

- [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).

[3] Therefore, Matthew and Luke could not have depended on Mark and a “Q” source.

(2) Fourth Gospel.

(a) Destructive critics have tended to deny:

[1] The John’s Gospel was written by John the Apostle and son of Zebedee.

[2] That the Gospel is to be dated during the last quarter of the first century A.D.

[3] That the Gospel is historically accurate.

[4] That this Gospel can be harmonized doctrinally, historically, chronologically with the Synoptic Gospels.

(b) Answers.

[1] Traditional view is supported by testimony of 2<sup>nd</sup> century church fathers.

[2] The Rylands fragment of John 18:31-33, 37, 38 is dated about A.D. 100-150, and it supports traditional date.

[3] It was written by a person who lived in Palestine before A.D. 70.

B. Credibility of the contents of the Bible.

1. Credibility of the Old Testament.

a. Evidence from Christ’s citation of the Old Testament as historical fact.

(1) Creation of the universe (Genesis 1:1; cf. Mark 13:19).

(2) Creation of man as male and female (Genesis 1:27; cf. Matthew 19:4).

(3) Reality of man’s fall and the personality of Satan (Genesis 3 cf. John 8:44).

(4) Noahic flood (Genesis 6-8 cf. Luke 17:26-27).

(5) Historical existence of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Genesis 11-49 cf. Matthew 8:11).

(6) Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the rescue of Lot (Genesis 19 cf. Luke 17:28-30, 32).

(7) Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3 cf. Mark 12:24-26).

(8) Manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16 cf. John 6:32).

(9) Jonah in the great fish (Jonah 1-2 cf. Matthew 12:39-40).

- b. Evidence from archaeology for the accuracy of the Old Testament. Biblical archaeology involves the study of the material remains of antiquity of Palestine and of those countries which from the earliest time to the first century of the Christian era were brought into relation to it.

Examples:

- (1) Nuzi<sup>8</sup> Tablets tell of practices similar to those in Genesis
  - (a) Adoption of indirect heirs by a childless couple (Genesis 15:2)
  - (b) Children by proxy (Genesis 16:1-4; 21:1)
  - (c) Inheritance rights (Genesis 25:29-34)
  - (d) Marriage arrangements (Genesis 28:1-5; levirate marriage<sup>9</sup>: Genesis 38:6-8; Deuteronomy 25:5)
  - (e) Sistership by agreements in which a man adopted a woman as a sister. In the society of the Hurrians, a wife enjoyed both greater protection and a superior position when she also had the legal status of a sister. In such a case, two separate documents were drawn up, one for marriage and the other for sistership. This may explain why both Abraham (Genesis 12:10) and Isaac (Genesis 26:7) said their wives were there sisters.
- (2) Temple of Amun at Soleb – built on the left bank of the Nile, north of the Third Cataract<sup>10</sup> circa 1400 BC
  - (a) Inscription on a pillar – “land of the nomads of Yahweh”
  - (b) The only people known to worship Yahweh were the Israelites or Hebrews
- (3) Isaiah the Prophet’s Seal
  - (a) A clay impression (called a bulla<sup>11</sup>) that may have been made from the Prophet Isaiah's personal seal. The bulla was unearthed by archaeologist Eilat

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<sup>8</sup> Nuzi was a Hurrian administrative center not far from the Hurrian capital at Kirkuk in northern Iraq. The Nuzi Tablet date from 1450-1300 BC and were excavated between 1925 to 1933.

<sup>9</sup> A custom or law that requires a widow to marry her deceased husband’s brother.

<sup>10</sup> The Cataracts of the Nile are shallow lengths of the Nile river, between Khartoum and Aswan, where the surface of the water is broken by many small boulders and stones jutting out of the river bed, as well as many rocky islets.

<sup>11</sup> A lump of clay molded around a cord and stamped with a seal.

Mazar and her team in the Ophel excavations just south of the Temple Mount.

- (b) If it refers to Isaiah the prophet from 8<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, who was a spiritual advisor to King Hezekiah, it is the first contemporary archaeological evidence for the prophet.

2. Credibility of the New Testament.

a. Evidence from the qualifications of New Testament writers.

- (1) Such writers as Matthew, John, and Peter accompanied the Lord for three years.
- (2) Such writers as Mark and Luke were in close contact with human and written authority.
- (3) Such writers as Paul and John received direct revelation from God (2 Corinthians 12:1ff.; Galatians 1:11-17; Revelation 1:1ff.).
- (4) The Holy Spirit enabled the New Testament writers to recall perfectly what Christ had said to them.
- (5) The New Testament writers willingly allowed their teachings to be checked with other Scriptures for harmony (Acts 17:11, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4).
- (6) The New Testament apostles claimed divine authority for their teaching (Galatians 1:1, 12; 1 Timothy 4:11; Titus 2:15; 2 Peter 3:2).
- (7) The New Testament writings were to be preserved, circulated, and read by other believers as authoritative (Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27 cf. Deuteronomy 31:26; 2 Thessalonians 3:14).

b. Evidence from the harmony of New Testament writings.

- (1) New Testament writings are not contradictory, but are complementary and supplementary. E.g. cf. Acts 1:16-18 with Matthew 27:3-8.
- (2) New Testament writings harmonize with trustworthy extra-biblical sources of history.

c. Evidence from archaeology for the accuracy of the New Testament.

Examples:

- (1) Caiaphas Ossuary<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> A depository for the bones of the dead.

The Caiaphas ossuary was discovered in 1990 in a burial cave south of the old city of Jerusalem. Twelve ossuaries were found with a very ornate one inscribed with “Joseph son of Caiaphas.” The ossuary contained the skeletal remains of a 50-year-old male. It is likely the remains are of Caiaphas the high priest who interrogated Jesus (Matthew 26:3, 57; Luke 3:1-2; John 18:13-14; 24, 28; Acts 4:5-6).

(2) Pilate Stone

Until 1961, there was no archaeological evidence that demonstrated that Pontius Pilate existed (Matthew 27:1-26; John 19:1-15). Some literary sources mention him, but no administrative records survive from him and no genuine letters of his have been preserved.

In June 1961, Italian archaeologist Antonio Frova, while working in the ruins of Caesarea Maritima, found a sizable piece of limestone that bears the name of “Pontius Pilatus.”

The inscription says that Pilate had built a “Tiberieum” (likely a temple in or near Caesarea) dedicated to the then reigning Roman emperor, Tiberius, who ruled from A.D. 14 to A.D. 37.

The “Pilate Stone” is historically significant because it dates to Pilate’s own lifetime.

(3) Erastus Pavement Inscription

When Paul moved to Corinth in about AD 50 many people became Christians, including Erastus (Acts 19:21-22; Romans 16:23; 2 Timothy 4:20) who became a friend of Paul. Erastus was the city manager (Romans 16:23).

During the excavation of Corinth in 1929, archaeologist found a rectangular pavement stone with a Latin inscription mentioning Erastus. It is translated as, “Erastus in return for his aedileship<sup>13</sup> paved at his own expense.” The commentative inscription specifically mentions Erastus and his title.

V. Inspiration of the Bible.

A. Erroneous theories of inspiration.

1. Intuitive or natural inspiration.

a. Ideas.

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<sup>13</sup> Aedile – an official in ancient Rome in charge of public works and games, police, and the grain supply