you can trust it. 1800 verses of Jesus' words. 180 of them are quotes from OT. 10% It is written..
    - Jn 19:28 I thirst. To fulfill Scripture. Mt 27 My God my God why... Ps 22 This goes to show Jesus used Scripture to direct His own life. Lk 23 carrying cross everything written about me will be fulfilled. Mt 26:52ff how will the Scripture be fulfilled.
    - "I want Jesus but I cannot accept all that the Bible says." You cannot do this without trampling on Jesus.
  - Gospel to Abraham Context of Gal. going back to keeping the law. Ceremonial law was about Jesus. He is the fulfillment of all of these. Jn 5 John the Baptist is a witness and so is Scripture....points us to Jesus. Judges – about deliverers, Jesus types, I can deliver through many, few, through one.
- Matt 5:18 "I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, no the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."
  - Even the smallest details of God's Word will be accomplished. The smallest letter as well as the dotted "i" will be accomplished.
- Mark 12:35-37 - Jesus makes a point using specific words. The point of Jesus' argument is based on the fact that David calls Him my Lord. The Hebrew word for my is a single Hebrew letter. His argument is based on the use of a single one letter word! The Messiah was not only David's descendent but his Lord – my Lord.

- Matt 22:23,24, 28-32 - Jesus rebukes the Sadducees for not knowing the Scriptures and then teaches them about life after death from what God said to them as written in Ex 3:6. His whole argument is based on the verb tense. I am versus I was. He used the present tense to support the doctrine of resurrection. Jesus attributes the book of Exodus to God.
  - The Scriptures were acknowledged as the final authority in His day. He accused the Sadducees of not knowing the Scriptures.
  - He condemns the Pharisees for adding to the Scriptures in Mk 7:1-13. Nobody debated what was Scripture or its authority over men. It was common knowledge.
  
- Matthew 12:38-40 - Jesus believed in the inspiration of the O.T. as much as He believed He would rise on the third day. You cannot question the inspiration of the Scriptures without questioning the character of Jesus.
  
- Matt. 19:4–5 He who created them ... said is a strong affirmation of the divine inspiration of the OT Scriptures, because Jesus goes on to quote words from Genesis that are not attributed to any speaker (“Therefore a man ...” cf. Gen. 2:24) and attributes those words to God.
  
- Lk 24:25-27 – Jesus, after His resurrection, rebukes the disciples for not having believed all that the prophets have spoken concerning Him.
  - Foolish and slow of heart to believe all the prophets spoke
  - All the Scriptures point to Him. Moses and prophets - OT
  
- Jn 10:34,35 - Shows Jesus' belief in:
  1. verbal inspiration - is it not written
  2. minutely inspired - focuses on a single word
  3. authoritatively inspired - the Scripture cannot be broken or emptied of its authority.
  
- Jesus equates the writings of Moses with the Word of God. Human authorship does not preclude Divine inspiration.
  - “For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and mother... Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition...” Mk 7:10,13
  
- Jesus verified these events recorded in the OT
  - Jonah and the fish Mt 12:38-40
  - The creation Matt 19:4
  - The flood Matt 24:37-39, Lk 17:26,27
  - Destruction of Sodom Lk 17:28-32, Mt 10:15
  - Moses Jn 3:14
  - Manna Jn 6:31-33,49
  - Adam and Eve Mt 19:4,5

- Jesus submits Himself to the authority of the OT in His own life.
  - Matt 4 Three times He says, “It is written...” and then quotes from Dt.
- Jesus believed that all Scripture would be fulfilled.
  - Mt 26:52-54 Concerning His arrest. “How then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen this way?”
- Jesus set His seal of authority on the yet unwritten accounts of the apostles or the NT.
  - Jn 14:26 “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”
  - Jn 16:12,13 “... He will guide you into all truth.... He will tell you what is yet to come.”

The Very Words are Inspired – human thoughts and ideas can only be expressed in human words. This is the language God used to communicate with us. Not only are the thoughts or ideas inspired but the very words are as well.

- Jn 12:49 – “For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it.”
  - Not only the thoughts but the very words are inspired
- “Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will never pass away.” Mt 24:35
- Paul’s view of OT inspiration.
  - Gal 3:16 Paul bases his argument on the word seed being singular instead of plural
- “The overriding reason for accepting the divine inspiration and authority of Scriptures is plain loyalty to Jesus.”
- "How then can we, the disciples of Jesus, possibly have a lower view of Scripture than our Teacher Himself had? How can we, the servants of Jesus, allow Scripture to occupy a smaller place in our lives than it occupied in the life of our Lord Himself?"
- The authority of Christ and the Scriptures stand together.

### Application

- Become like a Berean – study it for yourself. This is a foundational topic that you must have your own convictions on.

- If it really is what it claims to be, the very words of God, what should I be doing with it? How well do I know it? Even more, am I obeying what I already know?

Do I have a plan for studying this Book?

But how can we know that we still have the words of Jesus, the apostles and the prophets preserved for us today?

Primary Sources - The authors of the NT were eye witnesses to Jesus' life and teachings.

- The writers of the NT wrote as eyewitnesses or from firsthand information.
  - Luke 1:1-3 taken from eyewitness accounts
  - 2 Pet 1:16 "we were eyewitnesses of His majesty"
  - 1 Jn 1:1-3 "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard."
  - Jn 19:33-35 "The man who saw it has given testimony" regarding the death of Jesus.
  - Jn 20:24-30
  - Acts 2:22 The miracles that Jesus performed were common knowledge and could not be disputed.
    - "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.
    - Acts 2:32 we are all witnesses of the fact...of the resurrection
    - Acts 3:15, 4:18-20, 5:30-32, 10:39,40
  - Acts 26:24-26 "it was not done in a corner"
  - 1 Cor 15:3-8 He appeared to Peter, 12, 500, to Paul himself, James
  - 4 women as eyewitnesses of Jesus' resurrection
  
- Luke displays an incredible array of knowledge of local places, names, environmental conditions, customs, and circumstances that befit only an eyewitness contemporary of the time and events. Classical scholar and historian Colin Hemer chronicles Luke's accuracy in the book of Acts verse by verse. With painstaking detail, Hemer identifies 84 facts in the last 16 chapters of Acts that have been confirmed by historical and archaeological research.
  - Colin J Hemer, The Book of Acts...
  - Roman historian A. N. Sherwin-White says, "For Acts the confirmation of historicity is overwhelming. . . . Any attempt to reject its basic historicity must now appear absurd. Roman historians have long taken it for granted."
  - Luke also reports a total of 35 miracles in the same book of Acts.
  - miracles? In light of the fact that Luke has proven accurate with so many trivial details, it is nothing but pure anti-supernatural bias to say he's not telling the truth about the miracles he records.
    - I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist (p. 260). Crossway. Kindle Edition.



- Luke – same author as Acts. Same degree of accuracy. Carefully investigated Luke 1:3
  - There are several details in Luke’s Gospel that have been verified independently. For example, Luke names eleven historically confirmed leaders in the first three chapters of his Gospel alone
  - As Bible scholar F. F. Bruce observes, “A writer who thus relates his story to the wider context of world history is courting trouble if he is not careful; he affords his critical readers so many opportunities for testing his accuracy. Luke takes this risk, and stands the test admirably.”
  - all eleven of the historical figures Luke names in the first three chapters of his Gospel—including John the Baptist (son of Zechariah)—have been confirmed by non-Christian writers and/or archaeology.
    - I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist (p. 262). Crossway. Kindle Edition.
  
- FF Bruce states, “The earliest preachers of the gospel knew the value of ... first hand testimony, and appealed to it time and again. The disciples could not afford to risk inaccuracies which would at once be exposed by those who would be only too glad to do so. One of the strong points in the original apostolic preaching is the confident appeal to the knowledge of the hearers; they not only said, ‘We are witnesses of these things,’ but also, ‘As you yourselves also know’ Acts 2:22. Had there been any tendency to depart from the facts in any material respect, the possible presence of hostile witnesses in the audience would have served as a further corrective.”
- Eyewitnesses to the resurrection that were still alive when the NT was written. 1 Cor 15:6
- Luke based his account on parts of Mark and Matthew.
- John – many details that only an eyewitness would record. See I don’t have enough faith pg 268
- by referencing real historical figures and their doings. All in all, there are at least thirty characters in the New Testament who have been confirmed as historical by archaeology or non-Christian sources<sup>14</sup> (see table 10.1 on the next page).

**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. 14:3; 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.

## Dates of originals

- NT books written down during the lifetimes of those involved in the accounts themselves. The NT must be regarded as a competent primary source document from the first century.
  - NT gap is about 25 years and maybe less
  - All NT books written before AD 100
  - Most of the NT written before AD 70 since no mention of the destruction of the Temple and Israel
  - Many books composed before AD 62 since no mention of James' death. Acts for example must have been written prior to 63 AD and Luke as well since it predates Acts.
    - Paul quotes from Luke and calls it Scripture 1 Tim 5:18
  - Mark mid to late 50's if not earlier. One of the eyewitness sources Luke claims to have used.
  - Paul wrote 1 Cor around 55-56 AD accurate account of resurrection based early creed in 1 Cor 15:3-8 which dates back to soon after the resurrection.
  - Paul' death in mid 60's
  
- Williams Albright, one of the world's foremost archaeologists, said: "We can already say emphatically that there is no longer any solid basis for dating any book of the NT after about AD 80, two full generations before the date given by the more radical NT critics of today. Thanks to the Qumran discoveries (dead sea scrolls), the NT proves to be in fact what it was formerly believed to be: the teaching of Christ and his immediate followers between cir. 25 and 80 AD."

## Inerrancy

Intro: The charge against Jesus. Why the differences in something that should be so precise as a sign. This is clear proof the Bible has errors?

- Mt 27:37 This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.
- Mk 15:26 The King of the Jews.
- Lk 23:38 This is the King of the Jews.
- Jn 19:19 Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews.
- Sign written in Aramaic – one of the languages of the Jews, Latin – official language of Rome, and Greek – the common language throughout the empire.

Inerrancy – Is God's Word inerrant. Inspired and inerrant are usually linked together.

- The character of God demands inerrancy. If the Bible is the word of God, then we can logically assume that the Bible is without error.
- An attack on the inerrancy of the Bible is an attack on the character of God.
- Defined. "Inerrancy means that when all the facts are known, the Scriptures in their original autographs, properly interpreted, will be shown to be wholly true in

everything they affirm, whether this has to do with doctrine or morality or with the social, physical, or life sciences.”

- Inspiration does not exclude diversity of expression. He said the same thing in different ways, from different viewpoints and at different times.
  - The 4 gospels relate the same story in different ways to different groups of people.
  - Even Jesus is quoted as saying the same thing but using different words.
- God used different personalities and styles.
- God sometimes used non-biblical sources.
  - Luke based his gospel on research he had done.
  - Paul quoted freely from a heathen poet. Acts 17
  - All truth is God’s truth.
- What inerrancy is not.
  - Not strict grammar. Inerrancy is defined in terms of truth and not by strict grammar rules.
  - Having everything written in one literary mold. Many types of literary devices are used.
    - Poems, parables, allegory, metaphors, similes, hyperboles, satire.
  - Inspiration does not require the use of scholarly, technical, or scientific language. It is merely prescientific, written to the common man of the time of it’s writing.
    - Scriptures recorded in ancient times using ancient standards.
    - Uses round numbers
    - Language of the day.
- Inerrancy does not demand that the sayings of Jesus contain the exact words of Jesus only the exact voice.
  - Many of Jesus’ saying were spoken in Aramaic and had to be translated into Greek.
  - “An example of God’s desire to communicate an accurate meaning to us (rather than just mechanically precise words) is the fact that He gave us four gospels. The slight variations in Jesus’ words actually help us capture the accurate meaning He intended. Had each writer simply parroted the others, the text might be precise but the meaning might be misconstrued.”
- Inerrancy does not guarantee the exhaustive comprehensiveness of any single account or of combined accounts where those are involved.
  - God has not seen fit to record every detail of every account.
  - “There may be some unknown bit of information that would resolve seeming conflicts. All that is required is that the sentences used by each writer be true.”

- Inerrancy does not apply to every copy, only to the original text.
  - So what about the translations we have today. This area of study is called textual criticism.
  - The copies we have today are known to be accurate to the originals because of all the copies we have today.
  - Why didn't God preserve the originals?
    - Man may have worshiped them
    - So that no one could tamper with them. It is practically impossible for anyone to make changes in the thousands of existing copies we have.

How reliable are the copies we have of the NT?

- These copies are called manuscripts – hand written copies.

Dates of manuscripts

- Fragment Jn 18 John Rylands fragment AD 117-138 in Egypt
- 9 disputed fragments from 50-70 AD
- NT gap is about 25 years compared to Iliad next shortest gap is 500 years.
- Complete NT AD 200

Author	Book	Date Written	Earliest copy	Time gap	No. of copies
Homer	Iliad	800 BC	400BC	400 yrs	643
Herodotus	History	480-425BC	AD 900	1,350 yrs	8
Thucydides	History	460-400	AD 900	1,300 yrs	8
Plato		400 BC	AD 900	1,300 yrs	7
Demosthenes		300 BC	AD 1100	1,400 yrs	200
Caesar	Gallic Wars	100-44BC	AD 900	1,000yrs	10
Livy	History of Rome	59 BC - AD 17	4 <sup>th</sup> cent mostly 10 <sup>th</sup>	400 yrs 1,000 yrs	1 partial 19 copies
Tacitus	Annals	AD 100	AD 1100	1,000 yrs	20
New Testament Greek		AD 50-100	114 fragment 200 books 250 most 325 complete	50 yrs 100yrs 150 yrs 225 yrs	5366
N.T. Translations		AD 150			10,000 Latin Other 9,284 19,284+ <u>24,970+</u>

- 5000 handwritten Greek manuscripts - the next best in ancient literature is Caesar's Gallic Wars with 9!
- Translations of the N.T. - Syriac and Latin translations of the N.T. were made around 150 AD - very near the originals. We currently have more than 15,000 copies of various versions.
- We have over 24,000 manuscript copies of portions of the N.T. in different languages in existence today. No other document of antiquity even begins to approach such numbers ... In Comparison, the Iliad by Homer is second with only 643 manuscripts that still survive. The first complete preserved text of Homer dates from the 13th century.
  - "Homer was no doubt the most widely read author of antiquity." E.G. Turner
- Sir Fredrick Kenyon (one of the great authorities in the field of N.T. textual criticism, librarian of the British museum) has made the following statements. "The interval then between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed."

#### Testimony of early Church fathers – quotations in their writings

- 303 Diocletian persecution to destroy manuscripts could never have succeeded due to the many quotes found in the church fathers writings 36,289 quotes...all but eleven verses of the NT can be reconstructed just from their quotations.
- J. Harold Greenlee says that the quotations of the Scripture in the works of the early Christian writers "are so extensive that the N.T. could virtually be reconstructed from them without the use of the N.T. manuscripts."
- Bruce Metzger reiterates the above, "Indeed, so extensive are these citations that if all other sources for our knowledge of the text of the N.T. were destroyed, they would be sufficient alone for the reconstruction of practically the entire N.T."

#### Conclusion

- "The number of manuscripts of the N.T., of early translations from it, and of quotations from it in the oldest writers of the Church, is so large that it is practically certain that the true reading of every doubtful passage is preserved in some one or other of these ancient authorities. This can be said of no other ancient book in the world."
- There are no known original manuscripts of the Bible in existence. "Fortunately, however, the abundance of manuscript copies makes it possible to reconstruct the original with virtually complete accuracy." Geisler

- John Warwick Montgomery says that, "to be skeptical of the resultant text of the New testament books is to allow all of classical antiquity to slip into obscurity, for no documents of the ancient period are as well attested bibliographically as the New Testament."

### What about all the errors in our Bible?

- Critics are quick to point out that there are 200,000 variants in the existing manuscripts of the N.T. These variants represent only 10,000 places in the N.T. since one misspelled word found in 3,000 manuscripts is counted as 3,000 variants or readings.
- Geisler and Nix state that, "only about 1/8 of all variants had any weight, as most of them are merely mechanical matters such as spelling or style. Of the whole, then, only about 1/16 rise above 'trivialities', or can in any sense be called 'substantial variation'. Mathematically this would compute to a text that is 98.33% pure."
- Tregelles and Scrivener state, "We possess so many manuscripts, and we are aided by so many versions, that we are never left to the need of conjecture as the means of removing errata."
- F.F. Bruce states, "The wealth of attestation is such that the true reading is almost invariably bound to be preserved by at least one of the thousands of witnesses."
- "No fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith rests on a disputed reading."  
Dockery
- Example of a disputed passage - NIV notes
  - John 5:2 – differences in spelling of a town
  - John 5:4 – an obvious later addition to explain while all these people hung around this pool

### Objections to claims of Inspiration and Inerrancy

#### Arguing in Circles

- "You believe in inerrancy because you believe the Bible teaches it, but you believe the Bible because you believe in inerrancy."
- This is not the case.
- The Bible is reliable and trustworthy, the same as other historical documents from this period of time. I.e. Josephus or accounts by Julius Caesar.
- On the basis of this historical reliability of the Bible, we look at the life and teachings of the central character of the Bible – Jesus Christ. He claimed to be God, the infallible Authority. Jesus believed and taught the Scriptures are entirely without error and eternal, the very Word of God.
- If the Scriptures are the Word of God, then they are inerrant, as a reflection of God Himself.

- The argument begins with the nature of the Bible in general, moves to the person and teaching of Jesus, and concludes by adopting His teaching concerning the nature of the Bible.
  - o Bible/Historical/Accurate -----Jesus/God-----His teaching-----Scriptures

### Difficulties/Problems

- “Difficulties do not constitute objections. Unsolved problems are not of necessity errors.”
  - “Errors are inconsistent with an infallible Bible, but difficulties are not.”  
W.A. Criswell
  - Many so called problems have been solved even in this century.
  - The unexplained is not necessarily unexplainable.
    - Critics once thought Moses could not have written the first 5 books of the Bible because there was no writing in Moses’ day. Yet now we know that there was writing, even long before Moses. Yet the argument that began the theory of multiple authors continues to this day.
    - Existence of the Hittites.

### External Evidence

#### Are the NT documents truth? Are they factual?

Sources outside of the NT books that validate events.

- 10 known non-Christian writers within 150 years of Jesus’ life.
- “In other words, Jesus of Nazareth, who was not even a Roman official in the Roman Empire, is mentioned in ancient writings about as much as the emperor at that time!” Not Enough Faith...
- Testament. Piecing together all ten non-Christian references, we see that: 1. Jesus lived during the time of Tiberius Caesar. 2. He lived a virtuous life. 3. He was a wonder-worker. 4. He had a brother named James. 5. He was acclaimed to be the Messiah. 6. He was crucified under Pontius Pilate. 7. He was crucified on the eve of the Jewish Passover. 8. Darkness and an earthquake occurred when he died. 9. His disciples believed he rose from the dead. 10. His disciples were willing to die for their belief.
- “At this time [the time of Pilate] there was a wise man who was called Jesus. 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 and to die. But 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; accordingly he was perhaps the Messiah, concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders.”

Josephus Antiquities

- I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist (pp. 221-222). Crossway. Kindle Edition.



### Continuity

- Suppose you were going to write a book. You ask 40 different people to help you write it. These people must come from different backgrounds and educational levels. Some doctors, lawyers, some farmers, some fishermen, some government leaders, some by political prisoners, some truck drivers, some IRS officials etc. 40 in all. Ask them to write on some of the following topics: the nature of God, of man, heaven, hell, salvation, creation, history, ethics, philosophy, science, the future, etc. In addition, these authors can not communicate with each other except by word of mouth passed down through the years. Oh yes, I forgot, these authors must live over a time span of one and a half thousand years. Compile it into one book and what would you have?
  - o Written over a 1500 year period
  - o 40 Authors
  - o 3 languages
  - o Internal harmony, total continuity, it is one book containing everything for life and godliness.

### Longevity

- o As compared with writings of Shakespeare. With the exception of between 12 and 20 contested verses, every verse in the NT is settled by general consent of scholars as to the context, while in every one of Shakespeare's 37 plays there are probably a hundred readings still in dispute, many of which affect the meaning of the passage.
- o Through persecution – AD 303 Diocletian issued an edict to destroy the Christian Scriptures.
  - o Voltaire claimed that 50 years after his death (1778) the Bible would be out of existence, yet 50 years after his death the Geneva Bible Society was using his house and his presses to print stacks of Bibles.

### Fulfilled Prophecy

- "Other books claim divine inspiration, such as the Koran, Book of Mormon, parts of the Veda. But none of those contains predictive prophecy." Norman Geisler and William Nix
- There are more than 6,000 verses of prophecy in the Bible and aboutt 3,000 have already been fulfilled.
- How can we explain the hundreds of detailed prophecies found in the Scriptures that have literally been fulfilled hundreds of years after they were written? One of the reasons for the rise of higher criticism (the study concerning the author, date circumstances surrounding the writing of the books) was to discount prophecy by re-dating the book's to a time after the historical events prophesied had already taken place. One of the characteristics of the living God is His capacity to announce the future beforehand.
  - o Is 46:9-11 ... declaring the end from the beginning

- Credentials of a prophet Dt 18:21-22, Dt 13:1-3
- Prophecy concerning Tyre Ez 26:3,4,7,8,12,14,21 Mainland city captured by Nebuchadnezzar in 572 BC after a 13 year siege. The siege began 3 years after this prophecy was made. The island fortress was destroyed by Alexander the Great in 332 BC after building a causeway to the island fortress.
- Prophecies concerning the nations in Ez 25-37

### Jesus

- |                          |          |         |             |
|--------------------------|----------|---------|-------------|
| - Place of birth         | Mic 5:2  | 700 BC  | Mt 2:1      |
| - Born of a virgin       | Is 7:14  | 700 BC  | Mt 1:18     |
| - Triumphal entry        | Zech 9:9 | 500 BC  | Jn 12:12-19 |
| - Betrayed by a friend   | Ps 41:9  | 1000 BC | Mk 14:10    |
| - Resurrection           | Ps 66:10 | 1000 BC | Acts 3:15   |
| - Crucified with sinners | Is 53:12 | 1000 BC | Mt 27:38    |
| - Hands and feet pierced | Ps 22:16 | 1000 BC | Jn 20:27    |
- In all there are 61 major prophecies concerning Jesus in the O.T.
  - Was it just coincidental? The probability of of any man having lived to the present time and fulfilled eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17<sup>th</sup> power. Silver dollars on the face of Texas 2 feet deep. Blindfold a man, walk as far as you like and pick up the one marked coin. Stoner in Science Speaks
    - Chance of fulfilling 48 prophecies? 1 in 10 to the 157<sup>th</sup> power.

### Archaeology

- Nelson Glueck, Jewish archeologist concludes, "It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference."
- Henry Morris observes: "in view of the great mass of corroborative evidence regarding the Biblical history of these periods, there exists today not one unquestionable find of archaeology that proves the Bible to be in error at any point."
- Examples of things validated by archaeology.
  - Moses could have written the Pentateuch
  - Hittites were a real people
  - There was a place called Ur where Abraham was from
  - Walls of Jericho
  - Book of Daniel/Belshazzar
- F.F. Bruce notes: "Where Luke has been suspected of inaccuracy, and accuracy has been vindicated by some inscriptional evidence, it may be legitimate to say that archaeology has confirmed the N.T. record."

- Sir William Ramsey, regarded as one of the greatest archaeologists ever to have lived, was at first a skeptic as to the accuracy of Luke's account. After 30 years of study, he had to change his view radically to, "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 to its trustworthiness."
- Dead Sea Scrolls - the scrolls show us what books of the Old Testament were considered sacred in the period between the testaments. They also proved that we have an accurate copy of the OT.
  - About 175 of the 500 scrolls are biblical. All the O.T. books are represented among the scrolls, except Esther. The scrolls show a distinction between canonical and non canonical books. Only canonical books have commentaries associated with them. 20 of the 39 books of the O.T. are quoted or referred to as Scripture. The scrolls give positive evidence for the canonicity of all but Chronicles, Esther, and Song of Solomon
  - Earliest complete Hebrew MS from AD 900. Dead Sea scrolls about 125 BC. Significance has to do with accuracy of Isaiah with 1,000 year time gap. It "proved to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95% of the text. The 5% of variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling." Gleason Archer

### Septuagint

- The translation of the Hebrew O.T. into Greek. It is the first group of books to ever be translated into another language. It was made in the third and second centuries B.C. as a growing number of Jews spoke Greek as their primary language. Legend says it was made by 72 Hebrew translators. (6 from each of the 12 tribes)
- Septuagint was commonly used by Greek speaking Jews in Jesus' day. Acts 6:9
- The gospel was carried to the world in the form of the Septuagint since Greek was the language of the Gentile world. It is from the Septuagint that we get the order and number of our O.T. books.
- Many of the O.T. quotes recorded in the N.T. are from the Septuagint. As a result, these quotes may appear to contradict or be different from those found in our Hebrew O.T.
- Example: Stephen's defense recorded in Acts 7. Stephen was a Hellenistic, or Greek speaking, Jew. he used the Septuagint translation in his defense

- O.T. quotes in our N.T not only come from the Septuagint translation but there are quotes which are taken from other translations as well. (Aramaic, Samaritan and others which are unknown to us today)

#### Application:

- We can trust the Bible as the Word of God.
- Ps 119:97 A people of the Word.
- Be a Berean. Acts 17:11 “Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”
  - Don’t believe everything you hear, especially when you hear people claiming there are errors in the Bible. Check it out, study it for yourself.
- Be a student of the Word of God all the time. Heb 4:12 Living and active,.... Able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
- Dt 30:31 They are not idle words for you, they are your life, by them you will live long...

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