

## **The Authenticity of the Bible**

Why consider this subject? 1 Pet. 3:5 “...to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.”

Volume I, Study III:

The Bible is the oldest book in existence.

Written over a period of about 1,700 years, by more than 30 different individuals.

Translated into every major language. (As of 2022 – 2,846 languages.)

It has the greatest circulation of any book ever written.

The Bible contains the following information that we would expect of a Divine Revelation:

A portrayal of God’s character, will and plan.

An accurate history of mankind and the object of his creation.

An explanation of the current situation in the world, including why evil is predominant.

A record of future events, including mankind’s place in that future.

Characteristics of a Divine Revelation:

- (a) Writings that come from God
- (b) Information transmitted by miraculous means
- (c) Information unavailable from other sources up to the time of writing

Four additional criteria:

1. Scientific knowledge that predates modern discoveries
2. Prophecies that have been fulfilled
3. Historical accuracy
4. Reliability of manuscripts

The necessity for the Plan of God to be largely “hidden” at the present time:

It is not God’s purpose at the present time to reveal these things to the World.

Now is the age of faith. (Heb. 11:1,6)

Matthew 13:10-16 – Aside from showing that the Plan of God was hidden in parables and dark sayings, the motive behind this as given in these verses will seem very strange to many: “*lest at any time they should see ... hear ... understand ... and be converted*”. Now is **not** the time for converting the world.

“*Many **prophets** and **righteous men** have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*” (verse 17)

1 Peter 1:12 – Even the angels in heaven are not permitted to understand portions of the Plan of God before the due time.

Luke 10:21

Why did God intentionally make the Bible difficult to understand?

Three special groups must be trained for a future role in helping everyone else, under difficult circumstances. (1 Corinthians 2:8)

- (a) Those mentioned in Hebrews chapter 11, who lived before the time of Jesus
- (b) Jews who have the faith of Abraham
- (c) Spirit-begotten believers from the time of Jesus until now

These are the only ones who have been specially dealt with up until the present time.

What about everyone else?

They will be resurrected from the dead.

They will be given a complete and accurate knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2:3-6)

The purpose of the three elect classes is to serve and help the non-elect.

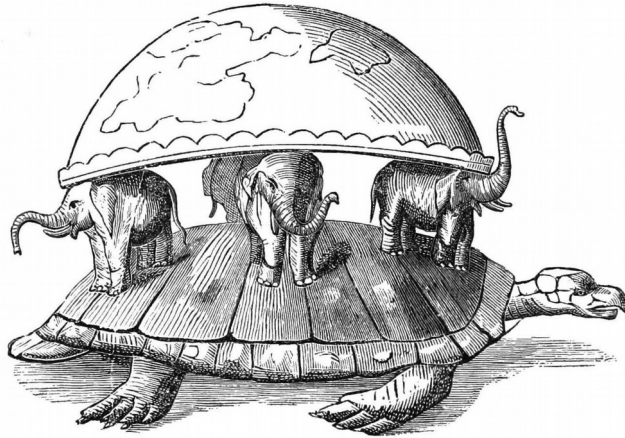
Many Bible Student websites are a good source of booklets on this subject, such as:

**[www.biblestudents.com](http://www.biblestudents.com)**

# 1. Scientific Knowledge that Predates Modern Discoveries

## What Holds Up the Earth:

Hindu scriptures and Greek mythology:

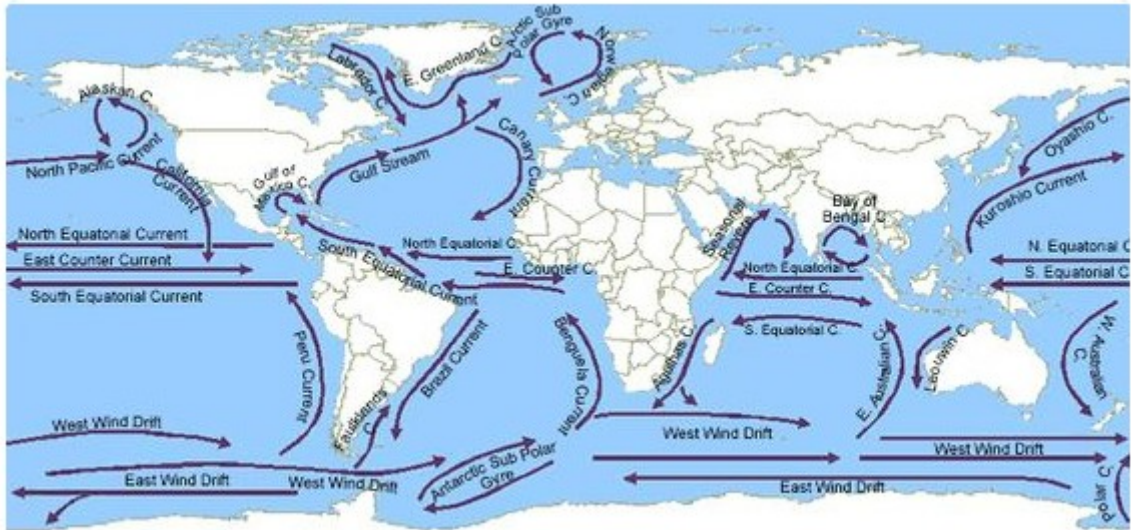


The Bible states in Job 26:7 that God “*hangeth the earth on nothing*”.

## The Bottom of the Ocean:



## The Paths of the Sea:

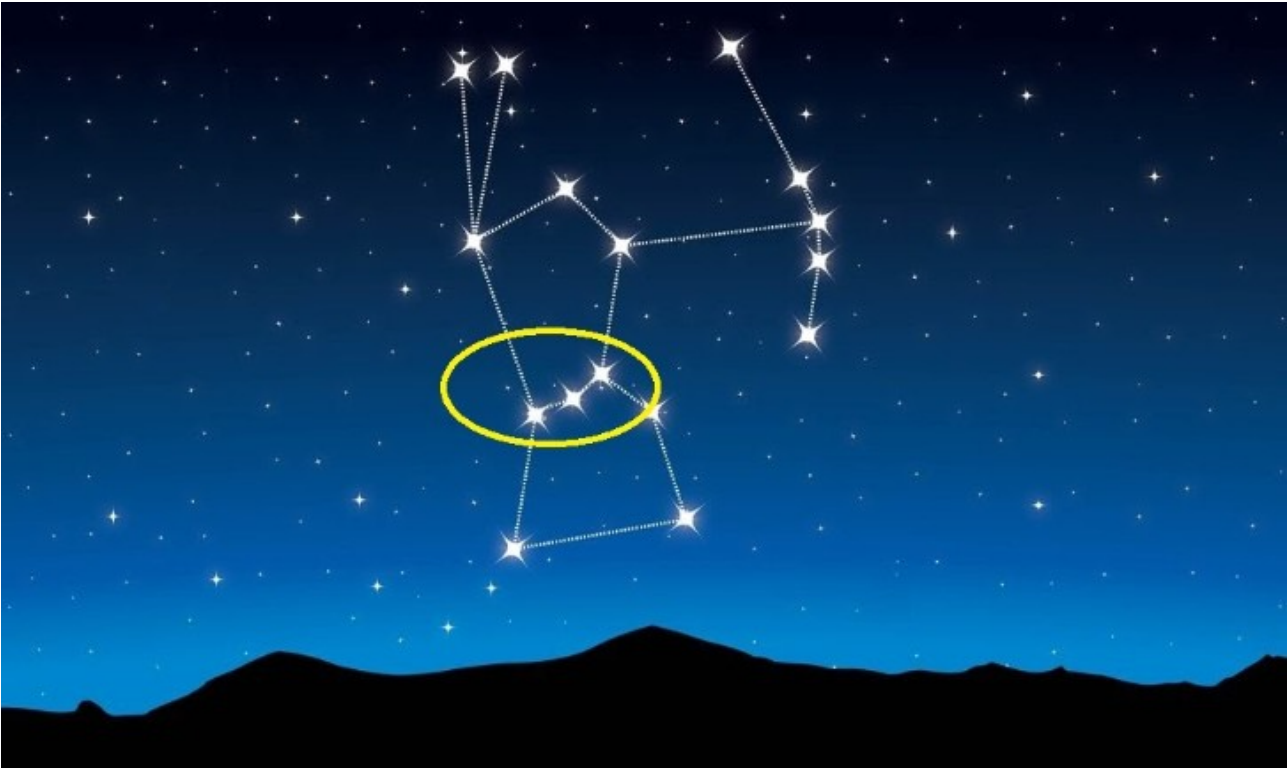


**The Pleiades is an Open Star Cluster:**





Orion's Belt is being "loosened" over time:



**Arcturus is not a single star:**



## **Geologic Epochs:**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Creative Day corresponds to the beginning of the Precambrian Epoch.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Creative Day corresponds to the Proterozoic period of the Precambrian Epoch.

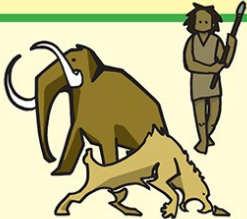

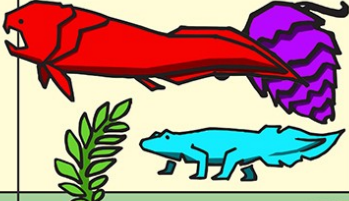
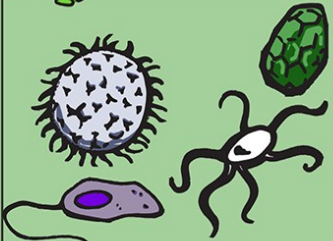
The 3<sup>rd</sup> Creative Day corresponds to the first half of the Paleozoic period of the Phanerozoic Epoch.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Creative Day corresponds to the second half of the Paleozoic period of the Phanerozoic Epoch.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Creative Day corresponds to the Mesozoic Epoch.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Creative Day corresponds to the Paleogene Period of the Cenozoic Epoch.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Creative Day corresponds to the last part of the Neogene Period and the entire Quaternary period of the Cenozoic Epoch.

ERA	CREATIVE DAY	IMPORTANT LIFE
Cenozoic	7TH 6TH	
Mesozoic	5TH	
Paleozoic	4TH 3RD	
Precambrian	2ND 1ST	

## **2. Prophecies that have been Fulfilled**

### **Israel being dispersed and becoming a nation again:**

Isaiah 11:12; 43:5-7

Jeremiah 16:14-15; 23:3-8; 32:37

Ezekiel 11:16-17; 28:25-26; 34:12-14;

Amos 9:14,15

### **Jesus:**

There are more than 300 prophecies in the Old Testament concerning events and details of Messiah's birth, life and ministry. All of these were fulfilled in the life and ministry of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament.

### **Tyre and Sidon:**

Detailed prophecies contained in Ezekiel 26 and 28 all came true.

### **Daniel:**

The 70 weeks prophecy pinpoints the beginning and end of Messiah's 3-½ year ministry. Additional prophecies from Daniel have been fulfilled in modern times, especially the increase of knowledge, running to and fro, the time of trouble, etc.

**Revelation:**

Contains a detailed and accurate history of events that took place centuries after it was written. Most prominent is the fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of the Papacy.

Key figures can be readily identified by their characteristics.

The French Revolution is also shown.

**Time Prophecies:**

Both the Old and New Testaments contain time prophecies which accurately predicted many events, including the date and length of Jesus' ministry; the beginning and end of the Papal Millennium; the beginning of WWI; etc.

The best source of information is the six Volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures* and other writings of Brother Russell.

### **3. Historical Accuracy**

#### **The Hittites:**

Toward the end of the 19th century, Hittite monuments were uncovered at Carchemish on the Euphrates River in Syria. Prior to this, skeptics pointed to a lack of archaeological evidence.

#### **The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III:**

Inscribed in 858-824 B.C. – shows Jehu, king of Israel, bowing before the Assyrian king.

#### **Tablets from the time of Tiglath-Pileser:**

From 744-727 B.C. – state that he received tribute from Jehoahaz of Judah. This is the full name of Ahaz. (2 Kings 16:7)

#### **The Cylinder of Nabonidus:**

Nabonidus was the last ruler of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. This stele proves that his son Belshazzar was co-regent with him. (Daniel 5; 7:1; 8:1)

#### **The Pool of Siloam in Old Jerusalem:**

Article from *The Los Angeles Times* (August 9, 2005)

### **The Merneptah Stela:**

Inscribed on this 13<sup>th</sup> century B.C. stela is a hymn which states in part: *“Israel is laid waste, his seed is no more.”*

### **Sennacherib’s Prism:**

At Nineveh, archaeologists found an account of the events recorded in 2 Kings 18:9-17, 28-31 in the annals of Sennacherib.

**Archaeological evidence** strongly supports the migration of Jews from Egypt to Canaan (the Exodus), crossing the Jordan at Jericho, and rapidly settling the region.

*On the Reliability of the Old Testament* by K. A. Kitchen, page 252

*The Bible as History* by Werner Keller

No discoveries have ever been made that disprove the historical accuracy of the Bible.



## 4. Reliability of Manuscripts

Author	Work	Date Written	Earliest MSS	Time Gap	Number of MSS
Homer	<i>Iliad</i>	800 BC	c. 400 BC	400	1757
Herodotus	<i>History</i>	480-425 BC	10th C	1350	109
Sophocles	Plays	496-406 BC	3rd C BC	100-200	193
Plato	Tetralogies	400 BC	AD 895	1300	210
Caesar	<i>Gallic Wars</i>	100-44 BC	9th C	950	251
Livy	<i>History of Rome</i>	59 BC-AD 17	Early 5th C	400	150
Tacitus	<i>Annals</i>	AD 100	AD 850	750-950	33
Pliny, the Elder	<i>Natural History</i>	AD 49-79	5th C fragment: 1; Rem. 14-15th C	400	200
Thucydides	<i>History</i>	460-400 BC	3rd C BC	200	96
Demosthenes	Speeches	300 BC	Some fragments from 1 C BC	1100+	340
Greek NT		AD 50-100	AD 130	40	5795

### **Some examples:**

The oldest fragment from the Gospel of Matthew is dated between 37 A.D. and 150 A.D. The exact year of Matthew's Gospel is thought to be 74 A.D., certainly before 100 A.D.

The oldest fragment from the Gospel of Mark is dated before 90 A.D. Mark died in 68 A.D.

The oldest fragment from the Gospel of John is dated between 100 A.D. and 175 A.D. John died around 100 A.D.

The oldest fragment from the Gospel of Luke is dated between 175 A.D. and 225 A.D. Luke died around 84 A.D.

### **By comparison:**

Socrates (470–399 B.C.), is credited as one of the founders of Western philosophy, but he made *no writings*, and is known chiefly through the accounts of classical writers who wrote *after his lifetime*, particularly his students Plato and Xenophon.

The oldest fragment of the writings of Plato, who lived until about 347 B.C., are dated in the 2nd century A.D., more than 500 years after the death of Socrates.

The existence of Jesus, and the accuracy of the accounts of his teachings are based on much stronger manuscript evidence.

## **Comparison to other books that claim Divine origin**

The Koran – Moslem:

No history, no science, no accurate prophecy, contradicts known facts.

The Ganjour – Buddhist:

No personal God (nature is God), all matter is evil, no science, no accurate prophecy.

The Vedas – Hindu:

Many gods, including the elements which are gods, no science, no accurate prophecy.

The Zend-Avesta – Zoroaster:

God created both good and evil, no science, no history, no accurate prophecy.

The I-King – Confucius:

No personal God (nature is God), limited history, no science, no accurate prophecy.

The Kojiki and Nihongi – Shinto:

Many gods, including the elements which are gods, no science, no accurate prophecy.

The Book of Mormon:

God is a man, all men will become God, plagiarizes the KJV(including known errors).

## **What does this mean to you and me?**

These facts should give us confidence in the Bible as the Word of God.

This information can be very helpful in our witnessing to others.

The writings of Brother Russell form an important part of this subject.

The Harvest Message is an “authentic” interpretation of the Bible.

Scientific knowledge that predates modern discoveries:

The Van Allen Belts

Global warming

Prophecies that have been fulfilled:

The Great War of 1914

The reestablishment of Israel as a nation

The rise – and fall – of socialism and communism

The Six Volumes and other writings of the Pastor harmonize the Bible from Genesis to Revelation in a way that no other religious writings have ever done.

Brother Russell saw the beginnings of Evolution and Higher Criticism in his day. Those influences have practically taken over the educational institutions of today. Such influences have even had an effect upon some of the Lord’s people.

## Summary and Conclusions

The Bible contains Scientific knowledge that predates modern discoveries.

The Bible contains Prophecies that have been fulfilled.

The Bible has been proven to have Historical accuracy.

The Reliability and number of Bible manuscripts are unparalleled compared to all other ancient writings *combined*.

The Bible is the only book that accurately describes God's character.

The Bible is the only book that gives an explanation for why man dies.

The Bible is the only book that can be harmonized with *true* science and *true* history.

\* \* \*

The Harvest Message harmonizes the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. No other religious writings can make this claim.

Skepticism, higher-criticism, infidelity, agnosticism and atheism are on the rise.

We must: "*Always be prepared to give a defense to everyone who asks the reason for the hope that is in us, responding with gentleness and respect.*" (1 Peter 3:15)

May the Lord help us to defend His Word, His Character, His Plan and the Harvest Message.