

Why We Believe the Bible
2. The Reliability of the Bible
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A. Reliability of Manuscripts

The Bible compared to other ancient texts (from Josh McDowell *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, 1972):

Old Testament 1,800-400 B.C.	Plato <i>Tetralogies</i> 427-347 B.C.	Sophocles 496-406 BC	New Testament 49-90 A.D.	Tacitus <i>Annals</i> 100 A.D.	Pliny the Younger <i>History</i>
thousands of copies and fragment, Dead Sea scrolls 125 B.C., Septuagint Greek translation 250 B.C.--later copies, Masoretic text 900 A. D.	7 copies, earliest copy 900 A.D.	100 copies, earliest copy 1,000 A.D.	over 5,000 Greek, 8,000 Latin, 1,000 other translations, and 13,000 fragments of manuscripts, earliest fragment copy 130 A.D., earliest complete copies 325- 350 A.D.	20 copies, earliest copy 1,000 A.D.	7 copies, earliest copy 850 A.D.

Almost the entire New Testament could be reconstructed from quotations in lectionaries and other texts. Here is a table of some 3rd century writers (McDowell, p. 55):

Writer	Gospels	Acts	Pauline Letters	General Letters	Revelation	Total
Justin Martyr	268	10	43	6	3	330
Irenaeus	1038	194	499	23	65	1819
Clement Alex.	1017	44	1127	207	11	2406
Origen	9231	349	7778	399	165	17922
Tertullian	3822	502	2609	120	205	7258
Hippoytus	734	42	387	27	188	1378
Eusibius	3258	211	1592	88	27	5176
TOTALS	19368	1352	14035	870	664	36289

B. Reliability of Point of View

The ancient histories of the Babylonians, Egyptians, Romans, Greeks all provided a very biased view of their leaders. Faults were rarely shown and their histories neglected historic set backs. Such is not the case with biblical presentations of men and women. Their strengths and weakness are recorded.

C. Reliability of Prophecy

61 Prophecies of Christ (McDowell, pp. 151-174)

	Prophecy	OT Predicted	NT Fulfilled	last 24 hours
1	Born of the seed of woman	Gen. 3:15	Gal. 4:4; Matt. 1:20	
2	Born of a virgin	Is. 7:14 Septuagint	Matt. 1:23, Lk. 1:26f	
3	Son of God	Ps. 2:7, I Chron. 17:11f	Matt. 3:17, Lk. 9:35	
4	Seed of Abraham	Gen. 22:18, Gen. 12:2-3	Matt. 1:1, Gal. 3:16	
5	Son of Isaac	Gen. 21:12	Lk. 3:23, 34; Matt. 1:2	
6	Son of Jacob	Num. 24:17, Gen. 35:10	Lk. 3:23, 34; Matt. 1:2	
7	Tribe of Judah	Gen. 49:10, Mic. 5:2	Lk. 3:23, 33; Matt. 1:2	
8	Family line of Jesse	Is. 11:1, Is. 11:10	Lk. 3:23, 32; Matt. 1:6	
9	House of David	Jer. 23:5, 2 Sam. 7:12f	Lk. 3:23, 31; Matt. 1:1	
10	Born in Bethlehem	Mic. 5:2	Matt. 2:1	
11	Presented with gifts	Ps. 72:10, 12-15, Is. 60:6	Matt. 2:1, 11	
12	Herod kills children	Jer. 31:15	Matt. 2:16	
13	His pre-existence	Mic. 5:2; Is. 9:6	Col. 1:17, John 1:1	
14	Called Lord	Ps. 110:1, Jer. 23:6	Lk. 2:11, Lk. 20:41f	
15	Immanuel (God with us)	Is. 7:14	Matt. 1:23, Lk. 7:16	
16	A prophet	Deut. 18:18	Matt. 21:11, Lk. 7:16	
17	A priest	Ps. 110:4	Heb. 3:1, 5:5-6	
18	A judge	Is. 33:32	Jn. 5:30, 2 Tim. 4:1	
19	A King	Ps. 2:6, Zech. 9:9	Matt. 27:37, Jn. 18:33f	
20	Special anointing of Holy Spirit	Is. 11:2, Ps. 45:7	Matt. 3:16-17, Jn. 1:32	
21	Zeal for God	Ps. 69:9	Jn. 2:15-17	
22	Preceded by messenger	Is. 40:3	Matt. 3:1,2, Jn. 1:23	
23	Ministry to begin in Galilee	Is. 9:1	Matt. 4:12,13, 17	
24	Ministry of miracles	Is. 35:5-6, Is. 32:3	Matt. 9:35, Mk. 7:33f	
25	Teacher of parables	Ps. 78:2	Matt. 13:34	
26	Entered the Temple	Mal. 3:1	Matt 21:12	
27	Enter Jerusalem on donkey	Zech. 9:9	Lk. 19:35f, Matt. 21:6f	
28	Stone of stumbling to Jews	Ps. 118:22, Is. 8:14	1 Pet. 2:7, Rom. 9:32	
29	Light to Gentiles	Is. 60:3, Is. 49:6	Act. 13:47, Acts 26:23	
30	Resurrection	Ps. 16:10, Hos. 6:2	Act. 2:31, Mk. 16:6	
31	Ascension	Ps. 68:18	Act 1:9	
32	Seated at right hand of God	Ps. 110:1	Heb. 1:3, Mk. 16:19	
33	Betrayed by a friend	Ps. 41:9, Ps. 55:12-14	Matt. 10:4, Jn. 13:21	*
34	Sold for 30 pieces of silver	Zech. 11:12	Matt. 26:15, 27:3	*
35	Money thrown in God's house	Zech. 11:13	Matt. 27:5	*
36	Price given for potter's field	Zech. 11:13	Matt. 27:7	*
37	Forsaken by disciples	Zech. 13:7	Mk. 14:50, Matt. 26:31	*
38	Accused by false witnesses	Ps. 35:11	Matt. 26:59-61	*
39	Silent before accusers	Is. 53:7	Matt. 27:12-19	*
40	Wounded and Bruised	Is. 53:5, Zech. 13:6	Matt. 27:26	*
41	Smitten and spit upon	Is. 50:6, Mic. 5:1	Matt. 26:67, Lk. 22:63	*
42	Mocked	Ps. 22:7,8	Matt 27:31	*
43	Fell under the cross	Ps. 109.24-25	Jn. 19:17, Lk. 23:26	*

44	Hands and feet pierced	Ps. 22:16	Lk. 23:33, Jn. 20:25	*
45	Crucified with thieves	Is. 53:12	Matt. 27:38, Mk. 15:27	*
46	Intercession for persecutors	Is. 53:12	Lk. 23:34	*
47	Rejected by his own people	Is. 53:3	Jn. 7:5, Matt. 21:42-43	*
48	Hated without a cause	Ps. 69:4, Is. 49:7	Jn. 15:25	*
49	Friends stood afar off	Ps. 38:11	Lk. 23:49, Mk. 15:40	*
50	People shook their heads	Ps. 109:25, Ps. 22:7	Matt. 27:39	*
51	Stared upon	Ps. 22:17	Lk. 23:35	*
52	Garments parted, lots cast	Ps. 22:18	Jn. 19:23-24	*
53	Suffered thirst	Ps. 69:21 (Ps. 22:15)	Jn. 19:28	*
54	Gall and Vinegar offered	Ps. 69:21 (Ps. 22:15)	Matt. 27:34	*
55	His forsaken cry	Ps. 22:1	Matt. 27:46	*
56	Committed himself to God	Ps. 31:5	Lk. 23:46	*
57	Bones not broken	Ps. 34:20	Jn. 19:33	*
58	Heart broken	Ps. 22:14	Jn. 19:34	*
59	His side pierced	Zech. 12:10	Jn. 19:34	*
60	Darkness over the land	Amos 8:9	Matt. 27:45	*
61	Buried in rich man's tomb	Is 53:9	Matt. 27:57-60	*

D. Reliability of Historical Names and Places

The evidence for biblical accuracy is extensive. Entire journals such as the *Biblical Archeology Review* or websites such as <http://www.bible-history.com/> are devoted to examining archeological finds mentioned in the Bible. Numerous books are written on this as well. Why not take the time to read one of these?

E. God's preservation of the Bible

Despite these many enemies to God's word the Bible remains the best selling, most widely distributed book in the history of the world (from <http://wayoflife.org/fbns/thebibles-proof.html>):

In A.D. 303, the Roman Emperor Diocletian issued an edict to stop Christians from worshipping and to destroy their scriptures. Twenty-five years later his successor, Constantine, issued another edict ordering 50 Bibles to be published at government expense.

In the 1700's the atheist French writer Voltaire said, "within 100 years, the Bible and Christianity will be swept out of existence, and pass into history." Well, within 50 years, Voltaire was swept out of existence and passed into history, and the Geneva Bible Society used Voltaire's house and printing press to print and distribute thousands of Bibles.

F. Testimonies of the Reliability of the Bible (from <http://wayoflife.org/fbns/thebibles-proof.html>):

General Lew Wallace was a Territorial Governor following the days of the U.S. Civil War. He had been a Senator in Indiana at the age of 29 and was considered a very scholarly man. He had no confidence in Christianity or the BIBLE, so he set out to write a skeptical book to disprove both. In his study he instead found the BIBLE and Christ to be true, and became himself a devout Christian. General Wallace never wrote his book against the Bible. He wrote instead the classic Christian novel *Ben Hur*.

William Ramsey, the English scholar went to Asia Minor with the expressed purpose of proving the BIBLE was historically inaccurate. As he painstakingly poured over the ancient artifacts and details, to his amazement he found that the BIBLE was accurate down to the tiniest detail. The evidence was so convincing that Sir Ramsey himself became a Christian and a great Biblical scholar.