

QUESTION: Why should I believe in the Bible?

ANSWER: By this, I am assuming you mean "Why is the Bible RELIABLE?" and "Why should I put my trust in the Bible rather than some other religious book?" There are two sources of evidence for the **absolute reliability of the Bible**, and why we believe it is the WORD of GOD: those are INTERNAL EVIDENCES and EXTERNAL EVIDENCES.

INTERNAL EVIDENCES means reasons within the Bible itself for believing it is the written word of God.

1. **The Bible itself tells us it is inspired by God.** The Bible itself claims to be the written word of God. The Bible is actually 66 books written by many different human authors over several thousand years, and yet it is ONE BOOK **written by ONE AUTHOR, God**. In the Bible, God says 2,500 times, "God said...." or "The Lord has said...." or "Thus says the Lord...." God has made it very clear that He is speaking through this Book. The Holy Spirit of God inspired or "moved" men to write the Scriptures. The word "inspired" means **God-breathed**, so the very words of Scripture are ALIVE and POWERFUL and can change your life! The Bible is God's word given to mankind, and from Genesis to Revelation there is one common theme: God's love for mankind, and His plan to redeem His creation from sin.
 - **II Peter 1:20-21** "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of **SCRIPTURE** is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but **HOLY MEN of GOD spoke as they were MOVED by the HOLY SPIRIT.**"
 - **Hebrews 4:12** "For the **WORD of GOD** is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - **Proverbs 30:5-6** "**Every WORD of GOD is pure**; He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. **Do not add unto HIS WORDS**, lest He reprove you, and you be found a liar."
 - **Romans 10:17** "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing **by the WORD of GOD.**"
 - **II Timothy 3:15-16** "And that from a child you have known **the HOLY SCRIPTURES**, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

All SCRIPTURE is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

2. **Fulfilled prophecy proves the divine authorship of the Bible.** No other religious book or so-called sacred writings contain prophecies of the future, and certainly not prophecies that have come true and been fulfilled perfectly. Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon religion, made a number of predictions of the future, none of which ever came true. He was a false prophet! Some people claim that Nostradamus made many predictions of the future which came true. However, his predictions were for the most part very vague, and he had many that did not come true at all! The Bible itself says that if a prophet is not 100% right 100% of the time, he or she is NOT a prophet of God! (See Deuteronomy 18:20-22).

Fulfilled prophecy is the one proof you can't escape, and you can't get around. One-fourth of the Bible, when it was written, was prophetic: that is, it announced things that were to take place in the future. A great deal of that - in fact, a great deal more than people imagine - has already been fulfilled. We could turn to many places where

prophecy has been fulfilled exactly. One example is when the prophet Isaiah said that the invading Assyrian army would not shoot even one arrow into the city of Jerusalem (see II Kings 19:32-35). Out of an army of 185,000 soldiers, there was no way humanly possible that Isaiah could know that not one of those soldiers would shoot an arrow at them. But God knew, and God killed the entire invading army and protected Jerusalem from their attack. Isaiah also predicted, **700 years before it happened**, that a virgin would give birth to a son (Isaiah 7:14). The prophet Micah (Micah 5:2) also predicted that this Ruler sent from God would be born in the little town of Bethlehem. In fact, the Bible contains over 300 prophecies concerning the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Messiah, which were ALL fulfilled literally and exactly in Jesus Christ.

There are many other prophecies that were fulfilled literally and exactly, concerning the nations around Israel, and about Israel itself. According to mathematical law, the chances of ANY of these prophecies being fulfilled accurately and exactly are extremely unlikely. If these were just guesses or human predictions, the chances of ALL of them being fulfilled are off the charts - impossible!

3. **The Bible transforms and changes lives.** Thousands upon thousands of people have had their lives changed for the better, many even being rescued from near suicide, terrible drug or alcohol addiction, marriages and families saved from break-up, and so on, by reading and putting into practice the teachings of the Bible. Peoples' minds are renewed and their lives are transformed and cleansed as they READ **God's WORD, the Bible**. Most important, it is not just a book of teachings that help us have a better life here on earth, but it is the only book that contains the way to eternal life with God in heaven. The Bible tells us about God's Son, Jesus, and how we can be "born again" and have a new life with Him here on earth, and then in heaven for all eternity.
 - **I Peter 1:23** "Being **BORN AGAIN**, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, **by the WORD of GOD**, which lives and abides forever."
 - **Romans 12:2** "And do not be conformed to this world, but **be TRANSFORMED by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."
 - **Psalms 119:9** "How can a young man **CLEANSE his way [of life]**? By taking heed according to **Your word**."

EXTERNAL EVIDENCES means reasons outside the Bible, such as secular history and archeology.

1. **Archeological evidence.** Archeologists have discovered many things that have confirmed and corroborated the Bible. For instance, there were those who for many years denied that Moses actually wrote the first five books of the Bible (the Pentateuch), and since the Bible says Moses DID write them (under the inspiration of God, of course), they thought they had found a way to prove the Bible was not the word of God. They said that writing was not in existence in Moses' day, so he couldn't have written it. However, archeologists and scientists have now discovered writings much older than Moses, and proof that man did know how to write in the part of the world where Moses lived, and at that time. The hundreds of stone tablets found in the region of Ebla in the Middle East show evidence that the people of that time wrote down accounts of history, trade agreements, and all kinds of things. There are even tablets that mention the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, which many people thought were only fictional cities mentioned in the Bible.

Another example concerns Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor who tried and sentenced Jesus. Many skeptics used to say there was no historical proof that there ever was a Roman governor named Pontius Pilate, so that proved the Bible was wrong, and therefore not the word of God. Then one day, archeologists discovered some

Roman records mentioning Pontius Pilate, and the fact that he was governor of the very area of Judea that the Bible said he was (see Luke 3:1). This kind of confirmation of the Bible's accuracy has happened many, many times. Archeology ALWAYS confirms what the Bible says, and has NEVER discovered anything to DISPROVE the facts mentioned in the Bible.

2. **Preservation.** Down through the centuries, there have been a great many Bible burnings, and many Christians have been tortured and killed because of their belief in this Book. In spite of all the attacks against the Bible, all those who have tried to destroy it, it remains preserved for us to read today. How do we know we have **the true word of God preserved for us today**? The Bible says in Psalm 12:6-7, "The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. You shall keep them, O Lord, **You shall preserve them** from this generation **forever.**" And in Isaiah 40:8 it says, "The grass withers, the flower fades; but **the word of our God** shall stand **forever.**" Jesus said in Matthew 24:35, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but **My words will by no means pass away.**" So it comes down to a matter of faith - **do you believe God** when He said **He would preserve His word** and His words would not pass away? If God does not have the power to keep His promises and to preserve His word perfectly for us to read, then what makes you think He has the power to save you from hell? If God allowed error to creep into His word, then how do we know which parts are error, and which parts to believe, because they are His word and are TRUTH?

But what about the skeptic who does not accept God's promises of preserving His word? Would a real scientific discovery be enough proof for you? The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in just this last century, and instead of discrediting the Bible in any way, they only PROVED how well our Bible we have today has been preserved. There were Old Testament books, such as Isaiah, written on scrolls of animal skins, and dating back hundreds of years farther than any other manuscripts available for comparison. They proved that no errors had crept into our present-day version of the Bible - they were virtually the same as the Old Testament books we have now.