

# Is the Bible the Word of God

## Introduction

### SLIDE 1

As most of you know, my ambition in this season is to take us through the **20 Fundamental Beliefs** of the Church of God. But I don't want to just *read* those statements to you. I want to explore them in fresh, engaging ways that help **anchor these truths** in our hearts. My goal is simple: to empower God's people to know not only *what* we believe, but *why*.

So today, we are going to focus on **the Bible itself**.

The Bible is the foundation of the Christian faith. More than two billion people in the world identify with Christianity and believe that this book speaks with authority.

But at the same time, there are **billions more who do not believe** the Bible is inspired at all. Some dismiss it as the writings of men—ancient stories, myths, and moral fables. Others argue that while it may contain wisdom, it cannot be trusted as the very Word of God. Still others go further, accusing it of contradictions, errors, or being out of touch with modern life.

So the question before us is this: **Is the Bible truly the inspired Word of God?**

This is not a minor point. Everything else we believe stands or falls on this.

**2Ti 3:16** *"All Scripture is God-breathed..."*

The bible CLAIMS to be God-breathed; if that's TRUE then it demands our faith, obedience, and trust. But if it is merely the work of men, then it carries no more authority than any other human book.

**TRANSITION:** So today we will examine the evidence—four powerful proofs that show the Bible is exactly what it claims to be: the inspired Word of God.

## Point 1: Historical and Archaeological Accuracy

If we are going to say that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, we must first establish its **authenticity**. It is not enough to say that the Bible we hold today *claims* to be from God. The question is: *Has it been preserved faithfully? Is it historically reliable? Or has it been altered and amended over time?* If the TEXT is to mean anything, we must know that what was written long ago is the same text we are reading today.

**Isaiah 40:8** – *"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."*

This is a bold statement. But how do we know it is true? For many years, skeptics claimed the Bible had been corrupted. They argued that the Old Testament we read today was a product of centuries of copying and editing, so we could not trust it as the original record. But in 1947, all of that changed with the discovery of the **Dead Sea Scrolls**.

## **SLIDE 2**

Among the scrolls found in caves near Qumran were manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible dating back to around 250–100 B.C.—a thousand years older than the previously known copies. When scholars compared the scrolls of Isaiah, for example, to the standard Hebrew text used in the Middle Ages, they found it virtually identical, word for word.

### **Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, 2012**

Emanuel Tov, textual critic and Dead Sea Scrolls scholar: "The Dead Sea Scrolls confirm the remarkable stability of the Hebrew Bible's text over centuries, showing that the Masoretic Text we have today is largely consistent with manuscripts from two thousand years ago."

### **The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?, 1981**

F. F. Bruce, biblical scholar: "The Dead Sea Scrolls provide astonishing evidence that the Old Testament scriptures, as we have them, were transmitted with extraordinary fidelity across the centuries."

### **A Survey of Old Testament Introduction, 2007**

Gleason Archer, theologian and biblical scholar: "The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt the accuracy and reliability of the Old Testament text, showing how carefully it was preserved."

### **Holman QuickSource Guide to the Dead Sea Scrolls, 2010**

Craig A. Evans, New Testament scholar: "The scrolls offer a direct link to the biblical text as it existed before the time of Christ, affirming the consistency and integrity of the scriptures we read today."

### **The Dead Sea Scrolls: What They Really Say, 2003**

Peter Flint, Dead Sea Scrolls expert: "By revealing biblical texts that predate the standardized Hebrew Bible by centuries, the Dead Sea Scrolls provide compelling evidence for the reliability of the scriptural tradition."

God preserved His Word down to the smallest detail. And this preservation is not only in manuscripts but also in the record of history and archaeology. Time and again, discoveries in the field have confirmed the truth of Scripture.

## **SLIDE 3**

For centuries, critics mocked the Bible for mentioning nations or people for which there was no evidence. Take the **Hittites** as an example. The Old Testament refers to them over 40 times. One of the earliest references to the Hittites is God's promise to GIVE their land to ISRAEL:

**Joshua 1:4** – *“From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.”*

But until the late 19th century, skeptics dismissed them as a biblical myth. Then, in 1906, archaeologists uncovered the ruins of the Hittite capital at Hattusa, along with thousands of clay tablets recording their language and history. The Bible had been right all along.

#### **SLIDE 4**

Another striking discovery came in 1961, when an inscription was found in Caesarea Maritima that bore the name of **Pontius Pilate**, the Roman governor who condemned Jesus to death.

**Matthew 27:2** – *“And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.”*

Before that discovery, some scholars doubted Pilate's existence because he appeared only in the Bible and a few scattered references. Now archaeology has placed his name in stone, exactly as the Gospels record.

#### **SLIDE 5**

Likewise, the **Pool of Bethesda** in John 5 was long considered fictional because there was no evidence of it.

**John 5:2** – *“Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches.”*

But excavations in Jerusalem uncovered a pool with five porticoes, just as John described. The Gospel writer had remembered with precision.

#### **SLIDE 6**

Skeptics once scoffed that the Old Testament reference to “the house of David” was legendary.

**2 Samuel 7:16** – *“And your house (King David) and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.”*

But in 1993, an Aramaic inscription was unearthed at **Tel Dan**, mentioning the “House of David.” It stands as the earliest extra-biblical evidence for King David's dynasty. What critics said did not exist has been confirmed by archaeology.

The reliability of the Bible's historical details demonstrates that it is not a book of myths or fables.

Nelson Glueck, one of the most respected Jewish archaeologists of the 20th century, said: *"It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible."*

This gives us confidence to move forward. If the Bible has been preserved faithfully in history and confirmed by archaeology, then NEXT, we MUST evaluate the WRITINGS themselves. Is this BOOK of writings just a RANDOM collection of TEXTS or is there MORE to it than that?

## **Point 2: Unity of the Bible**

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Edinburgh Castle stands as a MONUMENT to Human Achievement in Construction. It began as a HILL FORT around 900 BC, and was completed as a FORMIDABLE Castle by 1588 AD.

Consider that THE Castle was DESIGNED by an estimated 20-35 architects, master masons, and engineers spanning a period of 2,400 years. The CONSISTENCY and COHERENCE in the DESIGN by so many different people across such an ENORMOUS period of TIME is ASTONISHING. Yet as awesome as that STRUCTURE is, it doesn't HOLD a candle to the WORK of the Bible.

Because, another powerful evidence that the Bible is inspired by God is its **remarkable UNITY**. No other collection of writings in human history compares to it. The Bible is not the work of a single WRITER or of a single GENERATION. It is a library of sixty-six books, written by about 40 different men, over a span of 1,500 years, in three different languages, across three continents. Its authors include kings, prophets, fishermen, shepherds, a physician, a tax collector, and a tentmaker. And yet, with all this diversity of background, culture, and time, the Bible speaks with **one voice**.

When the Pharisees were contemplating what to do about Peter and John preaching about Christ, they needed to understand an IMPORTANT Principle, pointed out to them by the head of one of their Schools, **Gamaliel**:

**Acts 5:38–39** – *"And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it—lest you even be found to fight against God."*

If the Bible were simply a human project, written across that much time and that many cultures, we would expect confusion, contradiction, and disunity. But instead, the Bible is marked by a **continuous unfolding story**: God's plan of salvation, revealed from Genesis to Revelation.

The early chapters of Genesis speak of the END result of Adam and Eve's Choice to CHOOSE what is RIGHT and WRONG for themselves – resulting in SEPARATION, SIN, and DEATH; but also of a FUTURE Redemption through a COMING Messiah, called the "Seed":

**Genesis 3:15** – *“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”*

The Law and the Prophets establish the framework of covenant and promise. The Psalms and Wisdom books express the longing for deliverance. The Gospels record the coming of the **promised Savior**, and the writings of PAUL, Peter, and John, and the other Apostles explain His work and the hope of the Kingdom. **Revelation brings** it all to a glorious conclusion.

Genesis PRESENTS the very first promise of a **Redeemer**, given at the dawn of human history. That promise is carried forward through the covenant with Abraham, through the line of David, and ultimately fulfilled in Christ. The Bible's message is not fragmented or random. It is a unified testimony to God's purpose, woven together over centuries.

**Galatians 3:16** – *“Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Christ.”*

Paul points out here that the promise given to Abraham finds its ultimate fulfillment in Christ. The unity of Scripture is PROFOUND! Scholars have marveled at this unity.

F. F. Bruce, the respected New Testament historian, once wrote: *“The Bible is not simply an anthology; there is a unity which binds the whole together. An anthology is compiled by an anthologist, but the Bible was written by many men over many centuries, yet it is a unity, and this unity is evidence of the one mind behind it.”*

**2 Peter 1:21** – *“For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were MOVED by the Holy Spirit.”*

This is the explanation for the Bible's unity. The **human writers** were guided by the same Spirit, inspired by the same divine Author. That is why Moses, writing in the wilderness of Sinai, and John, writing in exile on Patmos, could both be telling the same story. That is why Isaiah, seven hundred years before Christ, could write of a suffering Servant, and the apostles could recognize its fulfillment in the crucifixion of Christ.

**Isaiah 53:5** – *“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”*

The Bible CONTAINS the unified plan of God, revealed progressively, consistently, and truthfully over centuries.

Theologian Gleason Archer summarized it this way: *“The Bible, written over a span of fifteen hundred years by more than forty human authors, is an amazing demonstration of the unity of God’s revelation. It speaks with one voice about the most controversial subjects known to man. Wherever it is possible to check the Bible’s statements against historical and archaeological data, the Bible proves to be accurate.”*

**John 5:39** – *“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.”*

Jesus Himself declared the unity of the Scriptures, saying that all of them ultimately testify of Him. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible has a single center: Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah and coming King.

The Bible’s unity is powerful evidence that it was inspired by God. Human authors, separated by centuries and cultures, could never have produced such a harmonious whole on their own. The only explanation is that behind their WRITING was **one** divine Author, guiding their words by His Spirit.

### **Point 3: Scientific Accuracy and Foresight**

When we say the Bible is “scientifically accurate,” we do **not** mean it is a modern textbook. Scripture speaks in ordinary, observational language—sunrise, sunset, the circle of the horizon. The claim is simple: where the Bible *touches* the natural world, it is free of mythic superstition common in the ancient Near East. For example:

#### **SLIDE 8**

**Ancient Babylon (Enuma Elish):** The world is made from the carcass of the slain sea-goddess **Tiamat**; half her body becomes the sky, half the earth. The gods are birthed, fight, and the cosmos is the outcome of divine violence.

#### **SLIDE 9**

**Ancient Egypt (Nut–Geb–Shu cosmology):** The **sky is the goddess Nut** arched over the earth-god **Geb**, held apart by the air-god **Shu**. The sun sails across Nut in a **solar boat** by day and travels through her body (and the underworld) by night, battling the chaos serpent **Apophis**.

#### **SLIDE 10**

**Greco-Roman's:** **Atlas** physically holds up the heavens; the earth is encircled by the river-god **Oceanus**. Natural phenomena are assigned to discrete, competing deities (e.g., winds personified as gods).

This is TRUE mysticism in RELIGIOUS beliefs and TEACHINGS that CANNOT stand up to **Scientific Scrutiny**. It's been a part of HUMAN History for THOUSANDS of Years.

Conversely, the Bible expresses stable truths that align with the way creation actually works, validated by observation and SCIENCE.

**Psalms 111:2** – *“The works of the LORD are great, studied by all who have pleasure in them.”*

#### **SLIDE 11**

Consider the **water cycle**. Long before modern hydrology, Scripture describes evaporation, condensation, and precipitation in natural sequence.

**Job 36:27–28** – *“For He draws up drops of water, which distill as rain from the mist, which the clouds drop down and pour abundantly on man.”*

**Ecclesiastes 1:7** – *“All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place from which the rivers come, there they return again.”*

Job says God “draws up drops of water” which “distill as rain from the mist,” and Ecclesiastes notes rivers continually returning to the sea—straightforward statements of cyclic flow.

#### **SLIDE 12**

The Bible also hints at **ordered pathways in the oceans**.

**Psalms 8:8** – *“...the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas.”*

The psalmist speaks of “the paths of the seas”—language that later spurred Matthew Fontaine Maury (often called the “father of oceanography”) to chart prevailing currents and wind circuits. The key point is not that the verse names the “Gulf Stream,” but that it IDENTIFIES regularity and order in creation, not fickle deities controlling UNKNOWN phenomena.

#### **SLIDE 13**

On **human life**, Scripture’s summary statement is precise:

**Leviticus 17:11** – *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood...”*

We know TODAY, that oxygen transport, immunity, nutrient delivery, and waste removal all **depend on blood**. In eras when practices like bloodletting were common, the biblical affirmation stands out for its clarity and UNDERSTANDING.

#### SLIDE 14

Public health in ANCIENT Israel exhibits similar WISDOM:

**Leviticus 13:4** – *“If the bright spot is white on the skin of his body... then the priest shall ISOLATE the one who has the sore seven days.”*

Israel’s forms of QUARANTINE for infectious conditions reflect durable disease-control and wisdom—DELIBERATELY absent of magical incantation or ritual manipulation, common among PAGAN nations. Again, Scripture treats the world as orderly and accountable to the Creator’s moral and physical laws.

#### SLIDE 15

Scripture’s view of the **heavens** likewise avoids the common ancient picture of a cramped, countable UNIVERSE.

**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...”*

God tells Abraham and Jeremiah that the stars are beyond numbering. That is observationally true and scientifically fitting in a universe with hundreds of billions of galaxies—no MATH formula’s given, just the realistic admission that they cannot be counted by man.

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

Job’s cosmology is NOT mythical, but KNOWABLE: no earth on the back of a turtle, no divine carcass propping up the sky. “He hangs the earth on nothing” is language that fits a planet suspended in space—again, not a technical description, but free of pagan MYSTICISM.

**Isaiah 40:22** – *“It is He who sits above the CIRCLE of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers...”*

Isaiah’s “**circle of the earth**” is careful, too. The Hebrew term (*chûg*) denotes a circle or horizon—an observer’s way of describing Earth’s roundness without modern geometry. At minimum, it refuses the flat earth imagery and speaks of what people actually see.

Two observations from the Biblical View of the World and Universe beyond:

First, the Bible’s statements about the natural world are **SIMPLE**—they are neither speculative nor MYTHOLOGICAL.

Second, they display a **coherence** with reality that has ENDURED the progress of science. This is exactly what we would expect if the same God who authored creation also oversaw the writings that speak about it.

#### **Point 4: Fulfilled Prophecy — The Closing Argument**

We've established that the biblical text is authentic and well-preserved, that its message is unified across centuries and authors, and that where it touches nature it speaks without myth. Now we bring the final piece: **prediction and fulfillment**—God declaring in advance what He then brings to pass. This is where every natural explanation runs out of road.

**Deuteronomy 18:22** – *“When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken.”*

Prophecy is God's own **test** of His Word. If Scripture records detailed predictions written long before the events—and those events happen specifically—then the most reasonable conclusion is **divine authorship**.

**Isaiah 46:9–10** – *“For I am God, and there is no other... declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done.”*

#### **A. Messianic Prophecies (Written Centuries Before Jesus)**

##### **SLIDE 16**

Here are just 5 Old Testament Prophecies about Christ that were fulfilled and **beyond any human's power to manipulate** (birthplace, betrayal price, disposition of the money, method of death).

**Micah 5:2** – *“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah... out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel.”*

**Matthew 2:1–6** – *[Fulfilled in Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.]*

**Zechariah 9:9** – *“Behold, your King is coming to you... lowly and riding on a donkey.”*

**Matthew 21:1–7** – *[Fulfilled in the Triumphal Entry.]*

**Zechariah 11:12–13** – *“So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver... throw it to the potter.”*

**Matthew 27:3–10** – *[Judas' price; money thrown in the temple; used to buy the potter's field.]*

**Isaiah 53:7** – *“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth.”*

**Matthew 26:62–63** – *[Jesus silent before accusers.]*

**Psalm 22:16** – *“They pierced My hands and My feet.”*

**John 19:18, 37** – *[Crucifixion; “they shall look on Him whom they pierced.”]*

These were written **long before** the first century.

Some MAY object, “Perhaps Jesus arranged it.” But many prophecies are **unarrangeable: birthplace** (Micah 5:2), the **price** of betrayal and its **disposal** (Zech 11:12–13), **piercing** of hands and feet (Ps 22:16), and the **Roman method** of execution itself.

Others would require conspiring with enemies and authorities across competing interests—implausible in the extreme.

In *Science Speaks* (1958), mathematician **Dr. Peter Stoner** and classes of students estimated the odds of one person fulfilling just **eight** Messianic prophecies by chance. Using **conservative** assumptions, the probability was **1 in 10<sup>17</sup>**. The ODDS that God orchestrated the fulfillment of these 8 prophecies in Christ is 100,000,000,000,000,000 to 1 that it was random chance.

**SLIDE 17:** “1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000”

To picture that: cover the **entire state of Washington** with silver dollars **four feet deep**, mark **one** coin, mix thoroughly, blindfold a person and have them pick **one** coin at random. The chance they select the marked coin equals the chance of fulfilling **eight** prophecies by coincidence. **Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies,** .

Dr. Stoner conducted this Statistical Analysis because he WANTED the Student’s to have ABSOLUTE confidence in the Veracity, Accuracy, and Inspiration of the Bible as THE Word of God. It is Statistically IMPOSSIBLE that it is NOT!

## **B. Prophecies About Nations (Specific, Verifiable, Fulfilled)**

Messianic fulfillment is decisive; national prophecies reinforce the pattern—**named kings, named cities, and described outcomes** that history corroborates. Here are JUST 2 examples:

### **SLIDE 18**

**Isaiah 45:1** – *“Thus says the LORD to His anointed, to **Cyrus**... I will go before you and make the crooked places straight.”*

Isaiah names **Cyrus** over a century before the Medo-Persian king conquers Babylon and authorizes the Jewish return in 539 BC.

### **SLIDE 19**

**Ezekiel 26:12** – *“They will lay your stones, your timber, and your soil in the midst of the water.”*

The prophecy, which was fulfilled in stages, is completed with Alexander's siege of **Tyre in 332 BC**; Alexander used debris from the mainland city to build a causeway—Ezekiel's image enacted literally.

The point is that God gives SPECIFICS when he gives PROPHECY; He delivers **granular, testable claims** written in advance and **tethered to history**. Notice that God in the Old Testament (the Word) and Christ in the New Testament, CONFIRM God's intent with fulfilled Prophecy:

**Numbers 23:19** – *“God is not a man, that He should lie... Has He said, and will He not do?”*

**John 13:19** – *“Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He.”*

### **C. The Cumulative Case**

One prophecy fulfilled might be dismissed. A cluster of related fulfillments becomes harder to ignore. But **hundreds**—rooted in texts demonstrably older than the events—surpass coincidence. This is **God's own credential** EMBEDDED into Scripture. Speaking to THIS Reality, Luke Records of Christ:

**Luke 24:27** – *“And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”*

### **Conclusion**

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Since the text is authentic (Point 1), its message unified (Point 2), its outlook on creation sober and enduring (Point 3), and its **prophecies fulfilled** with precision (Point 4), the inference is not speculative.

The PROPHECIES fulfilled by Christ alone, eliminates any real possibility that God did not orchestrate his coming. EIGHT prophecies already overwhelm chance; forty-eight rocket past comprehension – for you math nerds, the chance is  $1:10^{157}$ ; by three hundred, 'coincidence' isn't a category anymore, the odds are too infinitesimally small to contemplate. It's just NOT possible unless GOD did it.

**The Bible is the inspired Word of God.**

There REALLY is NO Doubt about it!