



How Can You Know the Bible Is True?

“All your words are true; all your just laws will stand forever.” (Psalm 119:160, NIV)

For centuries, those who read the Bible considered it true. However, in the last century some scholars, teachers, professors, the media and even some ministers have tried to plant doubts about its accuracy. Some ask, “How do you know the scribes who copied the original scrolls didn’t make a mistake?” Some even question whether God inspired the words. One group, who claimed they were biblical scholars, decided and voted by colored beads which words Jesus actually spoke! Can you believe that? Paul warned that the time would come when “truth would be rejected for myths” and “people would look for teachers who would tell them what they wanted to hear.” (2 Timothy 4:3-4) That time is here!

The exciting discovery

In 1947, a Bedouin shepherdder made a discovery that helped to prove the accuracy of the early manuscripts. In an attempt to drive out a missing animal from a cave, he threw a stone into the cave and heard the sound of something breaking. Being curious, he went into the cave and discovered several large jars containing rolls of leather and papyrus (paper made from the papyrus plant) wrapped in cloths. He did not have a clue what he had discovered, but his discovery led others to search other caves. They found thousands of leather fragments and papyrus hid probably by the Essenes over two thousand years ago. (The Essenes were a strict religious group who withdrew to the desert and thought they were the only people chosen by God.) Over a hundred of these scrolls were copies or fragments from the Old Testament period. Can you imagine the excitement of the scholars when they found a scroll of Isaiah dated between 107 and 335 B.C.? To their delight, the few minor variations found in later manuscripts did not change the meaning of any of God’s Word!

Confirmation of archaeology

For centuries some people denied that Moses lived, the Red Sea opened for the Israelites, the Ten Commandments were given on Mount Sinai, Abraham or the city of Ur ever existed, or King Solomon with his thousands of horses ever lived, etc. As time passed, God began revealing the truth through the discoveries of archaeologists. (Archaeology is the study of the remains of early human cultures discovered chiefly by excavations.) Hundreds of times, the discoveries of archaeologists have confirmed the claims of Scripture, putting the people, places and events exactly where the Scriptures said.

Fulfillment of prophecy

Not only archaeology, but also fulfilled prophecies support the truth of the Bible. A biblical prophecy, made by a true prophet, is a prediction of the future made under the guidance of God. It is no problem for God to see future events as though they had already happened. In Isaiah 46:9-10 (NIV), God says, “*I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come.*”

The prophecy about Tyre

The prophet Ezekiel gave one of the most fascinating Old Testament prophecies against the city-state of Tyre in Phoenicia (on the Lebanon coast). Part of this beautiful, rich city was on land and part on an island. The wealthy city, ruler of the seas, seemed to be indestructible. Because the people worshiped idols, and gloated over Jerusalem’s destruction, God pronounced judgment on them. This is what Ezekiel foretold and how it happened:

Nebuchadnezzar will destroy the city of Tyre; nations will come against it; Tyre will become bare like a flat rock; fishermen will spread their nets over the sea and it will be thrown into the water and never be rebuilt will break down your walls and demolish your fine houses and throw your stones, timber, and rubble into the sea. I will put an end to your noisy songs, and the music of your harps will be heard no more... You will never be rebuilt. (Read Ezekiel 26:3-21, NIV)

History records how Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, battered the walls for thirteen years before finally destroying the part of the city on land. He had no ships to attack the island city so left it free. Two hundred years later (332 B.C.), Alexander the Great completed the prophecy. He threw the timbers and rocks, etc. from the mainland city into the sea until it made a causeway to the island city. With war machines and soldiers on rafts, he destroyed the city in seven months, killing many and selling others into slavery. Today you can still see the ruins of the causeway, stand on bare rock and watch fishermen spread their nets. It has never been rebuilt! Isn’t that a faith builder?

The prophecy about Israel

On October 14, 1948, part of another prophecy began coming true as the Jewish people, scattered among many nations, returned and founded the state of Israel. They rebuilt, under much stress and continued attacks, the barren and devastated land. Jeremiah and other prophets saw the day when this would happen. Keep your eye on Israel. Have you noticed this little country often dominates the news? Some day it will be the site of a great world battle. God’s enemies will be defeated, and Jerusalem will become the center of the world with Jesus reigning as King! Who knows? It may be in your lifetime! (Read Jeremiah 33, OT)

The Bible contains many prophecies that predicted the fall of nations and cities that have come true. When someone tells you the Bible is not true, or a book and movie such as the *DaVinci Code* conflicts with the Bible, be able to discern the false and understand why you know the Bible is true. As you study Scripture, check out the many other prophecies that God has fulfilled. There is more to come – the thrilling prophecies about Jesus and their fulfillment!

Attitude Check:

- How do fulfilled prophecies help you believe the Bible is true?

Explore:

- Read Matthew 24:1-2. The Romans under Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD, setting the temple on fire. Soldiers pried apart the stones to collect the gold that melted.
- Read Isaiah 13:19-21; Jeremiah 50:3; 51:30-32, 58. This prophecy was fulfilled in 539 B.C. Babylon (in Iraq) had two sets of walls and a deep wide moat filled with water on the outside wall. The Euphrates River flowed through it. When the Persians could not get through the walls, they dammed up the waters, diverting them into another channel, and walked into the city on the dried-up riverbed, which lay under the gates. The Babylonians were feasting, and the Persians easily conquered them.

Talking with God:

- Father, I thank you for the many proofs that your Word is true. Help me to know when to share with others, especially with unbelievers.