



Truth For These Times



1. EVIDENCE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Though God has not revealed Himself to our senses: for we cannot see Him, or hear Him, or touch Him, He has not left us to grope blindly in confusion and doubt, without any evidence of His existence. God never asks us to believe without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His Word, are all established by testimony that appeals to our reason and this testimony is abundant.

What are some of the evidences of God's existence and where do we find them?

FOOT PRINTS OF GOD IN THE EARTH

Matthew 6:28,29 **So why do you worry about clothing? CONSIDER THE LILIES OF THE FIELD, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even SOLOMON IN ALL HIS GLORY WAS NOT ARRAYED LIKE ONE OF THESE.**

All around us, in earth and sea and sky, there are countless evidences of order, beauty, accuracy, adaptation and intelligent planning. Consider these marvels of creative design: The beauty and perfume of the flowers; snowflake crystals; a butterfly's wing; a spider's web; a bird's feather; a cob of corn; the marvelous instincts and mechanisms of the honeybee; the annual miracle of bird migration; and the bat's ingenious 'radar' system.

Could these wonders of creation have made themselves?

FOOTPRINTS OF GOD IN THE HEAVENS

Psalms 19:1 **THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD; and the firmament shows His handiwork.**

Isaiah 40:26 **Lift up your eyes on high, and see WHO HAS CREATED THESE THINGS, Who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might and the strength of His power; not one is missing.**

In the heavens above us there are the same evidences of pattern, order, beauty, accuracy and apparent purpose that we see in our own world – only magnified to a breath-taking degree. Consider these wonders of the starry heavens: The enormous size, weight, speeds, numbers, distances and temperatures of the billions of planets and stars; the precise calculation and co-ordination of their weight, motions, speeds, temperatures and orbits; the fine balancing of attractions and repulsions; the split-second timing; the perfect synchronisation – the clock-like regularity; and all maintained in a state of harmony by constantly-operating laws and controls. Could these marvels of creation have made themselves?



FOOTPRINTS OF GOD IN OUR BODIES

Psalms 139:14 I will praise You, for I AM FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE; marvelous are Your works, and *that* my soul knows very well.

In the human body there are some amazing evidences of ingenious design, coordination, adaptation and creative forethought that we see in the earth and in the heavens. Consider these wonders of the body temple: The living cell; the heart; the brain; the eye; the ear; the hand; the senses of touch, taste and smell; the nervous system; the digestive system; the prolonged and intricate miracle of reproduction and growth; the glands; and the body's marvelous defense and healing mechanisms.



What shall we do with these countless evidences of intelligent planning and forethought in the earth, in the heavens and in our bodies? We cannot ignore them. They demand a rational explanation. They have come into existence either by design, or by accident. They are the product of God or of chance. There is no neutral ground.

Did you ever hear the story of the watch that made itself? Such a thing is impossible, as we well know. But the universe, and our bodies are more complicated and intricate than the mechanism of a watch. Reason demands a ‘Maker’ for the presence of such incredible design in His created works.

Hebrews 3:4 For every house is built by someone, but HE WHO BUILT ALL THINGS IS GOD.

This is the only rational explanation for the marvels of creation.

ARCHEOLOGY ILLUMINATES THE BIBLE

A hundred years ago there were learned critics who claimed that the Bible was full of historical blunders. Today the situation has changed – almost dramatically. The discoveries of archaeology in Bible lands have created a new confidence in the historical accuracy of Holy Scriptures. This new confidence is echoed in the words of Sir Frederic Kenyon, spoken during his Presidential address to the Victorian Institute: “The up to date scholars are now those who recognise the authenticity and authority of the Christian Literature; it is the critics, who formerly claimed to be ‘advanced’, who are now belated and behind the times.”



The ‘Middle East’ was the birth-place of the Bible, and the cradle of the human race. The great nations of antiquity – Egypt, Assyria, Phoenicia, Babylon and Persia were clustered there. The Bible narratives are knitted at a thousand points to the history of these nations.

The Middle East has thus become a gigantic museum, crammed with the relics of departed greatness. At the same time, this region is an enormous library. Beneath its restless sands, and on the stony faces of its storm-whipped monuments are preserved chronicles of the mighty empires of the past.

This library, the oldest and biggest in the world, with its clay tablets and cylinders, its rolls of papyrus, its scraps of broken pottery and its slabs of stone, is also a huge treasury, prepared by the hands of men long dead, filled with evidence of the historical accuracy of the sacred Scriptures, and reserved by God against the present hour of need.

PUTTING THE BIBLE TO THE TEST

2 Timothy 3:16 ALL SCRIPTURE *IS* GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.



This claim to Divine Authorship is made throughout the Bible. Expressions such as “Thus says the Lord”, and “Hear this word that the Lord has spoken” are found over 2,000 times in the pages of Scripture. But the Bible does not ask us to believe these claims without supporting evidence.

1 Thessalonians 5:20,21 Do not despise prophecies. **TEST ALL THINGS**; hold fast what is good.

THE PERMANENCE OF THE BIBLE

Consider first the Bible's claim to indestructible permanence.

Isaiah 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but **THE WORD OF OUR GOD STANDS FOREVER.**

John 10:35 If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and **THE SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE BROKEN**).

Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but **MY WORDS WILL BY NO MEANS PASS AWAY.**

Those words were spoken by Jesus Himself.

Diocletian, Roman Emperor of the 4th century, outlawed Christianity, confiscated all known copies of the Scriptures and burned them. Yet the Bible arose unharmed from the ashes.

Thomas Paine, the notorious English Freethinker of the 18th century, fought the Bible with sarcasm and ridicule. In spite of these and other attempts to destroy it the Bible has survived.

THE PROPHECIES OF THE BIBLE

Consider next the Bible's claim to be able to foretell the future.



Isaiah 46:9,10 Remember the former things of old, for I *am* God, and *there is* no other; *I am* God, and *there is* none like Me, **DECLARING THE END FROM THE BEGINNING**, and from ancient times *things* that are not *yet* done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure’.

The Bible contains at least 1,000 prophecies; some entirely fulfilled, some in process of fulfilment, some yet to be fulfilled. Approximately one third of the Bible is devoted to prediction. These prophecies stretch like a long avenue of shining lights all the way from Genesis to Revelation.

TYRE

For example let us take a look at Tyre, a flourishing maritime port of the ancient Phoenicians. This large, rich city was wicked in the sight of God. One of their religious practises was to offer babies to the fire god, Molech by placing a living infant on the red hot hands of the image. God made a prediction of doom upon this city.

In Ezekiel 26:7-14 God foretold six things that would happen to Tyre:

1. He would bring Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon against Tyre.
2. Many people in Tyre would be killed.
3. The ruins of the city would be thrown into the sea.
4. The city area would be scraped free of rubble, like the top of a rock.
5. Fishermen would use this site to spread fishing nets.
6. It would never be rebuilt.



Rosetta Stone.

This remarkable prediction was fulfilled in every detail. Soon after the prophecy was written, Nebuchadnezzar attacked the city, many were killed and the rest were locked inside the city walls. The Babylonian army laid siege on the city for 13 years, but they finally broke in, only to find all the people were gone. They had moved to an island half a mile off shore.

Two hundred and fifty years later, Alexander the Great set off to conquer the world. The people of Tyre felt safe on their island fortress, but Alexander was determined to overthrow them. He commanded his men to throw the ruins of the old city into the water and build a causeway to the island. The old city was scraped free of rubble like the top of a rock and Alexander marched his army to the island and conquered the new Tyre. Today it is common to see fishermen spread their nets where the old city once stood. Three attempts to rebuild the city have all failed. Ezekiel 26:14 states, “I will make you like the top of a rock; you shall be *a place for spreading nets*, and you shall never be rebuilt, for I the LORD have spoken,” says the Lord GOD.”

EGYPT

Surely Egypt enjoys a glorious past. But what of today? God's word records a prediction.

Ezekiel 29:14,15 I will bring back the captives of Egypt and cause them to return to the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin, and there they shall be A LOWLY KINGDOM. IT SHALL BE THE LOWLIEST OF KINGDOMS; it shall never again exalt itself above the nations, for I will diminish them so that they will not rule over the nations anymore.



While Egypt has made some progress in recent years, in dam building etc., yet 70% of the Egyptian people can neither read nor write, and in many areas the women and children are still the beasts of burden. Anciently, Egypt was famous for her supply of Papyrus, or paper to the world. The Papyrus reed grew bountifully along the river Nile, and other waterways. However, God foretold that the paper reeds by the brooks and rivers would wither and vanish away, and be no more in the land of Egypt. And even this minute detail has been fulfilled.

Isaiah 19:7 THE PAPYRUS REEDS by the River, by the mouth of the River, and everything sown by the River, will wither, be driven away, AND BE NO MORE.

Today, there are no papyrus reeds in Egypt, except for one carefully tended patch at the Cairo museum.

PETRA

Petra is a fantastic place. Every building (over 1,000 of them) is carved like a cameo from the living rock. On the highest mountains around the valley are to be found the places of human sacrifice. Every week, young women were sacrificed to the sun god. This was a gruesome practice, in which the girl was defiled; and then, while she was still alive, her heart would be torn out of her body and while it was still beating, offered to the rising sun. God hated sun worship and because of this He predicted the doom of Edom.



Jeremiah 49:17,18 EDOM ALSO SHALL BE AN ASTONISHMENT... No one shall remain there, Nor shall a son of man dwell in it.

Isaiah 34:11-13 tells us that fowls and beasts would make their dwelling in the ruins of Edom, and thorns and brambles would grow in the palaces and fortresses of the city. Nothing could be more accurate, for today Petra is a desolation.

BABYLON

Babylon, the greatest city of the ancient world, is often spoken of as the golden city of a golden age. Jeremiah prophesied concerning Babylon:

Jeremiah 51:26,37 They shall not take from you a stone for a corner nor a stone for a foundation, But **YOU SHALL BE DESOLATE FOREVER**, says the LORD. Babylon shall become a heap, a dwelling place for jackals, an astonishment and a hissing, **WITHOUT AN INHABITANT**.

Those who have visited the site of ancient Babylon report that still it is a desolate waste, ‘without an inhabitant’. But the prophecy is still more definite:

Isaiah 13:20,21 It will never be inhabited...**NOR WILL THE ARABIAN PITCH TENTS THERE**, nor will the shepherds make their sheepfolds there. But wild beasts of the desert will lie there.



Babylon's Ruins.

After 2,500 years the Arabians still exist, but there is not a Babylonian on the earth today. The mighty palaces and hanging gardens of Babylon are only a memory, but the Arab still lives in his tents. How did Isaiah know that the Arabs would continue to live near Babylon's ruins for 2,500 years, but would refuse to use them for shelter? Explorers and excavators report that it is impossible to eradicate this idea from the minds of these people. There are many particulars in this one prophecy, each of which furnishes proof of divine foresight. Put together, they would fill a large book.

ISRAEL

Here is another prophecy, one which every nation in the world has helped to fulfil, the prophecy

concerning the people of Israel. In Leviticus and Deuteronomy Moses outlined the political and religious history of this race of people for over 3,400 years – from about 1,500 BC to this present moment.

Leviticus 26:33-44 I WILL SCATTER YOU AMONG THE NATIONS and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste....And those of you who are left shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands;I WILL NOT CAST THEM AWAY, nor shall I abhor them, TO UTTERLY DESTROY THEM.

Deuteronomy 28:25 ...and you shall become TROUBLESOME TO ALL THE KINGDOMS of the earth.

These ancient people of God have mingled with all nations for over 2,500 years, yet they have always maintained their racial identity. During this same time many other nations have arisen, remained distinct for a while, and then disappeared in the mass of mankind. We need to look only at America, where millions have poured in from other lands. An immigrant group may preserve its nationality for a generation or two, but after that it is lost. Not so with the Jews. They are found in every nation, as the prophecy said they would be, but always and everywhere they are distinct.

THE POWER OF THE BIBLE

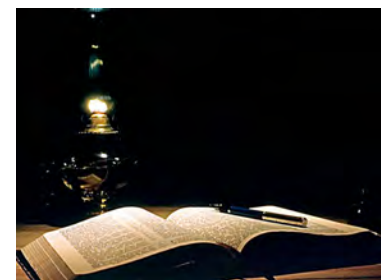
Consider finally, the Bible's claim to have life-changing power.

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the POWER OF GOD TO SALVATION for everyone who believes.

How shall we test the truth of these claims? Only by personal experience. The Divine Authorship of the Bible is not established by argument, but by experience. If we will give it a fair trial, it will prove itself to us.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone *is* IN CHRIST, *he is* A NEW CREATION; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Through the power of the Bible, countless men and women have broken the chains of sinful habit. Blasphemers have become reverent and pure. Drunkards have become sober. Criminals have become trustworthy and industrious. Cannibals have become kind and gentle. Souls that have borne the likeness of Satan have been transformed into the image of God. This change is the miracle of miracles.



Psalms 34:8 OH, TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD *IS* GOOD; blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in Him!

If we will receive the Bible for ourselves as a prescription from the Great Physician, we too, will become living witnesses to its life-changing power.

Dear friend, to believe in the Bible as the 'Word of God' is not following cunningly devised fables. The Bible is a proven book. The evidence is overwhelming. Search its pages and you will find God's message for you. You see, the Bible is God's book of instruction in order that we may know how to live this life. But it is more – it also shows you Jesus Christ, the Way to life everlasting.

Review Sheet – Evidence for the Existence of God

Assignment: Read the Bible study carefully before answering the following questions.

1. How did Christ compare the beauty of flowers with man's best clothing? Matthew 6:28,29
That even _____.
 2. What do the wonders of the stars declare? Psalms 19:1
The heavens declare _____.
 3. What did the Psalmist declare when he marvelled at the intricacies of the human body?
Psalms 139:14 For _____.
 4. Who is responsible for all created things? Hebrews 3:4
but he who _____.
 5. What has illuminated the truthfulness of the Bible and silenced the Bible critics? _____
 6. Who is responsible for the existence of the Bible? 2 Timothy 3:16
All scripture _____.
 7. How long will God's Word last? Isaiah 40:8
but the _____.
 8. What special ability does God have? Isaiah 46:9,10
Declaring _____.
 9. What ancient city did God say would have its ruins cast into the sea and never be rebuilt?
Ezekiel 26:7-14 _____.
 10. Which kingdom did God say would become the basest of nations? Ezekiel 29:14,15 _____.
 11. In the ruins of what ancient city will an Arabian refuse to stay overnight? Isaiah 13:20,21
_____.
 12. What did God say would become of the Israelites? Leviticus 26:33-44; Deuteronomy 28:25
I will _____ to _____.
And you shall become _____.
 13. What difference can the Bible make in a man's life? 2 Corinthians 5:17
If anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* _____.
 14. What test does God ask man to apply? Psalms 34:8
Oh _____.
- Do you believe the Bible is God's inspired Word? _____