

## Is the Bible True?

Many people question whether the Bible can be trusted. In fact, in today's society, the Bible has become to be seen as a book of fables, and only one perspective out of many. Many people no longer revere the Bible or take a Bible verse to heart when they hear it. The Bible has become on par with any other holy book from any other religion—a book of good principles to follow, but not the standard or guide by which people should live.

Before any meaningful discussion can be had about salvation, God, the apocalypse, heaven, or any other belief, we need to determine the veracity of the Bible. Only those who accept the Bible as true can appreciate and understand what the Bible has to say about any topic. Without that fundamental understanding, any discussion is moot.

It is possible to verify the authenticity of the Bible. The field of archaeology has done much to prove the Bible's record true. Also, as we study some of the prophecies of the Bible, we can determine the truthfulness of the Bible by the fulfillment of those prophecies. The Bible itself declares itself inspired. It comprises 66 books written by 44 different authors over a span of 1500 years. These authors, from many walks of life, and of varying degrees of education and nobility, most of whom never knew each other or lived within each other's lifespan, were only able to write so cohesively through God's inspiration. An objective view of the Bible can show us that, indeed, the Bible's composition is unique and inspired.

The Bible contains 66 books written over a 1500-year period of time by 44 different authors. The authenticity of its stories and of the people that lived in its history has been authenticated by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1948. The scrolls date back to 150-170 BC and contain all or parts of the Old Testament books except the book of Esther. Many other discoveries have helped prove many details of the Bible that had been scoffed at by higher critics:

The **Cyrus Cylinder**, discovered in 1879, records Cyrus' overthrow of Babylon and his subsequent deliverance of the Jewish captives.

The **Rosetta Stone**, discovered in 1799 in Egypt by Napoleon's scientists, was written in three languages: hieroglyphics, demotic, and Greek. It unlocked the mystery of the hieroglyphics which have helped confirm the authenticity of the Bible.

The **Moabite Stone** discovered in 1868 at Dibon, Jordan, confirmed Moabite attacks on Israel as recorded in [2 Kings 1 and 3](#).

The **Lachish Letters**, discovered in 1932-1938, 24 miles north of Beersheba, described the attack of Nebuchadnezzar on Jerusalem in 586 BC.

## Archeological Excavations

The Bible's authenticity is also evidenced by archeological excavations that prove the existence of names of people and cities found in the Bible. The discovery of the city of Petra, for example, helped confirm the authenticity of the Bible's record.

In addition, many of the Bible's prophecies have already come true. Prophecies concerning [Babylon \(Isaiah 13:19-22\)](#), [Tyre \(Ezekiel 26:3-5\)](#), Sidon ([Ezekiel 28:21-23](#)), Cyrus ([Ezra 4:3; 5:13-14; Isaiah 44:28; 45:1](#)), Medo Persia ([Daniel 8:20-21](#)), Greece ([Daniel 8:20-21](#)), and Jesus' birthplace Bethlehem ([Micah 5:2](#)) have all been fulfilled exactly as predicted. These fulfilled prophecies are an extremely strong argument for the trustworthiness of the Bible. They signify that we can trust [the prophecies concerning the Antichrist](#) and [other end-time prophecies](#).

## Unity of Scripture

Another evidence of the Bible's inspiration is found in its cohesive unity. In more than 3000 places, [the Bible declares itself inspired](#). It does not contradict itself.

The prophecies of the Bible in cases such as [Babylon](#), [Tyre](#), [Petra](#), and [Egypt](#), as well as the Messianic prophecies, prove the Bible's authenticity.

The Bible has survived centuries and even millenia. Despite all the attempts of Satan to hide it, destroy it, and make it inaccessible to the common person, the Bible has been preserved by God.

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever" (Psalm 12:6-7). Jesus also promises that "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

But what does the Bible have to say about its inspiration? From where does it say it gets its revelation?

2 Peter 1:21 says, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

In fact, the Bible states emphatically that, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

When this was written, it was primarily referring to the Old Testament. Those that say that the Old Testament, or the Gospels, or other parts of the Bible are no longer applicable to us, are incorrect. The entire Bible exists for our edification. The Scriptures point to Jesus and His solution for our sin problem.

From Genesis to Revelation, Jesus is revealed in His various forms. In the Pentateuch (the first five books), Jesus is revealed. In Genesis, Christ is our Creator. In Exodus, Christ is our Sanctuary, our Haven, and our Deliverer. In Leviticus, Christ is our

Sacrifice and Judge. In Numbers, Christ is our Guide. And in Deuteronomy, Christ is revealed as our Reward. In the books of Revelation and Daniel, we see Christ as our Judge. And we find these aspects of Christ revealed throughout the Bible.

Psalm 119:160 says, "Thy word is true from the beginning."

In John 17:17 we read, "thy word is truth."

The greatest evidence of the Bible's inspiration is evidenced in the Christ it reveals and the changes in those who study it ([John 5:39](#); [Acts 4:12](#); [Matthew 11:26-28](#)).

### **Tyre and the Bible**

Tyre was the maritime equivalent of Babylon. Carthage, a rival of Rome, was only a colony of Tyre. When Tyre was at the height of its power, the prophet Ezekiel prophesied this:

*And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her...and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water...And I will make thee like the top of a rock: thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more: for I the LORD have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD (Ezekiel 26:4,12,14).*

The destruction of Tyre could have been plausible. However, the prophecy that Tyre would be thrown into the midst of the sea, and its former location be scraped like the top of a rock seemed more than implausible. Yet both these prophecies were fulfilled. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon besieged the city and conquered it. The inhabitants of Tyre, however, escaped to a nearby island. Nebuchadnezzar then rendered the city to ruins. For two and-a-half centuries, these ruins were a mute contradiction of the Bible.

When Alexander the Great conquered the Medo-Persian empire, long after Nebuchadnezzar's siege, the new island city of Tyre resisted his advances. Frustrated by their efforts, Alexander ordered his troops to build a causeway to the island by throwing the ancient ruins of mainland Tyre into the midst of the sea, and using the dust to create a way for his troops, thus fulfilling the prophecy that Tyre would be thrown into the midst of the sea.

The scraped rocks and sunken causeway of ancient Tyre declare with emphasis to this generation that the Bible is more than just an ordinary book.

### **Petra and the Bible**

*Petra* is the Greek word for "rock." In the heart of Mount Seir, halfway between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba, there is a valley surrounded on all sides by very steep rocky cliffs, with a few narrow gorges leading inside. In this valley, the city of Petra was built. Its Biblical name was *Sela*. The earliest inhabitants of this area were the Horites, or Hurrians. Later, Esau, the brother of Jacob, settled in the territory

south of the Dead Sea, and his descendants, the Edomites, gradually replaced the Hurrians. The Edomites lived here when Israel came from Egypt during the Exodus, about 1445 BC.

About 400 BC, the Edomites were driven out by the Arabian Nabataeans. These people made Petra their capital and controlled the most important trade routes between the East and the West. Caravans passing through this territory had to pay taxes to the Nabataeans, who in this way became very wealthy enabling them to build beautiful palaces, temples, theatres, and tombs hewn out of solid rock in their capital city.

In later centuries, caravans followed other routes between the Orient and Europe. Traffic through Nabataean territory dried up, Petra became deserted and forgotten, and for centuries it was a legendary city. All the references in Scripture were considered by higher critics to be figments of the imagination. They claimed the non-existence of Petra as proof for the unreliability of Scripture.

In the year 1812, the Swiss explorer Johann Burckhardt, disguised as an Arabian sheik, discovered the lost city. When he published his report, it seemed almost unbelievable that such a picturesque place could have existed just 161 kilometres south of Jerusalem without being known.

Because of the unstable Middle Eastern political situation, visits to Petra were made virtually impossible, and only in recent years has this ancient city become readily accessible to tourists. Obadiah describes the lofty places of Petra and the confidence of its inhabitants. However, Jeremiah predicted that the city would lose its power and become uninhabited ([Obadiah 3-4](#); [Jeremiah 49:16-18](#)).

Why did God predict the demise of the inhabitants of Petra? For the answer, one must look into the rituals and practices of these people. The main place of worship, the *Jabel-Aibb' Atuf*, is the best-preserved high place in all the Bible lands. The object of worship here was not God, but the sun. And as part of their worship they offered human sacrifices. Close by, two obelisks may be seen which were probably sun pillars of fertility.

It was because of these and other abominable practices that God instructed Israel on their entry into Canaan after the Exodus, to destroy the high places of the heathen. Because of the pagan vices and immoral rites practised there, the finger of prophecy forecast the downfall and entire destruction of cities like Petra (Read [Joel 3:19](#) and [Ezekiel 35:3-9](#)).

Standing on Petra's high place with the colourful ruins of the city below, you can hear the voice of its desolate silence declaring that God's prophetic Word never fails!

### **Egypt and the Bible**

The Bible stories concerning the relationship of God's people with Egypt have been subject to much ridicule. Critics regard Biblical stories, such as the accounts of

Joseph and the Exodus, as mythology.

The stones of archaeology were silent witnesses to the dramas of the past, and it was only after 1799, when the Rosetta Stone was discovered, that the ancient records could be deciphered. It took Jean-François Champollion 20 years to decipher the ancient hieroglyphics from the Rosetta Stone. The Stone was unique in that three languages were inscribed upon it, each telling the same story. The science of archaeology is thus a fledgling science, and most of its treasures have only been subject to scrutiny in the last century.

Today it is possible to not only read hieroglyphics, but also the ancient cuneiform writings. Astoundingly, the ancient relics have succeeded in silencing many of the Biblical critics. The harmony between Scripture and archaeological findings has shed new light upon the debate.

Concerning the [story of Joseph](#), it is known that the Semitic Hyksos overthrew the Egyptian dynasties from the year 1780 BC to 1545 BC, a period of just over a quarter of a century. During this time, it would have been possible for a Semite to reach the position of prestige occupied by Joseph. In recent times, frescoes have been found in Egyptian tombs depicting fat and thin cows, and inscriptions have been found referring to seven lean and seven opulent years, making this Biblical story more than just a myth. One of the most exciting stories in Scripture, however, is the Exodus.

According to Biblical chronology, Moses was born in 1530 BC, during the reign of Tutmoses I, who ruled from 1532 to 1508 BC. Tutmoses I was the third pharaoh of the 18th dynasty. The first pharaoh was Amoses 1570 to 1553 BC, followed by Amenhotep 1553 to 1532 BC, who was the father of Tutmoses I. This is the pharaoh who issued the decree that all the sons born to the Israelites were to be thrown into the river, but that girls were permitted to live ([Exodus 1:22](#)).

Aaron, the brother of Moses, was born in 1533 BC, prior to the reign of Tutmoses I, and he had thus escaped the vicious decree. According to Biblical chronology, Moses fled Egypt 40 years after his birth in 1490 BC (Remember, we have to calculate backwards, as we are dealing with the time before Christ). Exodus 2:15 tells us about Pharaoh's reaction:

*When Pharaoh heard of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh, and went to live in Midian (NIV).*

It was here, in Midian of Sinai, that the Lord revealed Himself to Moses. Two pharaohs reigned simultaneously during the exile of Moses. Tutmoses I, who issued the decree to kill the newborn sons of the Israelites, was the father of Hatshepsut, the princess who is the most likely candidate for having found Moses in the Nile. It is probable that Moses grew up as a foster child in the house of Pharaoh. Tutmoses I had no sons, and, upon his death in 1508 BC, Moses could have become the pharaoh,

but he declined. Acts 7:20 tells us, "Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was powerful in speech and action."

In Hebrews 11:24, we are told, "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter."

After Moses' refusal, Tutmoses II (the husband of Hatshepsut) became pharaoh, but he only ruled from 1508 to 1504 BC, a period of just four years. Again, Moses could have become pharaoh, but again he refused. Hatshepsut herself became the next pharaoh. Her mortuary temple is at Deir el Bahri, and she ruled Egypt from 1504 to 1482 BC; a total of 22 years. The illegitimate son of Hatshepsut's husband became co-regent together with her. He was Tutmoses III, who was favoured by the Egyptian priesthood.

The story of Hatshepsut is a sad story. In 1488, six years prior to her death, all official records of Hatshepsut ceased. Her royal wall paintings on the walls of her mortuary temple at Deir el Bahri were defaced, and her statues were destroyed. To this day, only a few small busts have been found. Such drastic action was only taken if pharaohs were disloyal to Egyptian deities. It is probable that Hatshepsut adopted the Hebrew religion in 1488, when Egyptian documentation about her ceased. Moses at this time was already in exile, having fled before the wrath of Tutmoses III, who enjoyed the support of the Egyptian priesthood.

Moses heard about the death of Hatshepsut while he was in exile, and her death is recorded in his writings. Exodus 2:23 states, "During that long period, the king of Egypt died." The sole ruler in Egypt was now Tutmoses III, and with Hatshepsut out of the way, and the protection she probably afforded the Israelites no longer available, Tutmoses suppressed them in a most cruel fashion.

*The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. God heard their groanings and...looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them (Exodus 2:23-25).*

The return of Moses and his fear for Pharaoh is now understandable, particularly since the same pharaoh that induced him to flee became the sole ruler in Egypt.

Tutmoses III was one of the greatest pharaohs in history. He was known as the Napoleon of Egypt. He ruled until 1450 BC, which, according to the chronology in [1 Kings 6:1](#), is the year of the Exodus. According to the Bible, the Exodus took place on March 17, 1450 BC. The precise dates of the Passover and the Exodus are recorded in the Scriptures. The Bible tells us that the pharaoh then ruling (Tutmoses III) followed the Israelites through the Red Sea, and that he was killed in the process. The biography of Tutmoses III, written by Amenemhab says, "Lo, the king completed his lifetime of many years, splendid in valour, in might and triumph: from year 1 to 54."

1504 to 1450, a reign of 54 years, brings us precisely to the date of the Exodus. Amenemhab mentions the month and the day of his death:

*The last day of the third month of the second season... He mounted to heaven, he joined the sun: the divine limbs mingled with him who begot him.*

According to the Egyptologist James Breasted, this translates to the March 17, 1450 BC. A mummy of Tutmoses III in the Cairo museum was analysed by two Egyptologists, Harris and Weeks, in 1973 and found to be a mummy of a young man, whereas Tutmoses III must have been at least 80.

Egyptians had a way of disguising their embarrassments. The pharaoh was probably never recovered from the Red Sea, and to hide this fact, a fake mummy was put in his place. There is more circumstantial evidence from the 18th dynasty to support this argument. Tutmoses III co-reigned with his son, Amenhotep II (after the death of Hatshepsut), and Amenhotep II was not in Egypt at the time of the Exodus, but in Syro-Palestine suppressing an uprising with most of the Egyptian army.

According to Egyptian writings, he returned in June 1450 BC, when he apparently defaced many Egyptian monuments. This act needs an explanation. The Bible tells us that all the first-born in Egypt died in the last plague. On returning to Egypt, he would have found not only the Israelites gone, but he would have also found his father dead, and his first-born son killed in the plague.

One can now understand the emotion felt by Amenhotep that caused such a violent outburst.

The next pharaoh to rule was Tutmoses IV, who was the second born son of Amenhotep II. According to succession rights, the first-born should have become pharaoh, but he died. To explain this apparent anomaly, there is an inscription on the Sphinx telling the story of how the second-born son became pharaoh in the place of the first-born.

Apparently, Tutmoses IV was resting between the legs of the Sphinx when he heard a voice telling him to clear the sand from between the legs, and the Sphinx would see to it that he, rather than the first-born, would be the next pharaoh. An unlikely story, and another demonstration of attempts to cloud the issue, so that the embarrassment should not be made public to the descendants.

Monotheistic worship in Egypt did not die with the death of Hatshepsut. During the Amarna Period of the 18th dynasty, monotheism again surfaced in Egypt. The pharaoh after Tutmoses IV was Amenhotep III. This son of Tutmoses IV was still an idolater, but during the reign of his son (Amenhotep IV), the religion of Egypt shifted from the worship of Amun to that of Aten. Atenism was the worship of the one Creator God.

The symbol of the sun and its rays was used to describe Aten's care for humankind.

The sun was not worshipped in Atenism, but served merely as a symbol. There is good evidence that Atenism has its basis in the Hebrew religion.

The Exodus must have left its mark upon the Egyptian people, and many adhered to the God of the Hebrews, rather than to the Egyptian deities. The essence of the Egyptian religion was that of sun worship, but numerous gods played secondary roles in their belief system. Amenhotep IV changed his name to Akhenaten, symbolizing the change from Amun worship to Aten worship (*Amenhotep* means "Amun is pleased"). Further evidence of Akhenaten's break with the old religion is that he shifted his capital from Luxor to a new capital Akhetaten. In a song written by Akhenaten to his god, there are 17 verses corresponding with Psalm 104.

Under Akhenaten's influence, Egyptian culture experienced a period of realism. In statues of pharaohs and their families, pharaohs were no longer depicted as larger than life, but statues of Akhenaten and his family portray him with all his defects, and his wife and children are portrayed in a loving relationship with the pharaoh. His wife was the famous Nefertiti, whose name means "maiden of joy." They had six daughters, of which one was engaged to a young man by the name of Tutankaten. The daughter's name was Ankensenpaaten. Note that the names end in "aten," portraying their mode of worship. Upon the death of Akhenaten, Tutankaten was to become the next pharaoh. However, his change of name to Tutankamun indicates that his pharaohship was subject to the change of his religion. The greatest archaeological finds concern this pharaoh, and tell the story of a short but splendid reign.

Was it worth giving up the truth for the sake of earthly glory? The defacing of the statues associated with the reign of Akhenaten again demonstrates the hatred and rivalry between idolatry and the worship of the Creator God.

### Babylon and the Bible

Two hundred years ago, scholars doubted whether Babylon ever existed. The only record could be found in the Bible. Critics used the story of Babylon, and what they called its "non-historic kings," to discount Scripture. However, Babylon was discovered and excavated in 1898.

We know today that Babylon was one of the first cities in the world, and founded by Nimrod, great-grandson of Noah ([Genesis 10:9-10](#)). Archaeologists have found his name on many inscriptions and tablets, while a massive head of Nimrod has been excavated near Calah on the Tigris River.

The Bible tells the story of the tower of Babel and how the language of humanity was confused there. Archaeologists have found that the inhabitants of ancient Mesopotamia had a popular habit of building towers called *ziggurats*. Almost every city of importance had at least one.

The Tower of Babylon was the highest and largest of all, being 91 meters high and



built in seven stages. The foundations and a few steps of the stairway may still be seen today. This was the most probable location of the Tower of Babel. It is interesting to note that, according to the Scriptures, the tower was built of brick and asphalt ([Genesis 11:3 NKJV](#)), and this is the very building material found in the buildings of Babylon.

For 1400 years, the city of Babylon grew in importance. In 626 BC, it became the capital of the Babylonian empire. Babylon reached its peak in the time of Nebuchadnezzar II, becoming the wonder of the ancient world. It was 18 kilometres in circumference, with 26-meter-wide double walls towering 62 meters high. It was a magnificent sight, the external brickwork of buildings being glazed and of different colours. The outer walls were yellow, gates were blue, palaces were rose-red, and temples were white with golden domes.

Reliefs of bulls, dragons, and lions decorated many walls and gates. The famous Hanging Gardens were one of the seven wonders of the world. We know today that ancient Babylon was a center of advanced science, art, culture, and industry. Then appeared upon the scene the Hebrew prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah who predicted her utter destruction.

*And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah (Isaiah 13:19).*

*And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, and astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant (Jeremiah 51:37).*

These amazing prophecies are all the more astounding because Babylon was located at the very center of economic trade routes of that time. Destruction of a city might have been plausible, but that it would never be rebuilt to be inhabited again seemed far-fetched. This prophetic claim has been tested over the ages, yet the prophecy stands to this very day.

Babylon was extremely wealthy. Jeremiah predicted that these treasures would be robbed, and that all who robbed her would be satisfied ([Jeremiah 50:10](#)). To read this history is to read the fulfilment of the prophecy. Cyrus the Median took treasures, Xerxes the Persian took huge amounts of gold, and Alexander of Greece plundered what was left, fulfilling these prophecies to the letter.