

Is the Bible Reliable?

Psalms 119:97-104

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I. The Bible is unique in its continuity.

Your word, LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. (Psalms 119:89)

- a. Written by 40 human authors
- b. Over 1500 years
- c. On 3 different continents
- d. In 3 different languages
- e. One story: God's redemption of fallen man
- f. Judaism's holy Scriptures – Old Testament (Creation, Fall, God's choosing of a people to produce a Savior)
- g. Christianity's holy Scriptures – New Testament (Appearance of the Savior, Expansion of the story, Explanation of God's work and our responsibilities, Culmination of Creation)

II. The Bible is unique in its circulation.

In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power. (Acts 19:20)

- a. Distribution
- b. Translation

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:14)

III. The Bible is unique in its continued existence

- a. Through time

For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. (Matthew 5:18)

- b. Through persecution
- c. Through criticism
- d. Through continued existence of its initial caretakers

When I have brought them back from the nations and have gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will be proved holy through them in the sight of many nations. (Ezekiel 39:27)

IV. The Bible is unique in its correctness

- a. Prophecy

“This is what the LORD says— your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb:

I am the LORD,

the Maker of all things,

who stretches out the heavens,

who spreads out the earth by myself,

who foils the signs of false prophets

and makes fools of diviners,
who overthrows the learning of the wise
and turns it into nonsense,
who carries out the words of his servants
and fulfills the predictions of his messengers...
who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd
and will accomplish all that I please;
he will say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt,"
and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid."' (Isaiah 44:24-28)

Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against you, Tyre, and I will bring many nations against you, like the sea casting up its waves. They will destroy the walls of Tyre and pull down her towers; I will scrape away her rubble and make her a bare rock. Out in the sea she will become a place to spread fishnets, for I have spoken, declares the Sovereign LORD. She will become plunder for the nations, and her settlements on the mainland will be ravaged by the sword. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

"For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: From the north I am going to bring against Tyre Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses and chariots, with horsemen and a great army. He will ravage your settlements on the mainland with the sword; he will set up siege works against you, build a ramp up to your walls and raise his shields against you... They will plunder your wealth and loot your merchandise; they will break down your walls and demolish your fine houses and throw your stones, timber and rubble into the sea... You will never be rebuilt, for I the LORD have spoken, declares the Sovereign LORD. (Ezekiel 26:3-12)

b. History

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught. (Luke 1:1-4)

c. Humanity

"They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory." (Mark 10:37)

Then he began to call down curses, and he swore to them, "I don't know the man!" Immediately a rooster crowed. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly. (Matthew 26:74-75)

d. Transmission

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures... (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

e. Selection

If you fast, you will bring sin upon yourselves, and if you pray you will be condemned, and if you give to charity you will harm your spirits. (Gospel of Thomas, saying 14)

Blessings on the lion if a human eats it, making the lion human. Foul is the human if a lion eats it, making the lion human. (saying 7)

V. The Bible is unique in its claims

a. That it is the very Words of God

“This is what the LORD says, he who made the earth, the LORD who formed it and established it—the LORD is his name: ‘Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.’ (Jeremiah 33:2-3)

“Take a scroll and write on it all the words I have spoken to you concerning Israel, Judah and all the other nations from the time I began speaking to you in the reign of Josiah till now. (Jeremiah 36:2)

...the word of the Lord came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, by the Kebar River in the land of the Babylonians. There the hand of the Lord was on him. (Ezekiel 1:3)

He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” (Revelation 21:5)

b. That those who read and follow it will be blessed

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near. (Revelation 1:3)

Jesus replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.” (Luke 11:28)

c. That God made a way to be saved that doesn’t involve self-effort

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. (Romans 1:16)

VI. The Bible is unique in its consequences

a. Art/music

b. Education

c. Medicine

The Lord said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” (Numbers 21:8)

d. Politics

e. People willingly died

There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They

were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. (Hebrews 11:35b-37a)

f. Individual lives