

- [5] Is man immortal? Job 19:25-27; John 11:25-26
- [6] What is truth? John 14:6; 17:17
- [7] Why does evil exist? Isaiah 14; Ezekiel 28; Revelation 20:10
- [8] What are the determinants of history and what is its goal? Daniel 4:17; Revelation 22:20
- [9] What is right conduct? Matthew 22:37-39
- [10] What is the beautiful and valuable? Psalms 27:4; Mark 10:18; Philippians 4:8

(e) Fulfillment of Bible prophecy

- [1] The development of history predicted (Ephesians 1:11; Daniel 2; 7).
- [2] Details of the Messiah's life and death predicted (Psalms 22; Isaiah 53; Matthew 5:18).

It would be practically impossible for the biblical prophecies about the Messiah to be fulfilled by chance.<sup>7</sup>

(f) Reliability of the Bible.

The reliability of Scripture is supported not only by the precise fulfillment of biblical prophecy, but also by archaeological confirmation of biblical accuracy on historical, geographical, and cultural matters. If the Bible has demonstrated reliability in these areas, then it would seem safe and reasonable to accept the Bible's testimony about what it says is true. The Bible does indeed testify that is a special revelation from God, God's truth in written form (John 17:17).

This verification of the Bible's reliability from external scientific evidence (archaeology) helps avoid the criticism that circular reasoning is involved when the witness of the Bible is used to prove its own inspiration. If a witness is proven reliable, then it is not wrong to allow that witness to give testimony concerning itself. Furthermore, the truth-claims of Scripture concerning itself can be

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<sup>7</sup> Josh McDowell, Evidence that Demands a Verdict, 2nd rev. ed. (San Bernardino: Here's Life Publishers, 1979), pp. 166-167.

tested in human experience so that the truth of the Bible is verified through a self-authenticating process (Psalms 34:8).

- d. Sufficiency of a special revelation (in the Bible).
  - (1) Special revelation gives a limited knowledge of God (Deuteronomy 29:29; Romans 11:33; 1 Corinthians 13:12; Revelation 10:4) Finite man cannot fully comprehend the infinite God.
  - (2) Special revelation gives a vast and adequate revelation which contains all which God wants man to know presently (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:3).

#### IV. Reliability of the Bible.

##### A. Authenticity of the books of the Bible.

- 1. Definition of authenticity (as applied to a literary document).

“That a document or book is what it or tradition claims it to be, especially in terms of authorship and date.”
- 2. Problems of authenticity.
  - a. In the Old Testament.
    - (1) Denial of early practice of writing.
      - (a) Earliest known pictograph script – c. 3300 B.C.
      - (b) By the time of Moses (1520 - 1400 B.C.) alphabetic writing had become common. Attested by religious literature at Ras Shamra.
    - (2) Denial of Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch.

The origin of the Pentateuch is explained by the documentary hypothesis according to the destructive critical view.

      - (a) Assumptions of the documentary hypothesis:
        - [1] Anti-supernatural.
        - [2] Natural view of Israel’s history.
      - (b) Origination of the documentary hypothesis:

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, literary critics sought to distinguish literary strands in the Pentateuch on the basis of the usage of different divine names.
      - (c) Explanation of the documentary hypothesis.

- [1] The Pentateuch is supposedly a combination of several different documents. Each document represents a separate oral tradition (sometimes conflicting).
- [2] These documents are identified as:
  - [a] J (based on the divine name Yahweh) (c. 850 B.C.)
  - [b] E (based on the divine name Elohim) (c. 750 B.C.)
  - [c] D (mainly material in Deuteronomy) (c. 621 B.C.)
  - [d] P (priestly code, mainly Leviticus) (c. 500 B.C.)

(d) Answers to the documentary hypothesis.

- [1] Many of the books claim that they were written by a certain person at a certain time (Exodus 17:14; Deuteronomy 31:9)
- [2] Other parts of the Bible testify to the authorship and time of writing of certain Old Testament books (1 Kings 2:3).
- [3] Christ and the New Testament writers specifically mention the authorship of some Old Testament books (John 5:46; Matthew 12:41; 24:15).
- [4] Jewish and Christian tradition recognize the authenticity of Old Testament books.
- [5] Recent literary, historical, and archaeological research support the authenticity of Old Testament books.

See Josh McDowell, *More Evidence that Demands a Verdict*.

(3) Denial of the unity of Isaiah.

(a) Explanation.

Isaiah chapters 40-66 were written by one or more authors different from the author of chapters 1-39. This view of destructive criticism is based primarily on the assumption that the alleged detailed predictive prophecy of Isaiah 40-66 is impossible.

(b) Answers.

[1] Denial of predictive prophecy is an anti-supernatural and anti-scriptural assumption (Mark 1:2).

[2] The expression, “the Holy One of Israel,” occurs only 5 times in the rest of scripture, but 12 times in Isaiah 1-39, and 14 times in Isaiah 40-66.

[3] John 12:38-41 quotes from both parts of Isaiah (6:9 and 53:1) and ascribes both to Isaiah.

(4) Denial of the historicity of the events in Jonah.

(a) Explanation.

The destructive critics believe that the story of the book of Jonah does not represent actual history. They teach that the book is allegorical or mythical in form; nevertheless, it does convey valuable religious lessons.

(b) Answers.

[1] The book purports to be an actual historical account (Jonah 1:1; 2 Kings 14:25).

[2] Christ confirmed the historicity of Jonah and the events in the book (Matthew 12:39-41; 16:4).

b. In the New Testament.

(1) Synoptic (presenting or taking the same or common view) Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

(a) Problem.

Destructive critics and a few conservatives believe that Matthew and Luke used Mark’s Gospel and a hypothesized document “Q” in the production of their Gospels.

(b) Answers.

[1] None of the Synoptic Gospels could have been written latter than A.D. 70 because the they portray the temple of Jerusalem still standing.

[2] There is good evidence that Matthew (A.D. 50) and Luke (A.D. 58) wrote their Gospels before Mark (A.D. 67-68).