
Historical Proof for the Bible (Pt.2)

Selected Scriptures

Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

12/1/13 © 2013

Transcription By: <https://riverside.fm/transcription>

00:00

Well, this morning I began by talking about the historical proof of the Bible. And I trust you still have your notes from this morning. And if you do, you'll notice that we covered the first two points. We talked about the internal test and the external test. And these tests that we're applying to the Bible is what historical science does when it is seeking to verify the authenticity of an ancient document.

00:27

this could be applied to any ancient document not just the Bible and this is something that secular people use again affirming whether this a document is certainly authentic now we looked at the internal test we saw that there are no contradictions we saw through the genealogies of christ i read one of them tonight in matthew and we saw through those genealogies in matthew chapter one and Luke chapter three there's no contradictions one of them is referring to the

00:56

offspring of the the line of joseph and the other ones referring to the light of mary so we find again no contradictions there we looked at acts chapter nine inverse seven in acts twenty two inverse nine where we looked at paul's conversion and it tells us in the passage that in one passage it tells us that they did not hear a sound when uh... lord jesus spoke to paul but in another passage

01:24

looked at the different case usage that's used by the Greek word akuo, and we found out just by those different case usages that there was no contradiction in those passages either. And it's telling us that they heard the sound but they could not distinguish the voice. And then of course we looked at the external tests and we started looking at the first century historians and we looked at three of them by name, actually four of them by name.

01:51

and they were not sympathetic to the Christian cause, they were not believers, but things that they reported on affirmed without any doubt the events that we find in our Bible. And then of course last we ended with looking at archaeology. Well I want to pick up that third test, and that third test is the bibliographic test. And this test looks at the eyewitness accounts or the accounts of those who heard from eyewitnesses.

02:20

and if the document is old we must understand that it must have been copied several times in order to survive to the present day now the bibliographic test tries to determine whether or not the copies that we have today are truly the original they are true to the original not the original we don't have the original but they're true to the original and in order for a document to pass this test there must be a relatively short amount of time between the copy and the original

02:49

and there must be several copies made by different people. Well, before we look at the bibliographic evidence for the Bible, let's look again at some other ancient documents. We have the histories of Cornelius Tacitus. I've already mentioned him this morning. These are considered to be very accurate accounts of events which occurred in the Roman Empire during the first century AD. His works were give us a very substantial amount of the facts that we know concerning the Roman Empire.

03:20

Currently there are 20 copies of his major work. 20 copies. We don't have the original, but we have copies. It's called Annals. We have only one copy of a collection of his minor works. The earliest copy of his major work was almost 1,000 years after the original. And they held this as a great find, as being very authentic, passing the bibliographical test because of the short period of time from the original to the copy.

03:49

the single copy of his minor works that we have actually goes a little shorter it's nine hundred years after the original that sounds pretty good well let's take another person you have the works of Pliny the younger he was also a historian in the first century his history is currently

supported by seven different copies the earliest of which is seven hundred and fifty years after the original

04:19

Then we have the works of Homer. Anybody ever heard of Homer? His works, Iliad, was written in 800 BC. The earliest copies that we have date 400 BC, so you have a time gap of four hundred years after the original. There are 643 copies of this, and of the three examples, this would certainly be the best, because you're four hundred years after the original.

04:49

That sounds really good too, doesn't it? And all the scientists treat this as a very reliable document. But let's compare it with the numbers of the New Testament. The numbers of the New Testament just will astound you. For example, we have over twenty-four thousand five hundred and thirty-three copies of the original. Did you hear me? Almost twenty-five thousand copies of the original. The earliest copy, this is the one where you fall out of your chair,

05:19

dates back to 125. 125. The entire New Testament dates back to 200 AD. We're talking 25 years after the original. Now see, that's the best evidence right there that passed this bibliographic test to be 25 years after the original.

05:49

It passed this test better than any other work of its time.

05:56

What about the Old Testament? Well, prior to 1947, the earliest existing copy of parts of the Hebrew Old Testament came from the Cairo Codex, which was written about 895 AD. Since the last events of the Old Testament were supposed to have occurred approximately 450 BC, this represents a significant time lag between the original and the first available copies. But you know, in 1947 there was a wonderful discovery. Any of you ever heard of the Dead Sea Scrolls?

06:25

That wonderful discovery right there, the scrolls that contained there were copies of parts of at least 500 ancient books. And out of them, one of the scrolls contained a complete copy of the Old Testament book of Isaiah. And that scroll was dated by archaeologists as having been written, get this, 125 BC. This version of Isaiah proved to be word for word identical with the standard Hebrew Bible.

06:52

in more than 95 percent of the text, the five percent variation consisted mostly of obvious slips of the pen, variations in spelling, nothing major. So in over a thousand years then the book of Isaiah and presumably the rest of the Old Testament was copied faithfully. And if you remember I've mentioned to you and Brother Joe's probably mentioned this to you as well, it was a very tedious process when they would copy. Scribe had that job, there was another scribe standing over him.

07:21

making sure that everything he copied was accurate. That's helpful because I used to work in South Carolina for the state auditor's office, and I worked in the department where we would type up all the audits. Well, before that could go to publication, it had to go to the proofing department. No one proofed their own work, and for obvious reasons. You won't see your own errors. So you have to have somebody else look at it. And we would do each other's work, and we would find errors everywhere, and we would take it to the one person that would

07:50

look over it after us and if she'd come back with this blue pencil that's been applied to everything, you know as teachers we use the red ink, I like the red ink you know in school but they'd use a blue pencil, they'd circle stuff and it could be silly stuff like misspelling which is good if that's all it is uh... but then it could be numbers inverted and that's serious when you're producing an audit and uh... but you just think of this whole process you know we have copy machines we have printing presses now

08:20

And if it goes on that press in error, it's going to print in error, right? And it could be due to the type setting. Obviously, it's due to the person who put it together. We print stuff off our computer. And just the birthday, he was mentioned just a few moments ago. I mean, things happen. And sometimes, spell checker doesn't even catch all the words, right? But it's a very

tedious process, not really so much now, because we do have some of those helps. But it was more tedious because there was no printing press.

08:49

and everything was copied by hand. Interesting thing, just a footnote in the Old Testament in this whole process, when they would come to write the name Yahweh that's been transliterated Jehovah. Jehovah is not even a word, it's just a transliteration. But when they would come to the name Yahweh, they wouldn't even write it. They would write Adonai. Adonai also meant Lord. And then they'd throw their pen away because they treated the name of God as being so holy.

09:18

They weren't worthy to even write the name. And so whenever you read in your Bible, the publisher has helped us out with this. When you find in the Old Testament, Lord in all capital letters is trying to tell you that that is the Hebrew name Yahweh. When you find it capital L and the rest lowercase letters, that's the word Adonai. That's helpful. I don't know if you knew this, but that's just a little footnote. But again, just to tell you, the process is so tedious and it's very important.

09:47

And when you look at the Bible, the Bible passes this test better than any ancient document in history. And as William Green put it, quote, it may be safely said that no other work of antiquity has been so accurately transmitted, end quote. So we can say that the Bible that we have today is faithful to the original eyewitness accounts. It's faithful. Now we have translations, and we need to understand translations, okay?

10:16

Many times we have preferences on our translations. We like this translation. We like the way it reads. Many like the King James. That's the authorized version. 1611, when it first came out under the authority of King James. Most people can't read that version because of the English. What we are using today is the 1769. The update of that would be the new King James. And the only thing that they changed in there were

10:42

They made the verbs a little bit more readable. They took the ETH off the verbs. They capitalized all names and pronouns pertaining to deity. So if it's talking about Christ and you read him, well him, the H, would be capitalized. I like that. That helps out. Helps you when you're reading and sometimes you get lost in your reading and, well, who's still talking? You have other translations that are reliable. You have the New American Standard Bible. That's a very reliable translation. You have the ESV.

11:12

that came out a few years back. That is another reliable translation. These translations that I just mentioned to you are referred to as essential literal translations. They are literal word-for-word translations. Now the New International Version is not an essential literal. It is what is referred to as a dynamic equivalent. It doesn't focus so much on every word, but it focuses on every thought that's implied by the passage. That's why you'll find so much word variation.

11:39

But, doctrinally speaking, all of these translations are faithful. They're accurate. They don't contradict one another. It's just if you pick up a King James Bible and you turn around and pick up a new American Standard Bible, or even a new international version, you're going to find Word Orders being a lot different. Because it's translated from a different set of manuscripts. It's translated totally differently than what you're used to. And it's not to say, wow, this is no good. It's really more of a preference issue. I prefer this.

12:07

I prefer the Elizabethan language, the these, the vows. I make fun of my kids sometimes. I'll say, come is thou hither. They have no idea what I'm talking about. But they come anyway. But that, again, is just a whole issue of translations. Now one thing that we cannot claim on a translation is that we cannot claim inspiration. Inspiration, in 2 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 16, it says all scripture is given by inspiration of God.

12:37

In Greek, that's Theopneustos. That sounds fancy, but what it means is this. All scripture is breathed out. You know, it's expiration. I don't know why we use the word inspiration. Inspiration is like breathing in, but expiration is breathing out, right? Genesis 1.1, God said. Actually, it's 1.3. But we see there, that's expiration, God speaking. And that passage is

referring to all the Bible being the word of the living God. Now again, we can't claim that of a translation because

13:07

Men, not the disciples, not the apostles, but men have translated this. And sometimes there's other ways to translate a verse, there's other ways to define a word, better usages of it. Really the whole issue that they were dealing with in a translation is which is the oldest, which is the most reliable? Because again, when you go back to this bibliographic test that we're looking at, we're dealing with date issues, aren't we? So we want the oldest.

13:37

because the oldest is going to be many times the most accurate. But think about that. These three tests, historical science applied to this, internal test passed. External test, it passed that. Bibliographic test, guess what? It passed that as well.

13:56

you have a reliable text, you have a reliable Bible. You indeed can take your Bible and say, I have the words of the living God. And you can trust that. Either the Bible says of itself that you can trust it, the Bible says of itself that it's truth, as I was mentioning this morning, John 17, 17, Jesus himself said to the Father in his high priestly prayer, in John 17, your word is what? Truth. It's the truth.

14:25

and God has preserved this all through the ages and all through the tampering, all through the persecution let's say this seeking to tamper it but God's preserved it, hasn't he?

14:38

Praise God for that. Well there's a last question on your handout I want to deal with in the remaining amount of time that we have. And it's just a simple question. What does the Bible say about itself? I said this morning that the Bible is really kind of like a lion. You can let it out and it will take care of itself. You don't have to really defend it. It can defend itself on its own. In fact, when you read in Genesis chapter 1 verse 1, the Bible doesn't even seek to prove the existence of God, does it? It assumes it. It says, in the beginning God.

15:07

it doesn't say by the way let me prove that again it assumes it god exists in the beginning god created the heavens and the earth and it tells us that he's the creator god and then it starts talking about everything he created on six days and how do we know that there twenty four hour days we says evening in the morning where the first day evening in the morning where the second day evening in the morning with a third day what you have evening in the morning you have a full cycle and so you have a full day

15:34

but you have critics that come along and say no that's not what it means because the word yom for day, Hebrew word for day doesn't always mean a twenty-four hour day in other places. Well that's true. That is true, but in Genesis chapter one it means a twenty-four hour day. And again evolutionists come back and say well no it means millions of years. You try to apply that to the book of Joshua when they marched around Jericho. They did it for what six million years? It'd still be going on wouldn't it?

16:03

or just ended. Again, you're going through the dating of the earth, evolutionists believe it's billions of years old. If you're a conservative believer, you would look more like it's six to eight thousand years old. You say, well then how does it account for the full maturity of things? Well guess what? When God created Adam, He didn't create him as a baby, He created him as a full-grown man. Same with Eve, a full-grown woman. And the garden had to be

16:32

ready for two adults, right? So there's your again accounting for all of that. So what does the Bible say about itself? I'll just tell you straight up, it tells us that it is the Word of God. This is the Word of God. Let me have you to turn to Genesis chapter 1 since I mentioned it. And in Genesis chapter 1 there's

17:03

The first one is the one I just mentioned in verse 1. It says, in the beginning, God. In the beginning, God. So, the first thing we're looking at here in the answer of the question that it is the Word of God is first implicitly implied in Genesis 1. Verse 1, in the beginning, God. We see

again the existence of a creator God. Look at verse 3. What does this creator God do? It says, then God said.

17:31

He speaks, He communicates, He has personality, He has intelligence. Look at verse 5, God called. You know the phrase God said, it occurs in chapter 1, no less than ten times? We see Him speaking. Let's keep it as simple as possible. When we're talking about the Bible, we're talking about the very words of God. You want to hear what God has to say? Open up your Bible and read it.

18:01

And you've got it right there. Verse 3, verse 6, verse 9, verse 11, verse 14, verse 20, verse 24, verse 26, verse 28, verse 29. All of them say, God said. That's God's Word.

18:17

The phrase, God called, that occurs in chapter 1 five times.

18:23

and when we look at other statements the bible says about itself we can see specifically it stating that it is the word of god second timothy three sixteen all scripture is breed now see in in our versions that we're using in here it'll say is inspired by god it'll tell us all scripture is given by inspiration of god but the literal greek

18:53

says all scripture is god breathe and here's an example of measuring translations nothing to say anything wrong with what we just read yes the is the only tration translation that i know of that translated it with the literal greek rendering all scripture is god breed and that helps us out at least in a sense it's good to compare translations to see how words are defined

19:23

we don't use all the same words when we talk we need contacts when we talk uh... somebody just you walk up on a conversation somebody's talking in you've got a stand there for a few

minutes in listen you can figure out what's going on but if you just one of these types of dislikes talk anyway you just jump in and they'll smile be nice to you even though that's not what they were talking about uh... are we guilty of that

19:53

So again, God breathe. That's telling us specifically that it is the entire word of God. And when it says God breathe, it's referring to the entire content of the Bible. That which comes out of His mouth, His word. Just as you're seeing in Genesis chapter 1, when He said, this is what's coming out of His mouth. This is what He has to say. And when it talks about all Scripture being God breathe, it's referring to every single word. The word **PASSA**, all, means every.

20:23

and that reinforces the fact that divine inspiration produced each and every word of Scripture. Now the Bible is very clear in revealing that God is the author of the Bible. Listen to Psalm 68 and verse 11. It says, The LORD gave the word, and great was the company of those that published it. Who gave the word? The LORD. Or how about Hebrews 1 and verse

20:51

after he spoke long ago to the fathers and the prophets in many portions and many ways. Who spoke long ago? So the Bible is clear to tell us that this is in fact God's Word.

21:08

In 2 Samuel 23 in verse 2, David said this, The Spirit of the Lord spoke to me, and His word was on my tongue. You know how you could determine whether a prophet was truly a prophet of God? Did what he say come to pass? Did it happen just as he said it? Because if it didn't, he was a false prophet. You know what they did with false prophets during that time? They killed him. Took him out and stoned him.

21:37

There'd be a lot of stoning going on today. That was still going on. We have a lot of false prophets out there, false teachers.

21:45

Over in Colossians 3 and verse 16, it tells us not only is the Bible God's Word, but it's also the Word of Christ. It says this, let the Word of Christ richly dwell in you with all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. The Bible is God's Word.

22:15

bring any of this to a conclusion tonight, and that is, have you to turn to 1 Timothy chapter 5. 1 Timothy chapter 5.

22:24

I want you to see something here that's taking place. In chapter five, well let's just say something about the entire book. Paul is writing to Timothy. Timothy is his son in the faith. Timothy is a pastor at the church at Ephesus. First, second Timothy, and Titus, those three epistles are referred to as pastoral epistles. Why? Because they speak about matters of pastoring. They speak about matters of the church.

22:52

If you want to know the qualifications of a pastor are, you would find them in 1 Timothy chapter 3, Titus chapter 1. If you want to know the qualifications of deacons are, you'd find them in 1 Timothy chapter 3. If you want to know matters of church life, you want to know if the Bible supports women preachers, well read 1 Timothy chapter 2 and you would find out what does the Bible say about that entire issue. Well look at something over here in chapter 5. He says in verse 17.

23:21

Now, pastors are referred to by many different terms. Now, I'm not talking about the terms that people make up when they go home and they're angry at the pastor. I'm not talking about those terms. I'm talking about other terms. I'm talking about terms like in chapter three in verse one, he refers to them as overseers. Over in Acts chapter 20 verse 28, he refers to them as poymans, which is pastors, or Ephesians four, he refers to them as shepherds. So he uses different terms. Here in chapter five in verse 17, look at the term he uses now.

23:50

elders. He's not talking about someone high up in physical age, he's actually talking about a pastor. And by the way, to use that term would speak of their spiritual maturity. You don't want someone who's brand new in the faith being a preacher of a church. The Bible says they would be lifted up with pride, they'd fall under the same condemnation as the devil, because all of that would go to their head. You need somebody who's had some years of maturity and been matured by the Word. You want physical maturity as well as spiritual maturity for sure.

24:20

But he says, Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in word and doctrine. For the Scripture says, You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain, and the labor is worthy of his wages." I just read to you three different passages that occur in three different places in the Bible, even though you find them all right here. First passage, verse 17, obviously here in 1 Timothy 5, 17.

24:49

uh... is verse eighteen that's deuteronomy twenty five in verse four and then the rest of the verse where says the labor is worthy of his wages that's luke ten in verse seven i want to tell you something here when paul writes to timothy and he tells him let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor especially those who labor in word and doctrine are in preaching and teaching and then he says for the scripture says he's going to take what he is just said to timothy

25:18

with other scripture like Deuteronomy. See, because he refers to Deuteronomy as scripture. But he has just talked to Timothy about something that is equally scripture. And not only that, he mentions something that Luke had to say. Now, what is going on here is each writer of scripture is verifying each other's writings as scripture. Let me show you another place that this occurs. It's over in 2 Peter chapter 3. 2 Peter chapter 3.

25:51

Paul in chapter two has been dealing with false teachers as he comes to the end of the book. He's dealing still with scoffers, those who mock what God has to say. They question the promise of God. They say that God is not going to do the same things he's done in the past. And they forget that the Lord certainly judged sinners through the flood, the worldwide flood. He talks about the day of the Lord in verse 10.

26:19

and he's still talking about that. And when you get down to verse 14, he uses the word therefore, therefore refers back. So he's bringing this to a conclusion. He's saying since all these things are going to be dissolved, you know, through the day of the Lord, and we look forward to the Lord's return and His promise of His coming, verse 14, be diligent to be found by Him in peace without spot and blameless in account

26:45

that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation, as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things in which are some things hard to understand, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the rest of the scriptures." Now I want you to notice something here.

27:13

Peter just referred to all of Paul's writings as scripture. How many writings did Paul give us? Thirteen. He dominates the New Testament. Twenty-seven books, he writes thirteen of them. And so he says there, our brother Paul, verse fifteen, he's written in all of his epistles, verse sixteen, and those who don't understand or those who are untaught, those who are unstable, they twist scripture to their own destruction.

27:43

And like I said, he refers to it as scripture. Now, let me back up to the 1st Timothy 5 passage. If Paul is using Luke's writing, he's referring to it as scripture, and he's putting on the same par as Deuteronomy, which we know the writings of Moses with scripture, then that would have to tell us that the gospel of Luke is scripture, right? And if the gospel of Luke is scripture, then guess what? Another book that Luke wrote was the book of Acts, and that would be scripture as well. And if the gospel of Luke is scripture, then Matthew, Mark, and John have to be scripture because they speak of..

28:11

similar events that's why we call the first three synoptic Gospels because they speak of the same thing John is a little different it picks up events that are not found in the first three but it

falls in a same category so you have their first Timothy let's just forget first Timothy take all of Paul's writings in scripture you have compared on the level of Deuteronomy you have Luke's writings you know Peter does the same thing or rather I say Jude does the same thing for Peter go to the

28:40

a little small pistol of Jude and look at what he says and uh... that the verse seventeen here this entire book is talking about false teachers that's what you did is all about he tells us in verse sixteen that these are murmurs complainers walking according to their own less they mouth great swelling words a flatter people to gain advantage but you beloved remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our lord

29:09

how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. Now who is he talking about? He's talking about Peter. Because if you compare the book of Jude to 2 Peter, chapter 2, it's almost identical. Jude is repeating a lot of things that Peter said in chapter 2 of 2 Peter. And so when he refers back,

29:34

saying that you need to remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, how that they told you that there would be mockers in the last time. He's talking about 2nd Peter chapter 2. Now Paul spoke about false teachers as well, and out of all the letters that we have, the Holy Spirit has given to us and preserved for us, if there were any other writings, because there was a letter to Laodicea that we don't have, an epistle to the Laodiceans, Paul mentions that.

30:04

So we're getting an idea here how they viewed each other's writings. It wasn't just a letter sent to another church. This was the Word of God. And we've already seen by taking historical science and applying three tests to it that it's passed the reliability of an ancient document better than any other historical document that we have on the face of the planet.

30:31

And then we see here by it implicitly implied in Genesis 1 that this is the very word, the very breath of God, and specifically stated there in these passages that we're looking at right now. They would verify one another's writings. The Bible is so unique. It's unlike any other book.

30:57

Think about this for just a moment. Forty different authors, never contradicting one another, covering a time period of 1,500 years.

31:10

You know how hard it is to get two people in the room and to agree?