

95% of the text, with the 5% variation consisting mostly of slips of the pen and spelling.¹⁷ [2] **Fidelity of the Jewish scribes.** The Talmudists had an intricate system of transcribing synagogue scrolls, and the Masoretic scribes evidenced profound reverence for the Scriptures, following rigid rules for text transmission. For example, all of the letters were counted methodically, and if a manuscript was found to contain even one mistake, it was destroyed.¹⁸

7 THE BIBLE'S AMAZING UNITY

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

The Bible is one continuous story of God's redemption of mankind through the Messiah. (See "The Scarlet Thread" text box below.) Remarkably, the Bible demonstrates complete harmony and unity even though it contains 66 books, written over a span of 1,500 years by 40 authors with diverse backgrounds, on three continents, in three languages, and covering hundreds of subjects. Such a wonder could only be explained by the biblical claim that the Holy Spirit was the divine Author (2 Peter 1:21).

THE SCARLET THREAD OF REDEMPTION

A "scarlet thread of redemption" is woven throughout Scripture. It traces God's unfolding plan of love—to redeem fallen mankind. From Genesis to Revelation, this red ribbon represents our need for an innocent blood sacrifice. Ultimately, God sent His Son to die on the cross as the sacrifice for all our sins (John 3:16).¹⁹

—W. A. Criswell, D.D., Ph.D.

8 FULFILLED BIBLE PROPHECY

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

The Bible is a collection of 66 separate ancient documents. The OT books, written centuries before the NT books, contain extensive clear and specific prophecies. Amazingly, the NT shows historical fulfillment of hundreds of them with 100% accuracy. For example, in the first century AD, Jesus of Nazareth precisely fulfilled 300 OT predictions concerning the first coming of

Messiah, the Christ. And 61 of them were considered major Messianic prophecies.^{20,21} Fulfilled prophecy is indisputable evidence of the Bible's infallibility. All other books regarded as religious scripture contain little if any prophecy, and none dares to claim historical fulfillment.²²

Six Examples of Jesus' Fulfillment of Messianic Prophecies

- **Born of a virgin**
OT Prophecy—Isa. 7:14
NT Fulfillment—Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35
- **Born in Bethlehem**
OT Prophecy—Micah 5:2
NT Fulfillment—Matt. 2:1-6; John 7:42
- **Rode as King into Jerusalem on a donkey**
OT Prophecy—Zech. 9:9
NT Fulfillment—Mark 11:7-11; Luke 19:35-38
- **Crucified on our behalf (our substitution)**
OT Prophecy—Isa. 53:5
NT Fulfillment—Rom. 5:6-8; Matt. 27:26-35
- **Cried with anguish, forsaken by God**
OT Prophecy—Ps. 22:1-2
NT Fulfillment—Matt. 27:46
- **Declared to be the Son of God**
OT Prophecy—Ps. 2:7
NT Fulfillment—Matt. 3:17

NOTE: Using the modern science of probability, the chance of just eight of these prophecies being fulfilled by one person would be 1 in 10¹⁷ (a 1 followed by 17 zeros). The chance that any one man could fulfill even 48 of them would be 1 in 10⁵⁷. Thus coincidence is entirely ruled out.²³

CONCLUSION

Our Creator, who revealed His infallible Word to us, wants us to know that His Son, the promised Messiah, died on the cross to redeem us. Have you asked Jesus for forgiveness and invited Him into your life as Lord and Savior yet? He is waiting to hear from you and give you eternal life.

A Prayer to Receive Jesus Christ

"Father God, thank You for Your divinely revealed Word. Thank You that it teaches us of Your sacrificial love, sending Your Son (the promised Messiah) to provide the way for us to get to heaven. Lord Jesus, thank You for redeeming us by taking our punishment on the cross. Please forgive me for my sins and be my personal Lord and Savior. I want to follow You, Lord God. In Jesus' name, amen."

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IS THE BIBLE GOD'S INFALLIBLE WORD?



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Eight Major Evidences Identifying the Bible as the Infallible Word of God

INTRODUCTION

The question of whether the Bible is divinely inspired is of utmost importance to everyone. If the Bible is *not* the very Word of God, then the Christian faith is in vain. However, if the Bible is the Word of God to mankind, it reveals truth about God, life, death, and eternity. Historians agree as to the genuineness of both Old and New Testament writings. So the viable question is: **Is the Bible infallible (divinely inspired by God in its entirety) and therefore truthful and trustworthy?** Presented below is an overview of evidence based on the *three tests of historiography* used to investigate historical documents:

- **The Internal Test** analyzes what the Bible claims about itself and whether those claims are internally consistent
- **The External Test** analyzes outside sources that confirm or deny the internal testimony of the documents
- **The Bibliographical Test** analyzes the textual transmission by which documents reach us¹

1 THE BIBLE CLAIMS TO BE THE WORD OF GOD

INTERNAL EVIDENCE

The Bible consistently claims to be God's revelation to mankind. Some key scriptural teachings about the Bible are: [1] **It's authoritative.** Scripture is called the Word of God, the Word of truth, oracles of God, holy, pure, and perfect. [2] **It's fully inspired by God.** "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). [3] **It's authored by the Holy Spirit.** "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). [4] **It's infallible.** "The word of our God stands forever" (Isa. 40:8). [5] **Its words are dynamic.** "The word of God is living and powerful,

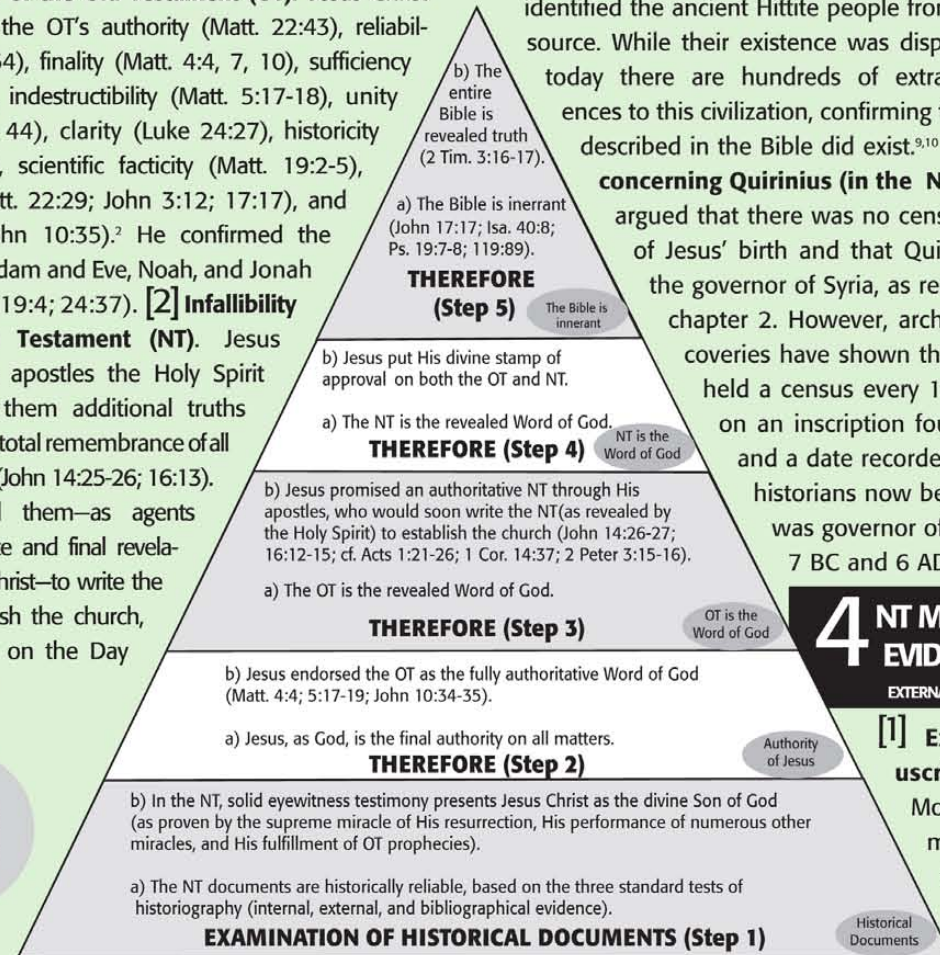
and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12). [6] **It's highly valued by God.** "You [O Lord] have magnified Your word above all Your name" (Ps. 138:2). [7] **It's final and complete.** "Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). [8] **It warns about distorting its message** (Prov. 30:5-6; 2 Pet. 3:15-17; Rev. 22:18-20).

2 JESUS CHRIST TAUGHT BIBLICAL INFALLIBILITY

INTERNAL EVIDENCE

[1] **Infallibility of the Old Testament (OT).** Jesus Christ taught about the OT's authority (Matt. 22:43), reliability (Matt. 26:54), finality (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10), sufficiency (Luke 16:31), indestructibility (Matt. 5:17-18), unity (Luke 24:27, 44), clarity (Luke 24:27), historicity (Matt. 12:40), scientific facticity (Matt. 19:2-5), inerrancy (Matt. 22:29; John 3:12; 17:17), and infallibility (John 10:35).² He confirmed the existence of Adam and Eve, Noah, and Jonah (Matt. 12:40; 19:4; 24:37). [2] **Infallibility of the New Testament (NT).** Jesus promised His apostles the Holy Spirit would teach them additional truths and give them total remembrance of all He had taught (John 14:25-26; 16:13). This prepared them—as agents of the complete and final revelation of Jesus Christ—to write the NT and establish the church, which began on the Day of Pentecost.³

A
Pyramid
of Logic



The Bible Is Inerrant

The pyramid above shows a logical progression of thought, building on a foundation (the NT historicity) and moving upward. Based on accepted principles of textual and historical analysis, the NT documents are reliable sources of information from the first century. They contain primary-source evidence for the life of Christ.⁴ ("Inerrant" means errorless in the original autographs. Thereafter, the NT has survived in more manuscripts and in purer form than any other book from antiquity.)⁵

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

Documented archaeological discoveries have confirmed much of biblical history as factual. Renowned Jewish archaeologist Nelson Glueck wrote: "It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted [disputed] a biblical reference."⁶ Here are just two of hundreds of OT and NT examples: [1] **The existence of the Hittites (in the OT).** A. H. Sayce, a 19th-century scholar and archaeologist, first identified the ancient Hittite people from a nonbiblical source. While their existence was disputed for years, today there are hundreds of extra-biblical references to this civilization, confirming that the Hittites described in the Bible did exist.^{9,10} [2] **The facts concerning Quirinius (in the NT).** Critics once argued that there was no census at the time of Jesus' birth and that Quirinius was not the governor of Syria, as recorded in Luke chapter 2. However, archaeological discoveries have shown that the Romans held a census every 14 years. Based on an inscription found in Antioch and a date recorded by Josephus, historians now believe Quirinius was governor of Syria twice, in 7 BC and 6 AD.¹¹

4 NT MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

[1] **Extensive manuscript evidence.** More than 24,000 manuscripts of the New Testament exist

today, of which 5,600 are the original handwritten Greek manuscripts. In addition, there are 19,200 manuscripts in other languages. Comparison of these numerous manuscripts, using the art and science of textual criticism, has established the reliability of the text as well as the integrity of its transmission.¹² [2] **Early church fathers' quotations.** The writings of the early Christian fathers, such as Origen and Tertullian (dated within 150 to 250 years of Jesus' earthly life), contain prolific quotations from the New Testament.¹³ Even if all other sources of knowledge about the New Testament text were destroyed, these writings "would be sufficient alone for the reconstruction of practically the entire New Testament."¹⁴

5 TEXTUAL TRANSMISSION

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL EVIDENCE

No other documents of antiquity are as well attested bibliographically as the New Testament, in that:

- There are more manuscripts preserved (5,686 in Greek plus 19,284 in other languages)
- They were copied more accurately
- Less time elapsed between the original manuscript and its earliest copy in existence

No other document of antiquity even begins to approach such numbers and attestation. *The Iliad* written by Homer is second, with only 643 surviving manuscripts.¹⁵

6 OT MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

[1] **Manuscript comparisons.** The integrity of the Hebrew Scriptures is confirmed by comparing texts from Palestine, Syria, and Egypt. Their reliability is further supported when compared to the Septuagint, a complete Greek translation initiated in Egypt c. 250 BC.¹⁶ [2] **Confirmation by the Dead Sea Scrolls.** In 1947, thousands of manuscripts were uncovered, containing portions of every book of the canonical OT except one. It included, for example, a complete manuscript of Isaiah from 100 BC (1,000 years earlier than the previously known manuscript). These two manuscripts proved to be identical in more than