

# IS THE BIBLE RELIABLE?



**Dennis Moles**



*introduction*

## **Is the Bible Reliable?**

“

**think I might be losing my faith,”** said Mackenzie.

Home for semester break, the college junior was having coffee with Terry, her former youth leader. “My doubts started at the beginning of my freshman year of college and have only gotten worse. I thought they would go away if I just prayed more or read my Bible more, but they haven’t. I don’t know what to do.”

As a science major, Mackenzie sees too much complexity and fine-tuning in the universe to doubt the existence of an intelligent and

purposeful creator. She still believes in God, but she struggles with the Bible. She's not sure she can trust it to give her a clear picture of who the designer of the universe really is.

Recently, one of her literature professors spent two full weeks working through a series of lectures titled "The Bible—Mythic History or Historic Myth?"

During this section of the course, the professor attacked the reliability and authenticity of the Bible, making three specific statements that troubled her:

*"There is no significant historical or archaeological support for believing that the Bible is historically accurate."*

*"There is little textual evidence to support the claims of the Bible aside from a few ancient and inconsistent scraps."*

*"Modern science has made it impossible to believe the Bible is true and trustworthy."*

"So what do I do?" Mackenzie concludes. "How do I keep believing the Bible when there are so many problems with it?"

*Dennis Moles*

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*one*

## Starting in the Right Place

**A**t this point in the conversation Terry has a few choices to make. Will she listen to Mackenzie's questions and doubts with compassion and curiosity, or will she jump to conclusions, assume the worst, and monologue her way out of relationship with Mackenzie? Will she double down on "The Bible is true because it says it's true"? Or will she take a more subtle and sophisticated approach?

Before she speaks, Terry needs to do two essential things. She's already done the first: she has listened. And importantly, she's listened for the questions

*behind* the questions. That's where she will learn the fears revealed in the questions. Second, she needs to discern the best place to start.

If Terry listens carefully she will discover that Mackenzie isn't afraid of losing the Bible. She is afraid of losing her faith. Her doubts about the trustworthiness of the Bible are the presenting issues that have churned up fear. Her angst has taken root in questions regarding the trustworthiness of the Scriptures but her fear is much more foundational.

Terry might be tempted to begin her response by using the Bible as the primary source to prove the Bible's reliability.

**The Bible is bluntly honest.** It records the moral and spiritual failures of those whose story it tells. Such candor is important. Potentially embarrassing reports written about one's own family, friends, or group tend to be treated as an indicator of authenticity. ▀

▀  ***Casting people (specifically saints) or their stories in an ideal light is called **hagiography**.***

**Jesus endorsed the Bible.** He made it clear that he believed the Old Testament was more than just national history or religious fable (MATTHEW 4:1–11; 5:17–19). He believed that the Scriptures were about

him—they told the story of God’s love and promise of a coming Messiah (JOHN 5:39–40).

**The Bible describes itself as more than just a human book.** Its timeless influence is therefore grounded not merely in the opinion of its readers, but in the claims it makes for itself (2 TIMOTHY 3:16; 2 PETER 1:16–21).

Those who accept that the Bible is true and trustworthy often find these features of Scripture to be compelling proofs for the veracity of those Scriptures. Such arguments are called *internal evidences*—using the testimony of the Bible itself to make their point. Internal evidences often reassure the faith of a believer, but just as often they fail to convince those who doubt that the Bible deserves to be trusted.

Suppose Mackenzie’s college professor believes newspapers are an inaccurate and untrustworthy source of information. Mackenzie disagrees with this assessment and sets out to build a case for the trustworthiness of newspapers by saying, “According to the *New York Times*, newspapers are fifty percent more likely to be accurate than Internet or television news sources. Last year the *The Times of London* ranked the top fifty news sources in the English-speaking world, and *The Times of London* topped the list as the globe’s most trustworthy news source.”

Would this line of reasoning be convincing? Would she be able to change her professor's mind based on this evidence? Probably not. Why? Because these arguments are based on an authority that her professor doubts.

In the same way, when those who believe the Bible set out to prove its trustworthiness using only the internal evidences, they can quickly lose credibility with those who are skeptical.■ This does not mean that the internal evidences are not valid. It simply means that when talking with those who doubt the reliability of Scripture, we should begin in a different place.

■ *One of the most common reasons **people doubt the trustworthiness of the Bible** is its miraculous claims. How can they trust a truth source, the Bible, that so obviously contradicts observable reality? Many see this as unenlightened superstition.*

For many, the Bible describes a world they have never experienced and cannot accept. They read about supernatural events that don't fit the laws of nature as they understand them. This is one of the key points in Mackenzie's professor's attack on the reliability of Scripture. It involves ideas about knowledge and truth as concepts and the ability of humans to possess knowledge and to experience and know truth. What is knowledge? Can we know something? Can we know



something we are not certain of? Is there objective truth? If so, how can we know it?

It is often an unquestioned assumption that scientific inquiry is the most reliable basis for knowing anything about our world. Some might even say it's the *only* reliable basis. If you cannot prove it scientifically or experientially then you can't know it. Add to this underlying belief, the general mistrust of institutions, experts, and authorities that seems to permeate our current culture and you have the perfect cocktail of skepticism and mistrust.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that scientific investigation has been an important means of opening up our understanding. But there is disagreement about whether it is the only or even the best way to discover truth. Some believe the Bible is true and trustworthy even when it makes supernatural claims that cannot be scientifically tested.▀ Others are convinced that scientific methods are the best or only way to understand reality and determine truth. They insist that it doesn't make sense to embrace both scientific inquiry and the Bible as sources of truth. Their worldview makes it impossible to believe the stories in the Bible that bend or break natural laws: a virgin giving birth, a man walking on water, a person rising

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1 See Tom Nichols, *The Death of Expertise: The Campaign against Established Knowledge and Why It Matters* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

from the dead, or a small amount of bread feeding thousands of people.

🔔 Simply put, **the scientific method** is this:

1. Ask a question.
2. Conduct research on the question.
3. Propose a hypothesis based on your research.
4. Design an experiment to test the hypothesis.
5. Test the hypothesis.
6. Accept or reject the hypothesis.

*If the hypothesis is rejected, the hypothesis should be revised and retested.*

But while scientific inquiry gives us knowledge and measures some truth claims, can we assert that it is the *only* way we know and experience truth? Are there things we know that cannot be tested scientifically? Can we say we *know*...

- When we love someone.
- That a sunset is beautiful.
- That justice is better than injustice.
- That the earth is spherical and not flat.
- That Abraham Lincoln was the sixteenth president of the United States of America.

No doubt, questioning this last statement sounds silly, but think about it: How *do* we know that the sixteenth president of the United States was

Abraham Lincoln? We know nothing about Lincoln from firsthand experience or scientific inquiry. We've never met him. We didn't vote for him.

"No," you might say, "but we have documentation—books, letters, photos, and other historical records that tell us he was the sixteenth president."

What if, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, I refused to accept that "Honest Abe" was president of the United States from 1861 to 1865?

In this scenario, is my doubt rational? Is it reasonable for me to hold this belief even though we cannot prove today from firsthand experience (seeing, touching, tasting, smelling, or hearing) or by an appeal to scientific inquiry that Abraham Lincoln was president? We have good reasons to believe that he was the sixteenth President of the United States. We have mountains of testimonial evidence that he was elected in 1860, reelected in 1864, signed the emancipation proclamation on January 1, 1863, and was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth on April 14, 1865. This is just a sampling of the historical evidence from many reputable sources of the 1850s and 60s that makes it ludicrous to deny that Lincoln was the sixteenth president of the United States. We only *know* these things about President Lincoln insofar as the source material we engage is a reliable and faithful witness to true events.

To refuse to believe the Lincoln presidency because of a few inconsistencies in accounts and possible contradictions in the reports of his whereabouts, thoughts, and political and sociological views would be irrational. Why? Because while it is *possible* that the Lincoln presidency was an elaborate hoax, it is highly *improbable*.

The difference between the historical record for the Lincoln presidency and the story of the Bible is clear. The record of the Lincoln presidency doesn't include claims for supernatural events as does the story of the Bible. It is the claims of the miraculous that cause so many to discount the Bible as reliable.■

▶ *While the skeptic is correct in their assertion that we cannot prove with certainty that the Bible is trustworthy, it is also true that the skeptic cannot prove that the miracles reported in the Bible are impossible.*

Given this, is it reasonable to claim that the Bible is trustworthy? Is there enough evidence to support the view that the Bible is a trustworthy witness of true events—even the miraculous ones? Is there any external evidence that supports the internal claims of the Bible?



*Two*

## Historical and Archaeological Support

**W**hen it comes to religious literature, one uniqueness of the Bible is that the record of its events are linked to named people, times, and places. Many of these places and cultures are recognizable: Egypt, the Sinai Peninsula, Syria, Jerusalem, and Galilee. But some are ancient and obscure enough for their historicity to be doubted. For instance, around the turn of the twentieth century, archaeologist John Garstang

► *One archaeological proof for the existence of the Hittite Empire is the discovery of the Sphinx Gate at the Alaca Höyük site in Turkey.*

made a discovery that had far-reaching effects in the world of biblical studies—he discovered archaeological evidence for the Hittite Empire.

In Garstang's time, the trustworthiness of the Bible was being hotly contested. Those who questioned the Bible's inspiration and authority contended that the historical and archaeological evidence for the Bible's accuracy did not add up, and they cited the lack of this type of evidence for the Hittite Empire as a specific example.

Defenders of the Scriptures, for the most part, agreed with critics that the Bible's primary purpose is not to serve as a history book or scientific text. It is an ancient, complex, and multi-volume work that is culturally conditioned and should not be held to our modern standards of historical method and scientific inquiry. Its purpose is to teach us about God and his plan for and interactions with human



**Historical documents also support the Bible's testimony about Jesus and the ancient church's commitment to the gospel story.**

creatures. This said, scriptural defenders have and do maintain that the Bible is historically accurate—insofar as it intends to be—including its reference to the existence of the Hittite Empire.

Even though other ancient literature<sup>1</sup> referred to the Hittites,<sup>2</sup> the critics' argument convinced many until Garstang's 1908 discovery. His archaeological find exposed an ancient civilization that existed for over four centuries (1600–1200 BC) and revealed a treasure trove of information about its people.<sup>3</sup> Since then, so much has been discovered about the Hittite Empire that it is now possible to study ancient Hittite culture, religion, and language at places like the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute.

✎ *“Excavations on Hittite sites in Asia Minor and northern Syria since the beginning of the 20th century have produced an enormous amount of information concerning the literature, religion, art and architecture of **the Hittites**. The ancient Hittite language, referred to in their own texts as *Khattili*, is not yet fully understood, though the later Hittite language *Neshili*, is much better known.”*

Negev, A. *The Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land* (3rd ed.). New York: Prentice Hall Press (1990).

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- 2 Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol. 2. *The New Kingdom* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 57.
- 3 Avraham Negev, *The Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land*, 3rd ed. (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1990).

And it's not just the Hittite evidence. Engraved stones or cylinders from other ancient civilizations verify other biblical accounts. For example, the Taylor Prism<sup>4</sup> confirms the Assyrian siege of Jerusalem that the Bible describes in 2 Kings 18–19, 2 Chronicles 32, and Isaiah 36–37. The discovery of the Tel Dan Stele confirms the existence of Israel's King David. The Cyrus Cylinder<sup>5</sup> records Cyrus of Persia's decree that allowed Babylonian captives to return to their homes and resume their religious practices. The Moabite Stone substantiates the events of 2 Kings 3. The stone not only chronicles the rebellion led by Mesha king of Moab but even mentions the name Yahweh.<sup>6</sup> Remember, our goal in presenting this information isn't to prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Scriptures are perfect down to every period or comma so much as it is to cast doubt on the claims that there is no archaeological or historical support for the trustworthiness of the Bible—at least in so far as to present the Bible a faithful and reliable ancient witness of true events.

📖 **The Taylor Prism**, a clay cylinder, was discovered during excavation of the biblical city of Nineveh and dates from 705 to 681 BC and actually mentions Israel's King Hezekiah by name.

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4 K. A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 34–50. See also <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/10899-moabite-stone>. The Cyrus Cylinder is on display at the British Museum in London, England, and the Moabite Stone is on display at the Louvre in Paris, France.



➤ **This artifact** substantiates the claims made in Ezra 1:1-3; 6:3, Isaiah 44:28, and 2 Chronicles 36:23. It is housed in the British Museum.

➤ “Now **Mesha king of Moab** raised sheep, and he had to supply the king of Israel with a hundred thousand lambs and with the wool of a hundred thousand rams. But after Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel” (2 KINGS 3:4–5).

Historical documents also support the Bible’s testimony about Jesus and the ancient church’s commitment to the gospel story. Jewish and Roman historians referred to the life and works of Jesus.<sup>5</sup> Josephus wrote about Jesus’ miracles. And Pliny the Younger, an ancient ruler, recorded that Christians in his province maintained their belief in and worship of Jesus even when faced with death.<sup>6</sup>

While these examples are just a sample of the available information supporting the accuracy of the Scriptures, they are sufficient to contradict the skeptics’ assertion that there is no significant historical or archaeological support for believing that the Bible is historically accurate. That claim is simply not true.

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5 Josephus, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and unabridged*, trans. William Whiston (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987).

6 Doug Powell, *Holman QuickSource Guide to Christian Apologetics* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 2006), 164-66.



### Three

# The Preservation of the Bible

**S**o how do we respond to those who doubt that the Bible we read is the same as that which was originally written—or that it really is an ancient record? The truth is that the Christian Scriptures are the best-preserved documents in the history of literature. This is a bold claim. But given the evidence, it is no overstatement, and it is based on three criteria: the historical

distance between the original writing and the earliest copies, the consistency of the documents, and the number of known copies.

We have evidence that the Gospels were written by apostles or in cooperation with them. Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of the apostle John, writes:

*Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. Luke also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by him. Afterwards, John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia.<sup>7</sup>*

These claims are consistent with other early witnesses.<sup>8</sup> But there is even more evidence that the Old and New Testaments are accurate and that they were written when and by whom Christians claim.

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<sup>7</sup> A. Roberts, J. Donaldson, & A. C. Coxe (eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus* (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company), 414.

<sup>8</sup> Josh McDowell, *The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999), 53-55.

Today we have the Scriptures because centuries ago scribes<sup>1</sup> copied the originals in order to preserve them. They paid meticulous attention to detail when they copied the text, which leads many scholars to believe that the copies can be trusted as accurate reproductions of the originals.

➤ **Scribes** *instituted various safe-guards to ensure accuracy of the copy:*

1. *The copying scribes were taught to copy one letter at a time.*
2. *A second scribe counted the number of words and letters on each copy to make sure they matched up exactly.*
3. *A third scribe checked to see if the middle word of each copy was identical.*

But what about the time that elapsed between the copies? Critics argue that the historical distance between the time the books were first written and our oldest existing manuscripts virtually guarantees that mistakes were introduced into the text.

This argument suffered a crippling blow following the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the late 1940s to mid-1950s. The Dead Sea Scrolls are a collection of over 950 manuscripts and text fragments. Most of these are copies of Old Testament Scriptures that date from the third century BC to

the middle of the first century AD. Until this discovery, the earliest manuscripts for the Old Testament were the Masoretic Texts (MT), which dated from about AD 980. Not only did the Dead Sea Scrolls give us older copies, they also allowed scholars to investigate the consistency between earlier and later copies. What they found was striking.

When comparing the MT copy of Isaiah 53 and copies of the same passage in the Dead Sea Scrolls, scholars found remarkable consistency. Out of the 166 Hebrew *words* in Isaiah 53, only 17 *letters* differ between the documents! None of these differences have any effect on the meaning of the text. Even though these documents were separated by approximately 1,000 years, their remarkable similarity demonstrates that great care was indeed taken to copy and preserve the biblical text.<sup>9</sup>

The Dead Sea Scrolls are strong evidence for the accuracy of the biblical text. But this isn't the



**Out of the 166 Hebrew words in Isaiah 53, only 17 letters differ between the documents.**

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<sup>9</sup> Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 196, 261-70, 351-85.

only evidence. Comparing the number of biblical manuscripts in existence today to the number of existing manuscripts of other ancient texts also supports the integrity of the Scriptures.

Homer wrote the *Iliad* in approximately 800 BC, and there are 643 known Greek copies,<sup>21</sup> or portions of copies, still in existence. The earliest of these is a partial copy that dates to approximately 400 BC. The first complete text dates to the 13th century. This means that the time between the actual writing of the *Iliad* and the oldest partial copy in existence is about 400 years, and the time between the actual writing and the first full copy is 2,100 years.

<sup>21</sup> These are hand copied, pre-printing press, original language copies of the text.

Four hundred years may sound like a lot of time. But in the preservation of ancient literature, four hundred years is brief. And 643 copies is substantial when compared to the number of copies of other ancient works. There are eight copies of Herodotus' *History*, and the time between the original and the earliest copy is 1,350 years. There are ten copies of Caesar's *Gallic Wars*, and the gap is one thousand years. There are twenty copies of Tacitus' *Annals*, seven copies of Pliny Secundus' *Natural History*, and twenty copies of Livy's *History of Rome*,

with historical distances of 1,000, 750, and 400 years respectively.<sup>10</sup> Yet despite the length of time between the original writings and the earliest copies, virtually no one questions the validity, accuracy, or authenticity of these documents.

In light of this information, it is reasonable to assert that if the biblical documents exceed these numbers, we have more than sufficient evidence that the Bible we read today is the same as when it was written.

So how does Scripture fare in comparison to these other ancient works? Currently we have identified approximately 5,800 full or partial copies of books of the New Testament. One complete copy of the New Testament can be dated to within 225 years of the original writing. The earliest confirmed copies of the New Testament Scriptures date back to AD 114. This means that the historical distance between our



**When compared to other ancient works, the textual evidence for the Christian Scriptures is remarkable.**

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<sup>10</sup> Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), 424-44. See also McDowell, *New Evidence*, 38.

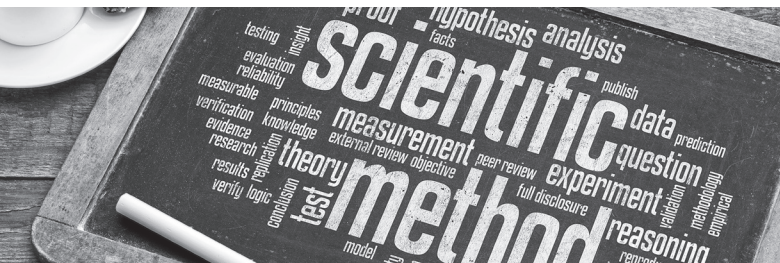
earliest copies and the date of the original writing is under 100 years.<sup>11</sup>

When compared to other ancient works, the textual evidence for the Christian Scriptures is remarkable. Research demonstrates that the Bible stands alone as the most thoroughly authenticated document in the history of literature.

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<sup>11</sup> See <https://www.csntm.org/> for more information.





## Four

**M**any people find it impossible to accept the Bible as true because they cannot reconcile the miracles recorded in the Bible with the conclusions of modern science. This reflects a naturalistic worldview, which assumes that things are not real, knowable, or trustworthy unless they can be tested and measured scientifically or experienced firsthand. This view is also called *scientism*.

This line of reasoning has led many naturalistic thinkers to arrive at the belief that science has

disproved the Bible. They assume that because some of the Bible's claims are scientifically immeasurable the Bible cannot be true.

Several years ago I pastored a small church in central Ohio. During that time my wife and I met Joe and Lisa (not their real names) who both taught in the biology department at a local college. Our two sons and their two sons attended the same elementary school, and as our boys became fast friends, so did we. Joe and I would often meet for coffee to discuss, challenge, and learn from one another in the areas of science and religion. But it was Lisa who posed a question that may prove helpful in this discussion about the compatibility of science and miracles.

The birthday party for our youngest son, Caleb, was in full swing. Close to a dozen kindergartners were there to help him celebrate. In the middle of this barely controlled chaos, Lisa, whose son was among the sugar-fueled horde, turned to Amy and me and said, "I have a question but I don't want to offend you." After we assured her that we were hard to offend, she said, "You're both intelligent people, and Amy, you're a nurse. How is it that you believe in the virgin birth?"

For Lisa this was a real and well-intended question. How could two educated people—one with a college degree in science—believe that a virgin could have a baby? She was not trying to trap us or drag us into a

debate; she was genuinely trying to understand how we could believe something so obviously impossible.

At that moment, Amy and I did two things that seemed to surprise our friend. First, we affirmed her skepticism. We told her that we too believe that it is *scientifically* impossible for a virgin to have a baby. And second, we tried to address the real issue that lurked behind her question: How can you trust the Bible (or a religious system) when science (in this case, reproductive science) contradicts it?

Our answer to this question is not found in the Bible itself but in the God the Bible reveals. We believe in the virgin birth not just because the Bible said it happened, but because we believe that the God of the Bible is able to make it happen—he is not bound by natural law. This may seem intellectually lazy, but it is the crux of the issue. We believe something *impossible* happened—in this case, the virgin birth—because we believe that God, himself the creator of the laws of nature, has the prerogative and power to work outside of them.■

▶ *It is possible that God has established “laws” we know nothing about to govern and make “miracles” possible.*

Interestingly, those who hold a naturalistic view of the world hold some truth claims of their own that cannot be scientifically proven. For example, when it comes to the origin of the universe, they believe that

something—everything actually—came from nothing. They say that time and chance caused life to emerge from nothingness.■ Some atheists feel so strongly about the truth of “something from nothing” that they repeatedly insist that the universe is a completely random place. They claim that there cannot be a design because of their deeply held belief that there is no designer. If there is design, there must be a designer. No matter how fine-tuned the universe appears, it is still a random place because there is no designer.<sup>12</sup>

➤ *If there is no God, there can be no construct for miracles, and if there are no miracles, **something is incapable of springing from nothing**. And if something cannot spring from nothing, then the naturalist has no way of explaining how we all got here in the first place.*

Why does this matter? Because at some level we all believe and claim to know things that cannot be proven scientifically. Everyone has faith in something. Those who believe the Bible do not disbelieve the laws of nature; they simply believe that miracles—exceptions to those laws—are possible.

The truth is that everyone—those who trust the Bible and those who don’t—believes many things that cannot

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12 Alvin Plantinga, “The Dawkins Confusion: Naturalism ‘Ad Absurdum’: A Review of Richard Dawkins’s *The God Delusion*,” in *God Is Great, God Is Good: Why Belief in God Is Reasonable and Responsible*, ed. William Lane Craig and Chad Meister (Downers Grove: IVP, 2009), 247-58.

be tested or proven. Science is simply not capable of answering every question. It cannot explain morality or provide a basis for making moral judgments. It cannot tell us what is beautiful nor can it tell us why justice is to be preferred over injustice. Science does not prove mathematical truths—it assumes them to function. And most intriguingly, science cannot validate the scientific method. Even the statement “science has disproved the Bible” is a claim that cannot be proven scientifically. To believe that it has is to believe something that is not scientifically verifiable.

Has modern science made it impossible to believe the Bible? No. Science simply tells us that there are no natural explanations for the miraculous claims of the Bible. But when we think about it, there are no natural or scientific explanations for love either, yet no one would say that science has disproved love. It’s just not something science can do. 🐾

🐾 *Every means of acquiring knowledge has its limits. **The scientific method** advances knowledge by collecting data via experimentation and observation. This system of acquisition is helpful in answering the question of how something functions but often falls short when answering the question of why it does what it does instead of doing something else.*



*Five*

## The Most Compelling Reason to Trust the Bible

**know I love my wife.** I know a beautiful sunset when I see one. Though I have never been there, I know that the Great Wall of China exists. I know Abraham Lincoln was the sixteenth president of the United States. And I know that the Bible is true and trustworthy.

If you have come to this book looking for certainty and ironclad arguments, we don't have them. I cannot prove beyond any doubt that the

Bible is worthy of your trust and belief any more than I can prove to you that love is real or that justice is better than injustice. But after weighing the evidence, I can confidently claim that I know the Bible is a true and faithful witness. The cumulative case for the trustworthiness of the Bible is just too convincing.

Is the Bible honest? Yes. Historical and archaeological discoveries corroborate its story. Does the Bible itself claim to be more than just a human book? Yes. God has not only inspired its composition but through the centuries has ensured its preservation. Did Jesus really endorse the Scriptures? Yes, he did. Not only did he endorse them, he embodied them. And this is the most compelling reason of all to trust the Bible.

In the pages of the Bible we encounter the most extravagant love story ever told. The God of the universe—the creator and designer of all—chose to become a human in order to restore the relationship we willfully broke when we chose to sin.

God created a good world, but when humans sinned and kept on sinning we brought separation and distance between the creator and his creation. But God was unwilling to allow that separation to continue indefinitely, so he did something for us that we could not do for ourselves. He closed the gap of sin and separation through the life, death, and

resurrection of Jesus Christ. We could not ascend to where he is so he descended in the person of Jesus Christ to where we are.

Are there good historical, textual, and philosophical reasons to believe that the Bible is trustworthy? Absolutely. But the most compelling reason to trust the Bible is its message of reconciliation and grace. It's not just good news—it's the best possible news.





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