

Seven reasons to believe the Bible



Geoff Cordingley

Seven reasons

to believe

the bible

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:29–31).

Geoff Cordingley

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ForewordForeword

There has never been a better time than now to place before our readers undeniable evidence that the Bible is God's word.

All would agree that, more than ever before, through the media and educational institutions at all levels, we are presented with the theory of evolution as if it were a proven fact. To make matters worse, evolutionary scientists seem to have an anti-creation, anti-Bible agenda.

Why seven reasons? The number seven is a fascinating number in many ways but God has made it His number of perfection both in the natural world and in the Bible. It is seen to be His signature number from Genesis to Revelation.

The seven reasons to believe the Bible that comprise the chapters of this book are simply those chosen by the author. Another writer could have chosen a different seven because there are numerous ways to show a sincere seeker of truth that the Bible is God's revelation to man.

The Bible is a unique book. Those who are familiar with its contents find it a blessing and comfort, not only in the way it helps them conduct their lives now, but in the message it contains concerning their future well-being. Unfortunately, this wonderful book, composed by many different authors over approximately 1500 years, is neglected by the vast majority of people.

The aim of our book is twofold: that the faith of believers might be strengthened and that any who have doubts about the authenticity of the Bible may be convinced of its truth by the evidence presented, and their own follow-up research.

“Ah Lord God! Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee” (Jer. 32:17).

1.Design

This world is full of treasures. They may be found both above the surface and below the surface. Unfortunately many people don't look closely enough to see the treasures above the surface, let alone dig beneath the surface to find the treasures waiting there.

There are enough of these treasures available to the naked eye for us to be able to come to the conclusion that a power greater than ourselves made everything. Take a walk through the countryside and observe the plants and animals. Observe the complexity of a common flower. Could a human make it? Of course not! Jesus said,

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these” (Matt. 6:28–29).

God's creation will stand close examination. Take out a magnifying glass and look more closely. More wonders appear for us to behold. No matter how close we look at it, or how powerful the magnification, God's handiwork will, unlike man's, continue to disclose further wonders and it never ceases to amaze.

Evolutionists claim that flower-bearing plants developed from simple plants over millions of years of small changes. The same claim is made in the development of animals from simple to complex. When they are challenged to produce evidence from the environment or fossil record it is not forthcoming. Charles Darwin himself was perplexed that the fossil record did not support his theory:

“Why is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediate links? Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely-graduated organic chain; and this is the most obvious and serious objection which can be urged against the theory.”¹

Further discoveries have confirmed his concern. There are no intermediate fossils, no matter how hard evolutionists try to pull the wool over our eyes. We are told that the small



“Consider the lilies of the field”

(iStock images)

changes from simple forms of life to complex forms are the result of mutations and natural selection. The truth is that the processes of mutation and natural selection will never give rise to new information in the genetic code of plants or animals. Mutations can only change existing information and are invariably harmful to a species, not helpful. Natural selection always results in loss of genetic information. Evolutionary scientists know this, yet persist with their theory of evolution. They “believe a lie” (Rom. 1:25), because the only alternative is creation. For them creation is not an option, because it would involve acknowledging a Creator and the obligations that go with knowing His will. Furthermore, scientists know that belief in creation also involves belief in the Bible, for creation of matter and life by an omnipotent God from His own power is found only in the Hebrew scriptures.

Microscopic life

Take a sample of stagnant water and look at it through a microscope. A whole new world opens up as many different types of single-celled organisms become visible. Here is what one scientist had to say about one of them:

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“Over the years, thousands of papers have been published on the bacterial flagellum. Not one scientist has ever published a model to account for the gradual evolution of this extraordinary molecular machine...In effect, the theory of Darwinian molecular evolution has not published and so it should perish.”²



Bacterial flagellum

Another fact overlooked by evolutionary thinkers is that, whereas single-celled creatures are numerous in the world around us, there are none with two, four or even 16 cells. Thus there is no evolutionary sequence from single-celled to multi-celled creatures.³

Once all the little pieces of evidence from nature are put together many people exclaim, “God must be!” Anyone who does not exclaim this is blinded by evolutionary oversimplification of complex processes. The apostle Paul put it this way,

“For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Rom. 1:20).

Once that impression has been made on the human mind, a firm foundation has been laid upon which to build, for “he that cometh to God must believe

that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him” (Heb. 11:6). It is the purpose of this chapter to show by virtue of design that God “is”, and that design in creation is important in proving the Bible true.

We’ll come back to visible treasures soon. But in order to find hidden treasure we must go to a gem field and dig, sift, wash and examine until that precious stone is found. Take a close look at the gem. Could a human make it? Of course not! It takes power to make matter – enormous amounts of it. There is a huge gap between a vacuum and matter. If there is one thing man has learnt from this atomic age it is this – there is an enormous amount of pent-up energy in matter. Who put it there? Obviously, someone equal to, no, greater than the energy in the matter found throughout the universe!



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Faceted garnets

Examining the gemstone in the light of the sun, it’s easy for humans, as the most intelligent of God’s creation, to appreciate the difference between a gem and an ordinary stone. An ape or some other animal would have no such appreciation. Put those gemstones in water and tumble them for a while, then notice the difference after the rough edges have been worn off.

Facet them so they reflect the light of the sun and they’re better still. The volume and variety of hidden gems across the world is truly amazing.

Godless people would have us believe that these gems happened by chance events, but their theories do not explain the power necessary to produce matter.

Bible believers can attest that the Bible is constructed in the same way, and there are as many treasures beneath the surface as there are plainly visible on the surface. Regarding these hidden treasures, the wise man Solomon put it this way:

“It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honour of kings is to search out a matter” (Prov. 25:2).

The universe

Take a telescope and examine the heavens. Design of the highest magnitude is there for all to see. Many a person, even without telescope in hand, has been compelled to recite along with King David,

“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him?” (Psa. 8:3).

Only enormous power can account for the stars. God’s name in Hebrew is *El* and it means power.

(iStock photos)



The heavens declare the glory of God

Sir Isaac Newton developed a very simple scientific proof for the creation of the universe. He reasoned:

“Hot bodies always warm cold bodies until they reach the same temperature. For example, if hot and cold water are mixed together, warm water is the result but it is impossible to separate them into their hot and cold parts again. The universe contains both hot and cold bodies that have not had time to reach the warm state. It follows therefore that such a state could not have

existed forever. The universe must have been created. Also, it’s quite impossible that a primordial gas could have produced both hot and cold bodies for the same reason that warm water cannot be separated into the original hot and cold parts. Therefore the universe cannot be explained in scientific terms and must have been created.”⁴

Believers such as Newton realize that God works His wonders by miracles because He is all-powerful. Materialistic (i.e. non-Bible believing) scientists say, “I have never observed any miracles; therefore I do not believe such things.” The American philosopher George Santayana (1863–1952) represents this unbelief in his words: “Miracles are propitious accidents, the natural causes of which are too complicated to be readily understood.”

It should be noted, however, that “accidents” have invariably produced changes for the worse, not favourable changes as Santayana and other materialists would have us believe. To them, miracles are a stumbling block but they want the public to believe more than miracles; they want them to believe the impossible.

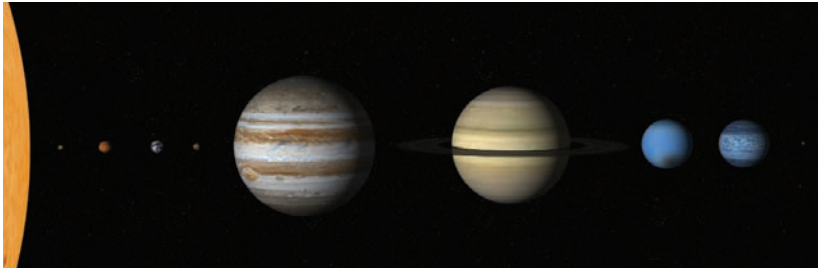
Sir Isaac Newton’s brilliant reasoning about the universe was the forerunner to the law of entropy, a scientific and engineering term meaning that orderly arrangements tend to become disorderly.

To give a very simple example—a well-tended garden is an orderly arrangement. Leave it alone for a while and it becomes disorderly. The law of entropy applying here and generally is that disorder increases naturally. If disorder increases naturally, then order only increases with the application of effort or energy.



A well-tended garden is an orderly arrangement.

Logically, order in the universe can only increase supernaturally! The universe is orderly. Our solar system is orderly. Earth systems are orderly. The only explanation for such order is creation, as outlined in Genesis in God’s holy word the Bible.



The solar system

Also, our sun and the other stars of the universe are losing energy and mass at millions of tonnes per second. The fact is they can’t have been doing this forever. Someone must have created them and given them their original mass, from which they have been decreasing ever since. Who is this “someone”? The Bible has the answer: God “made the stars also” (Gen. 1:16).

The solar system: Planet earth

Coming back down to earth, design is to be found in the location of planet earth in the solar system. Earth is at the right distance from the sun and rotates on its axis, so it is not too hot and not too cold. In other words, average temperature is just right for life to survive. All the other planets are either too hot, too cold or have no atmosphere.

The Bible says, “He hangeth the earth upon nothing” (Job 26:7), so, long before man discovered the law of gravity, the Bible was correct.

Materialistic thinkers also need to explain the existence of radioactive substances, which cannot have been decomposing forever. Who gave them their original mass?

Read man’s literature on the subject and take note of his breathtaking arrogance in statements such as this, (speaking of planet earth):

“It alone supports life, and more than anything else, this seems to be down to chance. When the cosmic dice were thrown, our planet came out with a double six.”⁵

The chances were much less than that, as we shall soon see. Most scientists also cheerfully assure us that with an infinite amount of time, disorderly arrangements can become orderly by natural means, that is, the impossible can happen! They would have us believe that given enough time, somewhere a kettle of water will freeze on a hot plate, or somewhere, sometime, a prawn will learn to whistle.



(Stock photos)

Earth and moon from space

Let us now consider some of the many cycles in nature that come under the general heading of earth cycles.

Oxygen cycle

Consider the two kingdoms of life, plants and animals. There is amazing design there as well. Animals need oxygen to breathe and plants provide it. Plants need carbon dioxide to breathe and animals provide it. Most of earth’s oxygen comes from huge quantities of free-floating sea algae and other sea plants. Land plants supply the rest.⁵ (See chemical equation in Carbon section below.) Is that chance or design? It is an amazingly balanced earth cycle only a Creator-God could oversee.

It has been self-sustaining for 6000 years. Only recently has man begun to upset the balance, putting too much carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Carbon cycle

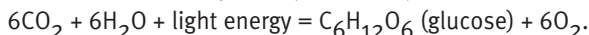
A basic building block of all animals and plants is carbon. How would humans arrange for them to get it? Would they put it in the soil? Would they put it in the water? Those seem like logical places to us humans, however, a far higher intelligence than ours took care of it long ago—6000 years ago at creation. The only possible place for the carbon to be placed was in the air in the form of carbon dioxide. Plants breathe it in through their leaves and change it into carbon compounds by the complex process of photosynthesis—so complex, man cannot imitate it.



Atmospheric pollution

(iStock photos)

A chemist would show photosynthesis by this chemical equation:



Most of us never use chemical equations, but simply expressed, the equation means: 6 molecules of carbon dioxide + 6 molecules of water, produce one molecule of sugar + 6 molecules of oxygen.

This process can only take place because of chlorophyll in plants. To say that this brilliant chemistry happened by accident is nonsense.

Animals obtain carbon compounds from the plants by eating them. Carbon is the ideal building block for animal and plant life because of its ability to bond with other elements, but all the elements have their place in the grand design of the great Creator.

Ninety years ago it was thought that only 10 of the 90 naturally occurring elements were necessary for life but now it is known that at least 20 are needed, including oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, fluorine, sodium, potassium, iron, magnesium, zinc, selenium, vanadium, molybdenum, copper, germanium, lithium, strontium, iodine, phosphorus and cobalt.

Using the laws of chance and probability the mathematical chances of selecting the correct element each time from the ninety elements is not as simple as throwing a double six. It actually works out to one in billions. Is this chance or design?

The Bible claims that God made man from “the dust of the ground” (Gen. 2:7), so not only is there design in the selection of the required elements, but the Bible is scientifically correct again. These 20 necessary elements are called trace elements and they are found in the food we eat. Consider just iodine for

example, and we learn that it is a vital trace element which enables cells to regulate their rate of functioning. Iodine comes to us via the food chains and is picked up by the thyroid gland, but it is extremely scarce in the environment. It occurs at the rate of just one gram per 50 tonnes of seawater.

Non-believers need to answer this: “Who programmed the thyroid to pick up essential iodine?” It had to be present in the very first humans or their body cells would not have been able to regulate their rate of functioning and they soon would have died. In fact their complete digestive systems had to be functioning from day one or our first parents would soon have perished.⁴

The only plausible explanation of human life is that found in Genesis: “Male and female created he them,” (Gen. 1:27), a factual, scientific statement endorsed by Moses and Jesus.

Nitrogen cycle

The air we breathe consists mainly of the gas nitrogen, which dilutes the oxygen we need for life. Nitrogen is important for the production of our body’s protein, but we don’t get it directly from the air. It comes to us via the nitrogen cycle: but, unlike carbon, it comes from the ground and water. Plants take in salts containing nitrogen through their roots, combining it with other chemicals to produce protein foods. Nitrogen is so important to plant growth and development, scientists describe it as the cornerstone of plant growth. Animals take in these plant foods to build protein in their own bodies.

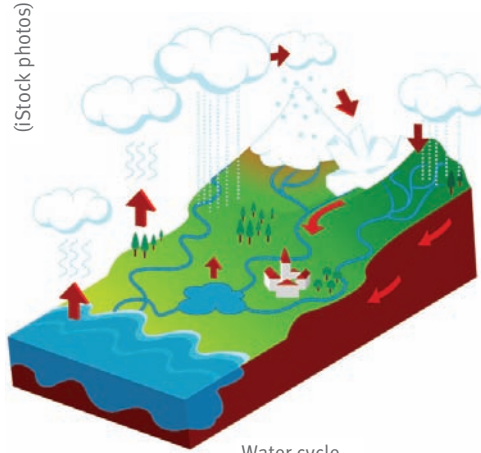
The cycle continues as animal waste, decaying plants, animals and bacteria in the soil provide the soil with nitrogen salts that plants can absorb, thus completing the cycle.

A few plants such as beans and peas are able to take nitrogen directly from the air because bacteria in swellings in their roots are able to break down the nitrogen atom to make protein directly, but this is only a small part of the nitrogen cycle.

Knowing that protein is such an essential part of life, especially in DNA, it needed to be in the overall design process from the beginning. Furthermore, the DNA helix in each cell requires twenty different proteins for its structure. These specific proteins can only be produced under the direction of the information in the DNA; therefore the whole complex system must have been formed complete from the beginning of life.³

Water cycle

The Bible is not a science textbook, but nowhere does it state anything that opposes true science. The wise man Solomon stated, “All the rivers flow into the sea, yet the sea is not full” (Eccl. 1:7). The prophet Jeremiah wrote, “He hath established the world by His wisdom...and He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth” (Jer. 51:15–16). Amos wrote, “Seek him...that calleth for the waters of the sea and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The Lord is His name” (Amos 5:8).



Their testimony is scientifically correct because the water cycle was put in place by God at creation. The cycle begins when energy from the sun causes water to evaporate. During evaporation, water becomes water vapour, which ascends into the atmosphere, forming clouds. As the water vapour rises it cools, condenses around tiny specks of salt, dust or smoke in the air, and forms droplets of water. When the droplets become heavy enough they fall to the earth. That is called precipitation—rain, snow or hail. High in the mountains where precipitation is greatest it produces small streams that join to form mighty rivers. These rivers ultimately reach the sea where water evaporates and the cycle continues.

Considering that all life depends on fresh water, this cycle is further evidence of design. When we also learn that just three per cent of the earth’s water is fresh and most of that is locked up in ice and snow, mainly at the poles, the essential nature of the water cycle is further emphasized. Also, an estimated 30 per cent of fresh water is underground, so a mere 0.3 per cent is available for our use in rivers and lakes.⁵

We have considered four earth cycles, but others are necessary to provide the other chemicals needful for life.

Creation and life systems

Anyone who has ever made anything that works knows that it is not a simple matter. It requires materials from which to make the object, energy to put them together and intelligence in the planning, making and assembly stages. The materials are not things we can create ourselves, so we have to use things from our environment. That is because the Law of Conservation of Matter states: “Matter cannot be created or destroyed.”

Energy is not something we naturally possess either. It too has to come from the environment in the form of the food we eat, which is converted to the muscles and organs of our bodies, allowing us to use the energy. This time the Law of Conservation of Energy applies: “Energy cannot be created or destroyed.”

Even something as simple as a model boat requires intelligence to build. It requires intelligence in the planning stage by way of drawings, etc. It requires intelligence in the construction stage by way of measuring, cutting, fitting and finishing. Once the parts have been drawn up and prepared, will they assemble themselves? No: they need both energy and intelligence for them to be assembled properly. Nothing ever yet assembled itself together. The reason for this was first expressed by Sir Isaac Newton in his first Law of Motion, which states in part:

“An object that is not moving will not move until a force acts on it.”

There are no exceptions to this law apart from those recorded in God’s word, the Bible. These are called miracles and in these cases the power of God is the force acting upon the object. Materialistic scientists don’t believe in miracles because that would involve belief in a Creator, and that is something they are not prepared to do.

If such is the case with something as simple as a model boat, how much more so with something as complex as any one of the many life forms around us, especially the human species.

Most scientists would have us believe that not only simple creatures but complex ones as well came into being by chance, that is, the matter and energy just happened and the intelligence to put their various parts together just happened by chance as well.

Matter and energy require great power. No other book but the Bible explains clearly where these fundamental entities came from, for example:

Jeremiah 51:15: “He hath made the earth by His power; He hath established the world by His wisdom and hath stretched out the heavens by His understanding.”

Romans 1:20: “Ever since the creation of the world His eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things He has made. So they are without excuse.” (New RSV).

No ancient stories of creation come anywhere near the simplicity, accuracy and common sense of that outlined in the Bible. That God is the source of all

matter and energy is abundantly clear from His own revelation, the Bible. God has given us all the information necessary to come to the right conclusions about the wonders around us, but if we choose to reject it, God correctly labels us as “fools” (Psa. 14:1).

Take the time to research the human digestive system and any reasonable person will appreciate magnificent design at each and every step. Quite often, evolutionary writers of articles on these systems slip in the word “design” accidentally, e.g. “The problem has been solved with a beautifully simple piece of design.”⁵

Seldom will such complex processes be described in evolutionary terms and, even if they are, scant detail of their development is given.

Then, when we realize that the digestive system is but one of many systems—skeletal, muscular, respiratory, circulatory, reproductive, sensory, and nervous systems, indeed all systems that make up a complete human body, the mind is filled with wonder at the creative genius that designed and made it. David expressed it so very well: “I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psa. 139:14).

Information science

Before closing this chapter, consideration should be given to the most recent proof of design in creation—information science.

An author on the subject is Professor Werner Gitt, a lecturer in science at Hanover University, Germany. Professor Gitt states:

“The philosophy that life and its origin are purely natural phenomena now dominates biological science...But science should be subservient to truth not folly.”⁶

Professor Gitt’s proof of creation should do as much to disprove the theory of evolution as Louis Pasteur’s discoveries disproved the fallacy of spontaneous generation. Until Pasteur, it was generally believed that life could arise spontaneously from non-life. The professor observes that many scientists regard information as the third fundamental entity alongside matter and energy. He then sets forth 30 laws of nature that hold for information, a few of which are:

- Information is a non-material (mental) entity. It is not a property of (inanimate) matter.
- Information only arises through an intentional act.
- A code is essential for establishing information (e.g. Morse code, brail, hieroglyphics, human languages, shorthand, computer languages, etc.).

- Traced backwards along a train of transmission, every piece of information leads to a mental source, i.e. the mind of the sender.
- There is no known natural law through which matter can give rise to information.

Professor Gitt makes it known that he has presented his natural laws to university audiences in Germany and abroad, but no researcher has ever mentioned a single rebuttal to his 30 laws of nature. They must therefore be regarded as natural laws, along with Newton's laws of motion and gravity for example, as they are universally valid.

He then proceeds to show that the ultimate code-storing device is the DNA of every living thing, whether plant or animal. DNA is the most exquisite example of information storage because of its extreme miniaturization and its ability to perform the very basis of life—replication of itself. Each DNA fibre is just two millionths of a millimetre thick and can only be seen by the most powerful electron microscopes. When the DNA replicates—every time a cell divides in two—the DNA strand unwinds and a complementary strand is constructed on each separate one until there are two new double strands identical to the original. The process of cell division lasts 20–80 minutes, during which the entire molecular library is copied correctly. To give some idea of the incredible amount of information in such a small fibre, Prof. Gitt uses the term “packing density” of the information. He first gives us an example of packing density which is physically possible i.e. placing the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation on a slide of microfilm 33 mm by 32 mm. He then makes this staggering comparison:

If it were possible to place the information contained in a DNA molecule on the same size slide of microfilm, there would be the equivalent of 2.77 million rows of Bibles and 2.77 million columns of entire Bibles on the slide, i.e. 7.7 million times as much information.

But it is not physically possible for humans to perform such miniaturization. The other big difference between the two methods of storage is that DNA can transfer its information unchanged to other cells by the life-process of division, or replication. Our minds become overloaded contemplating this marvel of life alone; but our Creator not only thought it out—He did it.

Dr. Gitt shows that all the marvels of nature, from the webs of spiders to the wing scales of butterflies, come from controlling programs with all the required information built in. The development of the human embryo is a most remarkable example of information guiding its growth, according to a set plan. From the fertilized egg, information in the DNA provides the

program for the development of the new person from the womb to adulthood. The only information the person lacks is how to behave morally; but God has not left us without any moral guidance at all. He has revealed it through His word the Bible. Without this guidance from God's laws, humans can behave worse than beasts of the field. Some of this moral teaching from God forms chapter seven of this book.



St Andrew's Cross spider

That information is a third entity alongside matter and energy is well proven by Dr. Gitt. Only God has the power to combine all three to produce life and the conditions to sustain it. God has the power to produce matter; He has the power to bring the required elements of matter together, for matter cannot move by itself; He has the power to codify and miniaturize the immense amount of information required for all forms of life. It is miraculous power and was used at creation, as outlined in Genesis. On completion, God viewed His creation and declared it to be "very good" (Gen. 1:31).

Should we now expect scientists everywhere to reject evolution because of these new findings? No. Some will resort to their tired old response, "We can't see God therefore we don't believe in Him." Do they refuse to believe in electricity because it can't be seen, only its effects?

This chapter has shown the effects of God's creative power are everywhere to be seen, but only honest people will admit it. Added to the evidence we have already produced—the information in every living cell—God has given us His word, so we are not left without knowledge of God and His plan and purpose at all. We cannot see God (John 1:18), but to deny His existence and maintain the folly of evolution is to have no hope, for God also outlines to us



Human development: unsurpassed design

in the Bible information on a way of extending the life He has given us into immortality. This life-changing information is examined briefly after chapter 7, in the conclusion.

We'll close this chapter on design by comparing Charles Darwin's doubts about the evolution of the eye with what the Bible has to say about its creation.

From Darwin's book, *On the Origin of Species*:

"To suppose that the eye, with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest possible degree."



(Dreamstime photos)

The human eye is a marvel of design

In contrast, the Bible makes this simple, clear statement:

"The hearing ear and the seeing eye—the Lord hath made even both of them" (Prov. 20:12).

Design in creation is a very good reason to believe the Bible.

2. The Jews

The survival of the Jews is one of the greatest proofs of the Bible. God said through the prophet Jeremiah:

“Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in measure and will not leave thee altogether unpunished” (Jer. 30:11).

The purpose of this chapter is to show that the Jewish people, some of the oldest known to mankind, have never been destroyed, nor will they be. God has said so. The Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian and Hittite cultures have all gone, yet the Jews remain as a witness to the truth of the Bible.



(dreamstime photos)

Jews worshipping

Abraham: Father of the Jews

Why does God have this special relationship with the Jewish people? We need to refer to the very first book of the Bible to find out, and read about a man named Abraham. So important is Abraham that he was given the distinguished title “Friend of God” and was promised by God that all nations of the earth would ultimately be blessed in him.

In Genesis chapters 11–12, we read how God called Abraham from the city of Ur to go to a land He would show him. That was the land of Canaan, which God promised Abraham and his seed as an everlasting possession. The same promises were renewed to Abraham’s son Isaac and his son Jacob. The special relationship came about for several reasons. First of all, God saw in Abraham’s character special qualities that could be developed. Secondly, both Abraham’s wife Sarah and Isaac’s wife Rebekah were originally unable to have children. God healed their barrenness, so in a special sense God was able to say, “Israel is my son even my firstborn” (Exod. 4:22), for without God’s intervention there would have been no Israel, or Jewish people.



Jewish Menorah

(dreamtime
photos)

Another important reason for this special relationship is in God's own statement: "I have called thee by thy name," speaking to Israel (Isa. 43:1). This came about in an interesting way. The nation of Israel was named after the man Israel, son of Isaac and Rebekah. His parents originally named him Jacob; however, in the incident of his wrestling with an angel (Gen. 32:24–30), his name was changed by God (*EI*) to IsraEL—Prince with God. His descendants have become known as the children of Israel ever since. Many people who speak in derisory tones about the nation of Israel are unaware of these facts or, if they are aware, believe that God has cast off His people. Nothing could be further from the truth.

God has not cast off Israel. Here is what God said about His people through the prophet Jeremiah: "Thus saith the Lord, if my covenant be not with day and night and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, then will I cast away the seed of Jacob and David my servant" (Jer. 33:25–6). Therefore, God has not cast off His people, and the survival of the Jews is as certain as the sun's rising each day. Many people have tried to wipe the Jews off the face of the earth. Haman, prince of the Persians, tried and failed. Hitler tried and failed. It's not because the Jews are more numerous, more powerful, or more righteous than other nations, but because God has promised their survival.



Hitler: Jew hater

(iStock photos)

Knowledge brings responsibility

God's warning to his people was that they would be punished for disobedience. The Jews were in the unique position of being the only nation to have God's laws. God promised them blessings for obedience to those laws but, conversely, curses for disobedience. We can read about these warnings in Deuteronomy 28. The first 14 verses are blessings for obedience:

"If thou hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, blessed shalt thou be in the city and blessed shalt thou be in the field; blessed shall be the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy ground and the fruit of thy cattle" (Deut. 28:1–3).

The rest of the chapter is curses for disobedience: "If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, cursed shalt thou be in the city and cursed shalt thou be in the field, cursed shall be thy basket and thy store, cursed shall be the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine and the flocks of thy sheep" (Deut 28:15–18).

The children of Israel said, “All that the Lord hast said will we do and be obedient,” but in reality they forgot and ignored his laws, indulging in the practices of the heathen idol-worshipping nations around them. Like most people in a position of privilege, they didn’t appreciate how well off they were. Their God was the one true God, whose commandments, moral precepts, rules of hygiene and behaviour, justice before God and man, and even care for the environment were unique. The Israelites’ laws on compensation for injury set the standard for the rest of the world, right down to the present day.

Having entered the land of promise under the leadership of Joshua, they made a good start, conquering most of the land and casting out the idol-worshipping Canaanites as God commanded them. However, God also required His people to remain separate from the surrounding nations, not to intermarry with them and to have no visible king as the other nations did.

They were required to observe a weekly day of rest on the seventh day of the week. This was their Sabbath and it reminded them that, “in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it” (Exod 20:11). This compulsory day of rest every week, required by God, was essential for healthy functioning of body and mind, and is another of the many benefits that have come down to us from the Jews. A weekly day of rest is now universal, although in some cultures it is less than 100 years old.⁸

Judges and kings

Under the rule of the judges and kings, the Jews ultimately rebelled against the requirements of God to such an extent that God was forced to say through Isaiah (43:22,24):

“But thou hast not called upon me O Jacob; but thou has been weary of me O Israel... Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.”

Although God had said to them, “Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God” (Isa. 43:12), it is clear from their behaviour that they were unwilling witnesses, and that is the case to this day. Very early in the reign of the kings the nation had become divided into two parts: Israel (10 tribes) in the north, and Judah (two tribes) in the south. Both nations entered into continuous cycles of idolatry and repentance until their wickedness became too great. God-fearing Israelites from the northern kingdom moved south to Judah over several years. Eventually in 709 BC, the northern kingdom of Israel was invaded by the Assyrians and taken captive. Even this did not serve as a warning to the southern kingdom of Judah, which became worse in its

wickedness than its former northern neighbour. Finally the kingdom of Judah was taken captive by the Babylonians. God's people were being corrected "in measure" and were "not altogether unpunished".

Diaspora

According to Jewish tradition the first temple, i.e. Solomon's, was captured on the ninth day of the Jewish month Av (Ab), in 586 BC. A series of amazing events happened on that same date in later years, as God brought judgment to bear on His own people. The Jews call 9 Av, Tisha B'Av, "the saddest day in Jewish history".

God allowed His people to return to their land after 70 years captivity in the land of Babylon, as foretold by the prophet Jeremiah (25:11–12). The period of captivity was for them to repent of their evil ways. Very often God will allow evil to come upon His children, that they may see the error of their ways, repent and change for their own good. The captivity in Babylon became known as the Diaspora or scattering of the Jews. They returned to their land under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah, when Cyrus was king of Persia, and those who returned built a second temple in Judea on the same site as Solomon's temple.

For a time the Jews were very careful to observe God's laws, yet history was to repeat itself in the greatest Diaspora of all time. The crucifixion of Christ brought the wrath of God on His own people, the Jews, who had rejected and slain their Messiah. Jesus warned, "When ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies... flee to the mountains" (Luke 21:20–21). Those who took notice of Jesus had an opportunity to escape from Jerusalem, as the army of the Roman General Cestius was harassed out of the country by Jewish rebels. The relief was only temporary, however, for Emperor Nero sent his distinguished general Vespasian and his son Titus, with 60 000 troops plus siege engines to finish the work.

Those Jews who observed the signs of the times, as Jesus suggested, and were looking for the end of the Mosaic era took action, fled to Pella and lived. Many of those who were deaf to Jesus' advice and wanted independence from the Roman yoke died or were taken captive in the ensuing battles.

Model of the second Temple (iStock photos)



Today we are nearing the end of the gentile era and, if we are adopted Jews, we will see in the signs of the times many indications that the end of the gentile times is near. Most people of this present world, filled with humanistic ideas, who refuse to recognize Christ when he comes, will want to keep their independence and will die in the battles to come. Now is the time to learn from the mistakes of the past, take action and live. Details on how to go about this are given after chapter seven, in the conclusion.

Vespasian entered northern Judea in 67 AD to find the country in a general state of lawlessness. First he subdued Galilee and the fortified town of Jotapata, which was under the control of Joseph ben Mattathius—better known as the historian Josephus. The fighting was fierce, the Jews were determined, and the Romans had advanced fighting equipment. However

God had pre-ordained that this would be the end of the Mosaic era. Josephus joined with Vespasian in a vain attempt to stop the Jews fighting. Lawless bands of Jews resorted to the fortified Jerusalem ahead of Vespasian. Terror prevailed in the city even before the Roman army arrived. The second temple was captured and demolished by the Romans on the anniversary of its destruction by the Babylonians. It was the ninth day of the Hebrew month Av, AD 70, when Vespasian's son Titus finally took Jerusalem. Over one million Jews died in Jerusalem alone. Tens of thousands were taken captive to Rome, of whom many were later destroyed in public games. Titus set up the Arch of Titus in Rome to commemorate his victory over the Jews. The Arch shows the Jews in subjection and the Temple treasures being looted by the Romans. It remains to this day as a symbol of the ascendancy of the Roman Empire and by extension the Roman Catholic Church against the Jews, for the Arch was later restored by one of the Popes.



Top: Detail on the arch showing Romans looting the Temple's seven branched lampstand in AD 70 (A. Brooker)
 Middle: The Arch of Titus, Rome (A. Clark)
 Bottom: Emperor Vespasian (iStock photos)

Prophecy fulfilled: 9 Av

In noting the amazing reoccurrence of the date 9 Av, many people would be inclined to suggest it was merely coincidence. Yet the prophecy in Deuteronomy 28 had already warned the Jews about the rise of the Roman Empire. This is what God had told them through Moses:

“Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee... And he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck until he have destroyed thee. The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand.” (Deut. 28:48–49).

Two symbols of the Roman nation were iron (Dan. 2) and the eagle. In fact the golden eagle was the standard of the Roman legions and was “the object of their fondest devotion”⁷. The gospel writer Matthew also records Jesus’ prophecy about the temple: “And Jesus went out and departed from the temple and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, ‘See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down’”. (Matt. 24:1–2).

For God’s temple of worship to be broken up twice on the same day of the month—9 Av—was no coincidence; it was providence at work—events that appear to be happening by chance, but are actually controlled by God to bring about His purpose. Emperor Vespasian had coins issued with the words *Judea capta* on them, which reminded the Jews of their captivity.

When the Roman emperor Hadrian introduced repressive laws against the Jews, including a ban on circumcision and instruction in the Law, the Jews who were left in Judea rebelled again. This became known as the Bar Kochba uprising, centred in the fortress of Bet Their, southwest of Jerusalem. The Roman legions crushed the rebellion on the 9 Av 135 AD, the anniversary of the destruction of the first and second temples. This was after a two year siege. Surely no one would suggest that all three conquests took place on the same day of the same month, against the same people by chance, over 721 years! Yet there it is as a fact of history, attested by the Jews themselves, who on each occasion were fighting to prevent the conquest.⁸ When we consider the ninth day of Av, knowing that nine is God’s number for finality or judgment (Jer 39:1–2, Hag. 1:11, Matt. 27:46), it is clear that God meted out judgment on His people because of their disobedience, and for rejecting His son Jesus Christ. This judgment was punishment, not complete destruction, for the Jews have survived as witnesses to the very existence of God and the truth of His word the Bible.

Hadrian the emperor was so incensed by the latest Jewish uprising that he banned the name Judea and renamed the country Syria-Palestina, adapting the name Palestine already given by the Greeks. The word *Palestina* was a reference to the Philistines who once inhabited the coast of the Holy Land. He also renamed Jerusalem *Colonia Aelia Capitolina*, after the smallest of the seven hills of Rome, and dedicated it to Jupiter, building a temple to Jupiter on the site of the second temple.

The Holy Land kept the name Palestine, right through until the proclamation of the State of Israel on 14 May 1948. The Arabs who were displaced at that time became known as Palestinians, although until the proclamation of Israel their Jewish neighbours were also known as Palestinians.

Persecution of the Jews: Anti-Semitism

In Europe, for almost 2000 years, if ever a people looked as if they might be annihilated, it was the Jewish people. Emperor Constantine, (so-called “father of Christianity”) condemned Judaism’s sacrilegious gatherings and brought about much oppression. To rub salt into their wounds, he allowed them to visit Jerusalem on one day of the year only—the 9 Av!

None of the Roman emperors would listen to Jewish appeals to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem and every year Jews were reminded of Roman hatred when the tax collector called. From the third century onwards Jews had to pay an extra two drachmas, not levied on any other Roman citizen.⁹ In about 700 AD, Moslem conquerors of Palestine completed the Dome of the Rock on the site of the Jewish temple, further preventing Jewish ambition. God had decreed that the next temple to be built in Jerusalem, details of which are given in Ezekiel chapters 40–48, would be under Christ as king over the whole earth.

Persecution of Jews was particularly bad under Emperor Justinian, a “Christian” emperor, who in the name of Christianity, brought to bear shocking inhumanities on the Jewish race, in the name of the greatest Jew who ever lived, thinking he was doing Christ a service.

With the fall of the Roman Empire in the west, the hatred and persecution of the Jews was continued by the Roman Catholic Popes, so that they exceeded the Christian emperors and Pagan Rome in their oppression. The earliest recorded evidence of this hatred was from Melito, Bishop of Sardis, in the second century AD, who blamed lawless Israel for “the crucifixion of their God”. For Melito’s efforts, the Roman Catholic Church pronounced him a “saint”.⁹

The persecutions and inquisitions were directed mainly against the Jews, but also against Jews by adoption into the hope of Israel, all of whom the Roman Church called heretics (Gal.3:27–29). These persecutions lasted 1260 years in fulfilment of the prophecy of Revelation 11:2, that the gentiles would “tread underfoot” the “holy city” (spiritual Jerusalem or believers) for a period of “forty and two months” (equivalent to 1260 days). They began in earnest with the decree by Emperor Phocas (reigning in Constantinople), that the “Pope (in Rome), is head of all the churches.” The decree was issued in 606–07 AD. Church and state then worked together against the Jews and true Christians until 1866–67, when the Pope lost his temporal power over the papal states and was, from 1870 onwards, confined to the Vatican only. The prophetic 1260 day/years of Revelation 11:1–3 had been fulfilled.

Rome fell in the west to barbarian tribes around 400 AD. Eastern Rome fell to the Moslems in 1453 AD, and the Pope eventually lost his temporal power, but the Jews survived as God had predicted. They were “not...altogether unpunished” (Jer. 30:11); but they survived the Roman Empire and they will survive the continued hatred meted out by the Roman Catholic Church.



(iStock photos)

Modern Istanbul
(Constantinople)

The suffering endured by Jews, natural and spiritual, during those 1260 years makes for very sad reading and reflection, showing the true Jezebel nature of the Roman Catholic Church (Rev. 2:20).

The Crusades, at the instigation of Pope Urban II, beginning in 1096 AD, were ostensibly to remove Muslims from the Holy Land, but also included a long series of massacres of the Jewish people, lasting until 1272.

The middle ages present us with a scene of continuous murder of Jews. In the 15th century, repressive measures against the Jews were led by fanatical Dominican friars, surrounded by flagellants, who preached against all ‘heretics’. In 1412 AD, Jews of Castile, Spain, were forced into Juderias (Jewish quarters), forbidden to engage in medicine or any craft and made to wear badges. At both Castile and Aragon, Jews were forcibly baptized by the church. Many Jews who allowed themselves to be baptized did so without sincerity and still practised Judaism secretly.

When Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile ascended the Spanish throne they gave their consent to the church to root out any remaining ‘non-Christian’ influences. The Spanish Inquisition was set up by Pope Sixtus soon afterwards in 1478. It was to last until 1820 AD. It was mainly directed against the Jews who had converted to Christianity for convenience. Such Jews were given the name *marranos*—swine. In 1492, the year Columbus crossed the Atlantic for the new world, Ferdinand and Isabella issued an edict instructing all Jews to embrace Christianity or leave Spain. By 31 July that year there was not one professing Jew left. Many fled to Portugal, only to have King Manoel issue a similar order.

By 1498 there was not a single Jew left in Portugal. Church and state in both countries had combined to conspire against God’s people. God’s punishment, as foreshadowed by Moses, was being fulfilled:

“And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life” (Deut. 28:66).

With the discovery of the new world by Columbus, many Jews fled there to escape the persecution of the old. Some Portuguese Jews were deported to Brazil. Many found haven in the Netherlands. With the influx of Jewish learning and financiers, Holland became the greatest naval power in Europe at that time.

The Roman Inquisition followed hard on the heels of the Spanish Inquisition. Dreadful atrocities were committed against Jews and ‘heretics’ in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, with the blessing of the Pope in Rome.

Meanwhile in England, once a Catholic country which had persecuted the Jews, attitudes towards them changed under Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658).

Prior to Cromwell, that is, from 1219, the Jews of England had been forced to wear badges, after a decree by the Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury. All Jews were officially banned from England by King Edward I from 1290 until Cromwell’s intervention. Cromwell’s Puritan (protestant) army went to battle against the Roundheads of King Charles I, but when Charles I invited an Irish Catholic army to help him he was executed for high treason. Cromwell assumed the role of ‘Lord Protector’ and stood for a national church “without (Catholic) bishops”. He allowed the Jews back into England again.

(iStock photos)



Statue of Oliver Cromwell

England, English speaking countries and some other Protestant believers have regularly supported the Jews and Israel ever since. Easy access to the Bible in their own language has helped them understand that the Jews are God's people. Generally, predominantly Catholic countries such as Spain, Portugal and France have persecuted the Jews through the ages without cause, perhaps because the Catholic laity were discouraged from reading God's word for themselves.

(iStock photos)



Czar Nicholas

Popes in their Easter service at St Peters, up until Pope John XXIII (1958–63), condemned all Jews and infidels. Until the 18th century, all Western Europe, except for northern Italy and Germany, was closed to the Jews. In Eastern Europe and Russia, however, the hatred and brutality against the Jews persisted. As late as the early 1900s the Czars of Russia financed massacres of the Jews⁸; and the hatred continues to this day by a majority of the members of the United Nations (UN).

Anti-Semitism to Anti-Zionism

Of almost 200 members of the UN, only Israel has ever been given reduced privileges. Israel, for example, is not allowed to become a member of the UN Security Council. The Security Council has devoted one third of its energy criticizing one nation: Israel. The UN Commission on Human Rights, which accepts delegations from murderous tyrannies across the globe, has issued one quarter of its official condemnations against one democracy: Israel.

Anti-Zionism is further endorsed by the UN by celebrating 29 November each year as Solidarity with Palestine Day. This was the day in 1947 when the UN voted legitimately for the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab sectors. The UN now affirms annually: “We got it wrong in 1947.”

Zionism

The result of centuries of persecution of the Jews was Zionism, initiated by Theodore Herzl, a French-Jewish reporter, who witnessed the Dreyfus affair*. Herzl called a conference of Jews at Basle in Switzerland in 1897. The Jews finally returned to the land of Israel as foretold by the prophets (Ezek. 34:11–13; Isa. 54:7–8) fifty years after Herzl recorded in his diary, “At Basle I founded the Jewish state”.

Until 1933, when Hitler came to power, German Jewry seemed secure. However it wasn't long before Hitler and his Nazi Party introduced the

*Dreyfus was a Jewish captain in the French army who was wrongly accused of selling secrets to the Germans.



Badge worn by
German Jews

(wildolive.co.uk photo)

Nuremberg Laws. All Jews then lost their citizenship, were forbidden to intermarry with non-Jews, could not attend German schools, could not practise their professions and were forced to wear yellow badges.

On 9 November 1938, Kristallnacht, or the ‘night of broken glass’, the persecution of German Jews began in earnest. Germans were urged by their Nazi leadership to rise up against Jewish people and their property. Two hundred synagogues and 7000 Jewish businesses were attacked on that violent night. One hundred Jews were murdered and 35 000 were taken into custody to the concentration camps of Dachau, Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald. Many Jews tried to escape Germany, but it was too late; history had repeated itself. Those who saw the signs had already made their escape, many to Palestine, the USA and other free countries, just as the Jews who observed Jesus’ words escaped to Pella and saved themselves from the wrath of the Roman troops.

(dreamstime photos)

During World War II, the Allies and the papacy knew of the concentration and death camps. The silence from Pope Pius XII was deafening. He—as Cardinal Pacelli—had already made a concordat of cooperation and understanding with Hitler on 10 September 1933. The Roman Catholic Church was again showing its true colours. Its implacable hatred of the Jews continued throughout the war. It continues to this day. A minority of European nations such as Denmark, the Netherlands, Hungary and Bulgaria helped the Jews at great danger to themselves. Denmark refused to give up its Jews to Germany. King Kristian X said, “If the Jews have to wear a star of identification, I will wear one too”. Many Danish non-Jews followed his example.¹⁰



Royal palace, Denmark

The State of Israel

When church leaders in England found out about the death camps in 1942, many spoke out in support of the Jews, but the Vatican remained silent. Those who helped the Jews at that dreadful time have become known to the Jewish people as “the righteous among the gentiles.”

After the war, when the world in general found out the full story of the holocaust, or systematic annihilation of Jews, in which six million died, there was an enormous outpouring of sympathy for Jews everywhere except in many parts of Europe, where anti-Semitism continued unabated.

Great Britain, which had done so much for the Jews under the Balfour Declaration and League of Nations mandate for Palestine, reneged on its responsibilities towards them for fear of offending the Arabs, who were suppliers of Britain's oil.

At a time when Jews needed a home of their own in Palestine more than ever, after the suffering they had endured, Britain washed its hands of the problem and handed it over to the United Nations in February 1947.



Auschwitz death camp

The UN formulated a plan of partition whereby Jews and Arabs would share Palestine. The Arabs would have nothing to do with it and used their best endeavours to scuttle the UN's plan. The Arabs could never succeed, for they were working against the plan of God outlined by His prophets. On 29 November 1947 the Jews held their breath as the UN plan was decided by the 46 nations, who voted either for or against the partition of Palestine. Many nations abstained from voting. The vote was 33 in favour to 13 against partition. The Jews had their nation. This is what God prophesied about His people through Ezekiel the prophet:

“And I will bring them out from the people and gather them from the countries and will bring them into their own land” (Ezek. 34:13).

On 14 May 1948, when Prime Minister Ben Gurion declared Israel a nation, the Jews finally had a land to call their own once again.

The very next morning, which was a Sabbath, Egyptian Spitfires attacked Tel Aviv airport and the Egyptian army crossed the border, attacking any Israeli settlement in its path. Five Arab



Ben Gurion—Israel's first Prime Minister

(dreamstime photo)
(jewoftheday.com)

armies told the Palestinian Arabs to move aside while they drove the fledgling nation into the Mediterranean Sea. But they did not reckon on the God of the Jews. The tiny nation of Israel, with little more than half a million Jews and surrounded by 100 million Arabs, survived the 1948 War of Independence, which lasted over seven months. The Suez War followed in 1956, the Six-day War in 1967, and the Yom Kippur War in 1973. By now the Arab nations knew they could not defeat Israel by themselves and some even made peace with Israel. Arab terrorism then began in earnest to turn world opinion against Israel. This Arab-sponsored terrorism gave rise to the war Israel waged against Al Fatah in 1982, the war against Hizbollah in 2006 and the war against Hamas in 2008–2009. Hardly a day goes by without either a rocket or terrorist attack on Israel. That Israel has survived against all odds demonstrates clearly the providence of God:

“Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee” (Jer. 30:11).

The establishment of the nation of Israel was the greatest development of the 20th century, a sign to those who knew their Bible that God’s prophecies were sure. Christendom in general has not recognized that the nation of Israel is fulfilled prophecy. Most churches have no idea of “the hope of Israel” (Acts 28:20) or the gospel of God’s kingdom on earth. They actively work against any who see Israel as a prelude to Christ’s reign on earth. They label these people as Christian Zionists, a liability to peace in the Middle East.

Nevertheless, Israel’s greatest battle is yet to come—Armageddon, which we shall presently consider.

In his bunker before he took his own life, Hitler wrote in his will,

“Centuries may pass away, but out of the ruins of our towns and monuments, hatred will grow against those finally responsible for everything, International Jewry and its helpers.”

There was no remorse or repentance and, although Germany made reparations to Israel at the insistence of Israeli Prime Minister Ben Gurion, the old hatred smoulders away to burst forth in the future. Ben Gurion, quoting 1 Kings 21:19 and the account of Naboth’s vineyard, appealed to Germany in the words of the prophet Elijah to Ahab, “Hast thou killed and also taken possession?”

Germany paid \$1000 million in reparations to Israel at a time when it could ill afford it. The actions of the German government of the time amounted to

(iStock photos)



The Berlin wall

an admission of guilt and a temporary Divine blessing for Germany which allowed it to become the economic powerhouse it is today. Instead of the “centuries” envisioned by Hitler, Germany rose in power as an economic giant very quickly and West and East Germany joined together in October 1990 after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The Jews’ ancient enemy, the Roman empire, to be re-established

In Revelation 16:13 we read Christ’s prophecy about Israel’s enemies:

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of demons working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty ...And He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”

The moves of the nations leading to Armageddon will be mankind’s final attempt to annihilate God’s people. We need to understand the symbols ‘dragon’, ‘beast’ and ‘false prophet,’ for the combined efforts of these powers will see the re-establishment of the Roman empire for a very short time.

Moscow

The dragon

The dragon is a symbol of the old Roman Empire, but when Constantine became emperor—the first “Christian” emperor—he moved his throne east to Byzantium, naming it Constantinople after himself. He prescribed by law that it be called “Second Rome,” largely because of the influence of Rome’s culture and architecture.

From Constantinople the Greek form of Christianity was taken north to Russia where Vladimir, Grand Prince of Russia, adopted the Greek Orthodox religion, but stayed independent from it forming instead the Russian Orthodox Church. The theology of the Russian Church proclaimed



(dreamstime photo)

Moscow as the Third Rome with the remarkable assertion, “Two Romes have fallen, a third stands and a fourth there shall not be,”¹⁰ for meanwhile the Roman Empire in the west had fallen and Constantinople was overthrown by the Ottoman Turks in 1453. The Roman “dragon” now lived on in Moscow. To complete the Roman symbolism, in 1472 Russia’s King Ivan III married Sophia Paleologus, niece of Constantine XI, the last emperor of Eastern Rome. Ivan III decided that he was now heir to the Roman throne, naming himself Czar (Caesar) and Autocrat. To his family crest he added a double-headed eagle, successor of the Roman eagle, thus doubly establishing Russia as the Roman dragon of Rev. 16:13.¹⁰

The beast

The beast of Revelation 16:13 is Germany, centre of the old Holy Roman Empire. When Hitler proclaimed his Third Reich, which he claimed would “last 1000 years”, what was he talking about? He was hoping to mimic the old Holy Roman Empire, which lasted 1000 years, from 800 to about 1800 AD. Hitler’s was the Third (Roman) Reich or regime. The first was the Holy Roman Empire; the second was named the “Roman Empire of the German nation”, and was established by Otto Von Bismarck. The Second Reich led the nations into World War I, just as Hitler’s Third Reich led them into World War II. The German monarchs had already shown their Roman attachment, for they were known as Kaisers (Caesars).

The false prophet

The Catholic Church vainly endeavours to label the false prophet of Revelation 16:13 as the prophet Mohammed, but it is clearly the Pope of Rome because he adopted the old Roman emperor’s mantle, *Pontifex Maximus*, or Chief Pontiff. He is a false prophet because he claims to speak for God, but like the other false prophets of the Bible, he does no such thing. As the head of the Roman Catholic Church reigning from Rome, the city of seven hills (Rev. 17:9), the Pope clearly wears the title of false prophet. Pope Pius XII hoped that Hitler would restore the Holy Roman Empire in modern form and, although the Vatican’s hopes were dashed with the defeat of Germany, the same desire lingers on.

The Roman nature of the dragon, beast and false prophet of Rev 16:13 is complete and corresponds with the symbolism of the iron legs and feet of the image in the prophecy of Daniel 2. Just as Rome and Roman Catholicism have been traditional enemies of the Jews (witness the Arch of Titus restored by Pope Pius VI in 1821), so the dragon, beast and false prophet will work together, endeavouring to eliminate God’s people once again.

Armageddon

They will not succeed. Their troops will perish on the mountains of Israel (Ezekiel 39:18–23) and God will preserve a remnant of His people as consistently forecast by His prophets. Gog “the dragon”, of the land of Magog “the beast”, will combine with the other powers mentioned in Ezekiel 38:2–6, urged on by the “false prophet” in Rome looking for another “final solution” of the Jewish “problem.”

Then “God’s fury will come up in His face” (Ezek. 38:18) to bring about the utter destruction of those wicked adversaries of His people through the agency of His son Jesus Christ and his saints. In the process God’s people the Jews will come through the fire of affliction until they finally recognize Jesus as their Messiah and “mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son” (Zech. 12:10). Shortly thereafter the kingdom of God will be set up on earth.

The Lord’s Prayer, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,” will finally have been fulfilled.

The ongoing conflict between *Roma aeterna* (Rome the eternal city) and Jerusalem, the city of the great king, will have come to an end.

Kingdom restored to Israel

God’s word is consistent. Anyone that claims God has cut off His people forever is wrong (Rom. 11:1–2, 15–36).

God will “restore again the kingdom to Israel” (Acts 1:6) and his people will be elevated in the eyes of the nations:

“In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men... shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew saying, ‘We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you’” (Zech. 8:23).

The Jews cannot be removed from history, nor will they ever be completely deserted by God. There is the challenge for mankind. It is all revealed in God’s holy word if only people would take the time to read it.

The Jews are another good reason to believe the bible.

3. Prophecy

What does tomorrow hold in store for each of us? Will it be a good day or a bad day? Will we have success or failure? Will we be healthy or sick, alive or dead? The fact is, not one of us knows. We don't even know for certain what is in store for the rest of today. If we could see ahead just a few hours, how many accidents, disasters or bad decisions could be avoided! Jesus made this point very clearly in his parable of the rich man (Luke 12:16–21). The man was a landowner whose crop was extremely good. Realizing his existing barns were too small for such a good crop he resolved to pull them down and build bigger ones. Then he could live off the fruits of his labour for many years; he said he would, “take ease, eat, drink and be merry.” But God said to him, “You fool, this very night you must surrender your life; you have made your money; who will get it now?” Jesus added, “That is how it is with the man who amasses wealth for himself and remains a pauper in the sight of God” (NEB).

Real prophecies only in the Bible

If someone were to tell us of an event one day into the future, we would surely be impressed, but we may still be inclined to put it down to chance. What if someone were to tell us of thousands of events that came to pass as predicted? That could not possibly be put down to chance, especially if those predictions were not broad general statements, but specific statements containing exact details. What if some of the predictions came to pass before our very eyes? Surely we would stop and take notice. Surely then we would make the most of the information with a view to improving our lives now and into the future.

The Bible is the only book that has predicted world events time and time again, not only well before they occurred, but future events as well, which have still to come to pass. The Bible's prediction about the establishment of Israel we recall from the last chapter.



(iStock photo)

God's holy word

Bible prophecies not written after the events

When faced with the evidence, a sceptic invariably says the prophecies were written after the events. What are the facts?

First of all, history bears testimony to the conclusion that the Old Testament books of the Bible existed at least as long ago as 280 BC, as they were being translated into Greek by 70 Jews in Alexandria at that time. That version of the Bible became known as the Septuagint.

Then in the spring of 1947 the first Dead Sea scrolls were discovered by a Bedouin boy in a cave at Qumran on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea. Over the next ten years a total of 900 documents were discovered in 11 caves. These included texts from every book of the Hebrew Bible except Esther and Nehemiah, the only known surviving documents made before 100 AD.

There was a complete copy of the book of Isaiah the prophet. The accuracy of each text, compared with all previous known copies, demonstrated the skill of the scribes whose job it was to copy error-free from existing scrolls. Many of the scrolls are now housed in the Shrine of the Book in Jerusalem.



(iStock photos)

Qumran—the site where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found

Man's prophecies unreliable

There is a common-sense test of any prophecy: If it comes to pass it is genuine; if it doesn't, it is false. God stated this obvious truth through His prophet Jeremiah:

“When the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known that the Lord hath truly sent him” (Jer. 28:9).

We recall from the last chapter the prediction that Hitler made:

- A. That the Third Reich would last 1000 years.

False: It fell after 13 years.

He also predicted:

- B. “The final solution of the Jewish problem” would be completed before the end of the war.¹¹

False: The Jews were not completely destroyed.

- C. That in 1942 the Red Army would be, “beaten in every direction in the summer.”

False: The Red Army won.

All of his predictions proved to be wrong, because man simply cannot see into the future. Any prophecy can be checked against the test of time. Each prophecy is either right or wrong, based on what happens in the future.

The mathematical science of probability

Stated simply:

One prophecy has 1 out of 2 chances of being right:

- i. right ii. wrong (2)

Two prophecies have 1 out of 4 chances of being right:

- i. A and B both right ii. A and B both wrong
iii. A right and B wrong iv. A wrong and B right (4)

Three prophecies have 1 out of 8 chances of being right:

- i. A, B and C all right
 iii. A right, B right C wrong
 v. A wrong, B right, C right
 vii. A wrong, B right, C wrong
 ii. A, B and C all wrong
 iv. A right, B wrong, C right
 vi. A wrong, B wrong, C right
 viii. A right B wrong, C wrong (8)

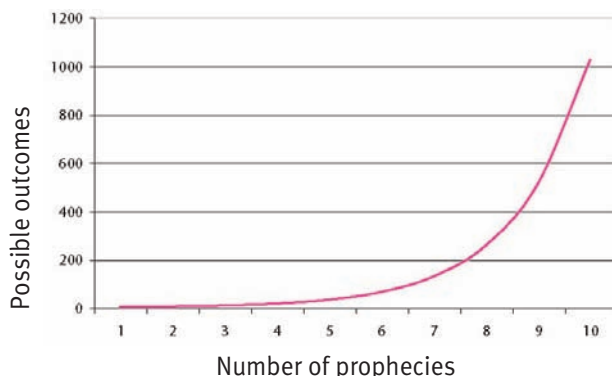
With each extra prophecy the chances of being right are reduced exponentially. What does exponentially mean? Look at the pattern developed so far:

- 1 prophecy: 1 in 2 chances of being right. 2^1 (2)
 2 prophecies: 1 in 4 chances of both being right 2^2 (2×2) = 4
 3 prophecies: 1 in 8 chances of all being right 2^3 ($2 \times 2 \times 2$) = 8

Therefore, the number of prophecies becomes the exponent of 2.

- 4 prophecies: 1 in 16 chances of all being right. $2^4 (2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2) = 16$
- 5 prophecies: 1 in 32 chances of all being right $2^5 (2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2) = 32$
- 6 prophecies: 1 in 64 chances of all being right 2^6 etc.
- 7 prophecies: 1 in 128 chances of all being right 2^7 etc.
- 8 prophecies: 1 in 256 chances of all being right. 2^8 etc.

The more prophecies there are the less chance there is that they will all be fulfilled. This exponential increase in values can be shown on a graph.



God's prophecies reliable

Now consider just eight fulfilled prophecies about Christ:

(a) Who he was:

i. He would be born of a virgin:

“Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel” (God with us) (Isa. 7:14).

Fulfilled in Luke 1:26:

“To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David and the virgin’s name was Mary.”

ii. He would be the son of God:

“I will be his father and he shall be my son” (2 Sam. 7:14).

Fulfilled in Luke 1:35:

“..therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the son of God.”

(b) What happened at his first advent:

i. He would be despised and rejected:

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isa. 53:3).

Fulfilled in Matt. 27:22:

“Pilate saith unto them what shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? They all say unto him, let him be crucified.”

ii. He would be crucified:

“..the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet.” (Psa. 22:16)

Fulfilled in Matt. 27:35:

“And they crucified him and parted his garments, casting lots.”

(c) When he was to come:

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people...Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build again Jerusalem unto the Messiah ...shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks...And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off... and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.”

Fulfilled when Christ was crucified: 490 day/years (70 x 7) after the commandment to “restore and build again Jerusalem” i.e. 456 BC. 490 years after 456 BC is AD 34, keeping in mind that in the AV, “in the midst of the week” means in the latter half of the week¹² (Dan. 9:24–27).

(d) Where he would be born:

“But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel” (Mic. 5:2).

Fulfilled in Matt. 2:1.

“Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.”



(dreamstime photos)

(e) Why he came:

Jerusalem today

i. He brought salvation.

“Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion; shout O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy king cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation” (Zech. 9:9).

Fulfilled in 2 Tim. 3:15:

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus.”

ii. He was a light to the gentiles.

“I will also give thee a light to the gentiles that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth” (Isa. 49:6).

Fulfilled in Luke 2:32:

“A light to lighten the gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel.”

Christ’s death—accurately prophesied



iStock photos

We have considered just eight prophecies out of 333 in the Old Testament regarding Christ's first advent. The eight prophecies give a prophetic picture of Christ in broad brush-strokes. The finer details are provided by the other 325 prophecies. Applying these figures to the graph on page 34, the chances of just those eight prophecies about Christ's first advent coming to pass should be one chance in 2^8 . That works out to one chance in 256.

However, by introducing the other factors of time and different authors, the chances of the prophecies being fulfilled in just one man are even less likely. The science of probability now has to go to a new level. Professor Emeritus of Science at Westmont College, Peter Stoner, has calculated the probability of one man fulfilling the major prophecies made concerning the Messiah. The estimates were worked out by twelve different classes, representing some 600 university students.

The students carefully weighed all the factors, discussed each prophecy at length and examined the various circumstances which might indicate that men had conspired together to fulfil a particular prophecy. They made their estimates conservative enough, to achieve unanimous agreement, even among the most sceptical students.

Professor Stoner then took their estimates and made them even more conservative. He also encouraged other sceptics or scientists to make their own estimates to see if his conclusions were more than fair. Finally, he submitted his figures for review to a committee of the American Scientific Affiliation. Upon examination they verified that his calculations were dependable and accurate in regard to the scientific material presented.¹³

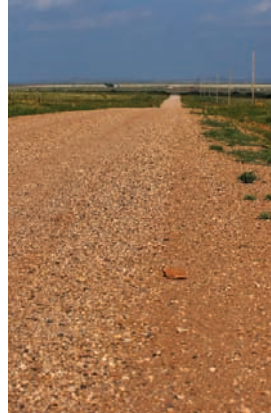
For example, concerning Micah 5:2 where it states the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, Stoner and his students determined the average population of Bethlehem from the time of Micah to the present; then they divided it by the average population of the earth during the same period. They concluded that the chance of one man being born in Bethlehem as predicted was one in 2.8×10^5 or one in 280 000.

After examining only eight different prophecies they conservatively estimated that the chance of one man fulfilling all eight prophecies was one in 10^{17} .

To illustrate how large the number 10^{17} is (a number with 17 zeros), Stoner gave this illustration:

"If you mark one of ten tickets and place all the tickets in a hat, and thoroughly stir them, and then ask a blindfolded man to draw one, his chance of getting the right ticket is one in ten. Suppose that we take

10¹⁷ silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They'll cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would've had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote them in their own wisdom."



(iStock photos)

Somewhere in Texas

But of course there are many more than eight prophecies. Stoner then used 48 prophecies (even though he could have used all 333) and arrived at the extremely conservative estimate that the probability of 48 prophecies being fulfilled in one person is one chance in the incredible number 10¹⁵⁷. How large is the number 10¹⁵⁷? 10¹⁵⁷ contains 157 zeros.

Obviously the probability that 333 prophecies would be fulfilled in one man by chance is vastly smaller. As Stoner concludes,

"Any man who rejects Christ as the Son of God is rejecting a fact, proved perhaps more absolutely than any other fact in the world."

God so thoroughly vindicated Jesus Christ that even mathematicians and statisticians, who were without faith, had to acknowledge that it is scientifically impossible to deny that Jesus is the Messiah.¹⁴

We could now examine Old Testament prophecies about Tyre and Sidon, Egypt, Edom, the Philistines, Babylon, Israel, and the history of the Jews, but these can be examined in books such as *Wonders of Prophecy* by John Urquhart, a standard text on the subject.

We will consider just one—Babylon—in the light of ancient prophecy and recent developments.

Babylon

Not long after the flood which destroyed the wicked, the children of men built the city of Babel with a tower "to reach unto heaven", for they didn't believe God's promise not to flood the earth again. They didn't name it Babel—God did—because it was there that the Lord confounded their language. In this way God ensured that groups with the same language would band



Model of Babylon's Ishtar Gate



Tiled lion from the Ishtar Gate

(both A. Clark)

together and move away from Babylon. The meaning of Babel is 'confusion', which is appropriate, not only because of the confusion of languages, but also because it was the city from which false religion spread around the world (Gen 11:9). Babel became the city of Babylon on the Euphrates River, capital of the kingdom of Babylonia and headquarters of Hammurabi the famous lawgiver. It was from the city of Ur in Babylonia that God called Abraham.

In Isaiah 13:19–21 the Lord God stated:

"And Babylon the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come and her days shall not be prolonged."

The prophecy was not completely fulfilled immediately, for the kings of Media and Persia reigned for some time in Babylon after they had destroyed its inhabitants, fulfilling Isa. 13:17–18. Alexander the Great also intended to restore Babylon, making it



Babylon in heaps

(Ferrell Jenkins, Bibleworld.com)

the capital of his empire, but he died in 323 BC before he could put his plan into action. The city therefore continued in some form for nearly 400 years after Isaiah's prophecy, but it was nevertheless doomed to destruction.

The city of Seleucia, which was built nearby by Alexander's successors in 300 BC, not only drew away inhabitants from Babylon, but also was constructed from materials of the ancient city. Babylon became "heaps, an astonishment and an hissing, without an inhabitant". The whole of Isaiah 13 is devoted to the fate of Babylon, but in these verses alone there are at least seven separate details which build a prophetic picture of this once great city. Every detail eventually came to pass.

In 1985 Saddam Hussein started rebuilding Babylon on top of the old ruins, for he considered himself a modern-day Nebuchadnezzar. Bricks were inscribed,

"This was built by Saddam Hussein son of Nebuchadnezzar, to glorify Iraq."

He had plans to restore the hanging gardens, the ancient ziggurat or Tower of Babel, and the Ishtar Gate. Next to Nebuchadnezzar's old palace he built his own.

As the powerful king Nebuchadnezzar had ruled the ancient world so Saddam Hussein hoped to rule over the world's greatest empire. As Nebuchadnezzar had conquered Jerusalem, so he imagined he would do the same. Saddam Hussein, like Hitler before him, brought upon himself the wrath of God, for not only did he curse God's people, but also he began to rebuild a city that God's prophets had said would not be rebuilt. The invasion of Iraq in April 2003 brought the downfall of Saddam Hussein and vandals and looters came to Saddam's Babylon. His inscribed bricks are now highly sought after as collector's items.

Before the invasion of 2003 Saddam Hussein had plans to build a cable car line over restored Babylon. After the invasion parts of the site were levelled to provide a landing area for US helicopters. Saddam Hussein's plans were consigned to history as was the evil man himself. Prophecy had been fulfilled.

In July 2006 United Nations officials announced that they had plans, together with the Iraqi administration, to restore Babylon again. It would



Saddam Hussein

(iStock photos)

have shopping malls, hotels and even a theme park.¹⁵ Their ignorance of the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah is apparent for all students of the Bible to see. The UN's plans for Babylon will meet the same fate as Saddam Hussein's and "the children of men" of Gen 11.

Enough has been shown of prophecies in the Old Testament regarding the Messiah and Babylon for even the most adamant sceptic finally to take notice. Add to all of the Old Testament prophecies those of the New Testament, especially those made by Christ symbolically in the book of Revelation, and it can be seen that almost the whole Bible is prophecy.

Revelation gives the history of the world in advance from AD 96 onwards, until Christ's reign during the millennium, or 1000 years of peace. Coupled with Daniel's prophecies of the history of the world, which also take us through to the millennium, the sincere Bible student becomes not only convinced of the truth of God's word, but also a dedicated watcher of the signs of the times which indicate that Christ will soon be in the earth.

Prophecy is another good reason to believe the Bible.



(iStock photos)

UN building

4. Archaeology

In the second half of the 19th century believers in the Bible seemed to be caught in a pincer movement by the theory of evolution on one hand and Higher Criticism (from within the established church) on the other. Higher Criticism treats the Bible as a text created by human beings, for various motives, in contrast with the treatment of the Bible as the inerrant word of God.³¹

Many who were weak in faith gave in and accepted defeat. The faithful, however, were like Abijah king of Judah. His God-fearing troops were ambushed before and behind by the idol-worshipping soldiers of Jeroboam, so they cried unto the Lord. “And the children of Judah prevailed because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers” (2 Chron. 13:18).

Deliverance to the faithful few in the dark years of the late 1800s was provided by the spadework of anthropologists and archaeologists. Treasures were found beneath the earth that would prove on the one hand that there were no “missing links” to support the theory of evolution and, on the other hand, that there were numerous archaeological discoveries that discredited Higher Criticism and shed more light on the truth of the Bible.

The Hittites

The Higher Criticism movement had claimed for example that the Hittites never existed because Bible information concerning them could not be verified from other sources. There are over fifty references to the Hittites – black Canaanites descended from Ham through Heth – in the Bible. It is easy to see how the word Hethites could become Hittites with usage. In the time of Moses the Hittites formed the second strongest branch of Canaanites in the Promised Land.

Archibald Sayce (1846–1933), Professor of Assyriology at Oxford University, was the first to find archaeological, independent evidence of the Hittite people. He wrote:

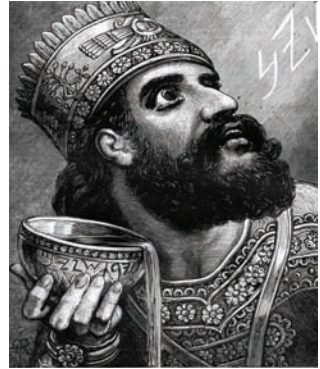
“It is not the Bible writer but the modern author who is now proved to have been unacquainted with contemporaneous history of the time.”

(iStock photos)

Hittites relief

Belshazzar

Belshazzar was the last king of Babylon. Once again, outside the Bible, no king of this name seemed to be known by any of the writers of Babylonian history. Nabonidus, the Higher Criticism movement claimed, was the last king. With discovery upon discovery of Babylonian inscriptions however, it is now clear that Nabonidus appointed his eldest son Belshazzar as his co-regent. That is why Belshazzar promised Daniel only a third place in the kingdom in his last terrified moments (Dan. 5:16, 29). He couldn't offer him half as he was already sharing the kingship with his father.



(karen'swhimsy.com photo)

Belshazzar

We have seen how the Bible gives evidence not found in other writings. Sometimes it can work the other way; archaeology gives extra information about activities not recorded in the Bible.

The black obelisk of Shalmaneser III is one such example. The Bible tells us that Hazael, king of Damascus, smote Israel in the time of King Jehu, but not that he had to pay tribute to Shalmaneser, king of Assyria. This archaeological evidence was found in the ruins of his palace at Calah, in Nimrud. The obelisk shows officials of five different nations paying tribute to him.

(A. Clark)

One of the kings of these nations is Jehu, the ninth king of Israel. The obelisk reads:

"...tribute of Jehu, son (descendant) of Omri, gold, silver, golden goblets and pictures, golden vases and vessels, sceptres from the hand of the king, javelins I received from him..."

The obelisk is about 2.4 metres tall, having the only likeness of an Israelite king ever found. Jehu is shown bowing to the king while behind him a line of Israelites bring tribute (gifts) to Shalmaneser.



Black obelisk of Shalmaneser III showing Jehu bowing to the king.

(A. Clark)



Hezekiah's tunnel

For our next piece of evidence we come down through history about 100 years to the time of Hezekiah, king of Judah. The thirteenth king of Judah, Hezekiah was a good king who performed many great acts. One concerned Jerusalem's water supply. The Bible testifies in 2 Kings 20:20:

"And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool and a conduit and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?"

Critics had a field day because there was no evidence of such a tunnel. They claimed it was merely an embellishment to dress up Hezekiah's character.

Hezekiah was a wise king who realized that Jerusalem should have an independent water supply in the time of any siege. Jerusalem's main water supply was the Spring of Gihon outside the walls of the city. In past sieges the city had to surrender through lack of sufficient water over a prolonged period. Hezekiah therefore gave instructions to cut a tunnel from Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam inside the city.

He instructed one group of pick-men to start at the Pool of Siloam and, to quicken the pace of construction, another group at Gihon spring, working towards one another. Thus, a tunnel was forged underground for a total distance of "1200 cubits" or 583 metres (i.e. over half a kilometre). How the two groups were able to cut a tunnel so long, over such a winding route, two metres high and 60 centimetres wide, about 50 metres on average below the city, and still meet face to face, shows they had skills back then that we don't know anything about. How do we know such detail? In 1890 a truant boy playing near the Pool of Siloam found an inscription reading:

"Now this is the history of the excavation. While the excavators were lifting up the pick, each toward his neighbour, and while there were yet three cubits to (excavate, there was heard) the voice of one man calling to his neighbour, for there was an excess in the rock on the right hand (and on the left). And after that, on the day of excavating, the excavators had struck pick against pick one against the other, the waters flowed from the spring to the pool for a distance of 1200 cubits, and 100 cubits was the height of the rock over the head of the excavation."¹⁶



Hezekiah's tunnel



Gihon Spring



Pool of Siloam

(Top, middle: Holylandphotos.org
Bottom: wildolive.co.uk)

The language points to Hezekiah's time and the direction of the pick marks in the conduit verifies the truth of the inscription.

Taylor's prism

This prism is another piece of evidence that relates to the time of Hezekiah, king of Judah. Taylor's prism, named after the archaeologist who discovered it, is also called Sennacherib's prism.

King Sennacherib, a powerful king of Assyria, wrought havoc on nations around the southern kingdom of Judah and, advancing on Jerusalem, captured 46 cities of Hezekiah's kingdom. With his army of 185 000 he set siege to the city of Jerusalem, as recorded in 2 Kings 18–19, Isaiah 36–37 and 2 Chronicles 32. It's hard to imagine such a huge army. It outnumbered more than three to one the size of the Roman army of Vespasian and Titus that captured Jerusalem almost 800 years later.

Now, just as God kept a record of these things in his word the Bible, so Sennacherib kept a record back home in Nineveh, Assyria. Both accounts differ in some respects as you would expect with two opposing sides but there are enough similarities to pinpoint the same event.

(A. Clark)

Sennacherib claimed to lay siege to Jerusalem, with an emphasis on overthrowing many other cities, which is true. This is what he wrote:

“As for Hezekiah the Judahite, who did not submit to my yoke...like a caged bird I shut up in Jerusalem, his royal city.”

Taylor's prism



He did not claim to have captured Jerusalem, and for very good reason—Hezekiah had prayed to God for deliverance. God's reply to him through the prophet Isaiah is recorded in 2 Kings 19:20:

“Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, ‘That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard.’”

2 Kings 19:35–36 reveals how God brought about the deliverance:

“And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went and returned and dwelt at Nineveh.”

Sennacherib had to give up the siege. He had no army left to fight with. He lost 185 000 men in one night! It was a miraculous intervention by God on behalf of a righteous man—an inspiring example of the great power of God. The Creator, who gave life, can easily take it away to suit His purpose.

When Sennacherib returned home and wrote about it, did he mention how he lost his army? Of course he didn't. Human nature is not like that. He told half the truth! Certainly, he had Hezekiah like a bird in a cage for a while—until he lost his army! He simply didn't mention the other half of the story. He didn't mention any defeat! We have noted already how God's word is most remarkable for telling the full story truthfully. In any account of his people Israel we read the bad as well as the good. There are defeats as well as victories. There are bad kings as well as good kings. It's all part of that "ring of truth", that aura of authenticity, which makes the Bible unique.

Hazor

With the establishment of the nation of Israel in 1948 the science of archaeology in the Holy Land expanded rapidly, so that we could examine dozens of sites, recently excavated in the nation of Israel alone, which verify Bible accounts. Let us look at just one—Hazor. Its ruins lie to the north of the Sea of Galilee.

"And Joshua at that time turned back and took Hazor and smote the king thereof with the sword; for Hazor beforetime was the head of all those kingdoms" (Josh. 11:10).

Hazor's earliest mention is in Egyptian execration texts of the 19th century BC, listing potential enemies of Egypt.

There are several other Bible references to Hazor but the one that interests us is in 1 Kings 9:15:

"And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the Lord, and his own house and Millo and the wall of Jerusalem and Hazor and Megiddo and Gezer."



Hazor

In 1955 a team of Israeli scientists led by the late Professor Yigael Yadin began an archaeological dig at Hazor on behalf of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. They found the usual relics of numerous cities, each layer containing the remains of a city rebuilt upon the ruins of its predecessor. The more ancient the city, the lower the level. The city built by Solomon in the 10th century BC was found at the tenth level from the surface. A few layers beneath were the charred remains of the last Canaanite city, the one destroyed by fire in Joshua's conquest of the 13th century BC. At the very bottom level the first city of Hazor was found, built some time during the third millennium BC. Several centuries later it became the largest city in the country.

As we read in 1 Kings 9:15, Solomon rebuilt it after it had been destroyed by fire in the conquest of the land of Canaan by Joshua and the children of Israel. Now Professor Yadin obviously knew his Bible and, in reading the above verse he wondered whether Solomon's architect might have used the same plan in the construction of the gates at Hazor, as in the gates at Megiddo.

The plans of the Megiddo gates were already known from a previous archaeological dig at Megiddo from 1925–39, so before digging further, Yadin and his archaeologists marked out on the ground, the plan of the Megiddo gate with the corridor, three chambers on either side and towers, to see if they'd conform. They turned out to be a perfect match. The ruins may be inspected today.¹⁷

Archaeology and the New Testament

Most people associate archaeology with the Old Testament but there have also been discoveries that verify the New Testament as well. We read in Luke 2:1, 3 and 5:

“In those days, a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be enrolled...and all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child” (RSV).

In other words, a census was to be taken throughout the Roman world. A public notice has recently emerged from the rainless sand of Egypt to verify a minor yet

(Stock photos)



Archaeologist at work

important point from the inspired record. Joseph and Mary, his espoused wife, had to return to Bethlehem to be enrolled. The last thing the carpenter Joseph needed was to have to take Mary, at such a late stage of her pregnancy, from Nazareth to Bethlehem. But the Roman bureaucrats had little care for the comfort of those they ruled, because for census purposes, it was more convenient for them to gather the population into their hometowns.

Now, a great blessing has been bestowed on us all by the unknown Egyptians who invented papyrus paper and the ink with which to mark it, for the document we mentioned is still clearly legible, at least in its first paragraph:

“Gaius Vibius, chief prefect of Egypt. Because of the approaching census it is necessary for all those residing for any cause away from their own districts to prepare to return at once to their own governments, in order that they may complete the family administration of the enrolment, and that the tilled lands may retain those belonging to them. Knowing that your city has need of provisions, I desire...”

After this the document becomes too fragmentary to decipher.

Obviously that was not the same notice Joseph and Mary responded to, but it does show the credibility of the whole account of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.¹⁸

Many such documents, letters and other pieces of evidence are coming to light all the time.

Politarchs

Another example comes from the archaeological work of Sir William Ramsay. When he began his work he accepted without question the popular opinion that the book Acts of the Apostles was written late in the second century, a sort of imaginative reconstruction of long-past events. But it was the compulsion of fact upon fact working on an honest mind that brought about his change of opinion on the accuracy of the Bible. We read in Acts 17:6, 8:

“And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, ‘These that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also’...and they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.”



Thessalonica

(Biblepicturegallery.com
photo)

In the original Greek, Luke calls the “rulers” of the city “politarchs.” Since this term was unknown elsewhere, the higher critics of the scriptures dismissed the word as yet another mistake. Today, thanks to archaeology, it is to be read high and clear in an arch spanning a street of Salonica i.e. old Thessalonica. Many other such examples have been found.

The writer of the Acts, traditionally Luke, has been proved correct by Ramsay in his geographical and political remarks in chapters 13–16; his reporting of local customs in chapters 14, 17 and 19; his names for local officials in chapters 13–18; his local religious facts in chapters 14 and 19; and in his knowledge of Greek and Asian cities in chapters 16–19.

Sir William Ramsay, by his work, research and integrity, found the Bible accurate. He is not the only person to be so affected by God’s word. Frank Morrison, author of *Who Moved the Stone*, originally set out to write a book disproving the resurrection of Jesus. However, once he had done his research and closely examined the scriptural record, he wrote a completely different book—one showing that the resurrection of Jesus was a fact!

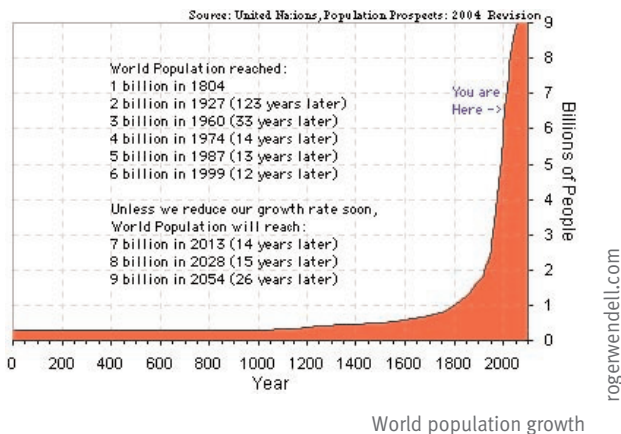
If archaeology shows the truth of small details then the truth of the major details, such as miracles, must be much easier to accept. Any who are still unconvinced should be like Ramsay and Morrison and do some research of their own. B. A. Urquhart’s, *The Bible Triumphant in Twentieth Century Discovery and Research*, is a standard reference on this fascinating subject. But don’t put it off. Don’t be like the learned men of Athens who said to Paul, “We’ll hear you again of this matter,” but never did. They missed the best opportunity of their lives. Paul was telling them about the resurrection of the dead, among other things. It was too much for them. Like Morrison before his conversion and most ‘learned’ folk today, they scoffed at the resurrection. Bible believers have no problem with the resurrection. They believe that if God made heaven and earth, man and woman, animals and plants, he can raise people from the dead. He raised his own son Jesus from the dead. Where is the difficulty for God? He has already set in motion a miraculous process whereby people are being made every day. They are slowly formed over time by a process we are familiar with, yet don’t understand. Surely God, who can bring about new human life slowly can perform resurrection instantly!

God has been pleased to reveal proof of His word through the science of archaeology. The faith of true believers stood firm, even before the archaeologist’s spade brought proof to light and, even today, archaeology is just one more proof of the authenticity of the Bible.

5. Population facts

This reason to believe the Bible is so mathematically sound, long-age evolutionary scientists have to use their utmost cunning to try to explain it away.

In 1999 AD the world's population reached six billion or 6000 million people. It is expected to reach seven billion by 2014.



Rate of population growth

Sceptics who don't believe in the Bible and are not aware of mathematical probability wonder how the earth's population could have reached six billion in just 4500 years approximately, since the flood of Noah. In fact the exact science of mathematics shows that it is quite easy.

The real question long-age evolutionists and non-believers need to answer is: If humans have been around for at least a million years,¹⁹ why are there not many more people than there are?

The reason that earth's population has reached such huge proportions in a relatively short time is because of the rate of population growth. When earth's human population doubled from its original two people to four people, the growth rate seemed quite small, but it is the same rate as when earth's population doubled from three billion to six billion.

World population growth can be established by a mathematical formula (see over page), to prove that the earth can be overpopulated in a few thousand years. Evolutionists argue that plagues, wars and disasters have had the

effect of keeping the human population in check. On the contrary, there have been well-documented plagues such as the Justinian plague of 540–590 AD; the Black Death of 1348–1380 AD which took a combined total of 250 million lives; the influenza epidemic of 1918–1919 which took 25 million lives, more than the total lives lost in World War I; and China's great famine of 1959–1961 which took 30 million lives. Such dreadful losses, however, were quickly made up for by subsequent rates of increase among the survivors.²⁰

The present rate of population growth is 1.7 per cent per year i.e. for every 100 million people 1.7 million are added every year, allowing for those who die during the year.²¹ This compares with a growth rate of 0.5 per cent per year, since the Noahic flood. The current high growth rate is partly because of antibiotics and other medical marvels, but mainly because of the high birth rate in developing countries. The growth rate in some developed countries is currently just 0.5 per cent per annum. Nevertheless, a continued growth rate of 1.7 per cent per annum, using the formula, would double the present world population in less than 50 years; others confidently predict there will be around nine billion people by 2050.²⁹ One scientific solution is to aim for zero population growth, otherwise “we will cease to exist”.²⁰

$$P_n = 2 (C^{n-x+1})(C^{x-1}) / (C-1)$$

Where n = the number of generations; C=Children; x=average number of generations alive; P=The population after n generations and generation is 35 years.

Zero population growth?

Zero population growth means that each family should produce just two children to keep population at its present level, meaning the growth rate is 2.0 children per family. Reasonably accurate data about earth's population are available for only the last 2000 years or so. Over that period of time the population growth has been an average of 2.1 children per family.

Evolutionary time scales on the other hand require that the average number of offspring should be just 2.0026 children per family—a huge difference! Such a tiny rate of increase indicates that at any stage the whole of humanity was close to extinction since new births barely keep up with deaths. It has to be asked: why such an enormous jump in only the last 2000 years?²⁰ These figures alone show that population facts fit the Bible chronology very well and not the assumed evolutionary time scales. The Bible is much more scientifically and mathematically correct than evolutionism.

Bible chronology—Noah’s family

If we consider Bible chronology now it can be calculated from the Bible that Noah’s flood was approximately 2500 BC, and the Bible assures us that only eight people survived the flood—Noah, his wife, their three sons and their wives (Gen. 7:7; 10:1).

A rough guide to show the accuracy of the Bible is the simple process of doubling. The first doubling of the eight from Noah’s family who survived the flood gives 16 people; the second doubling 32; the third 64, etc., as in the table below:

8	
16	(1) (first doubling)
32	(2) (second doubling)
64	(3) (third doubling)
128	(4)
256	(5)
512	(6)
1 024	(7)
2 048	(8)
4 096	(9)
8 192	(10)
16 384	(11)
32 768	(12)
65 536	(13)
131 072	(14)
262 144	(15)
524 288	(16)
1 048 576	(17)
2 097 152	(18)
4 194 304	(19)
8 388 608	(20)
16 777 216	(21)
33 544 432	(22)
67 108 864	(23)
134 217 728	(24)
268 435 456	(25)
536 870 912	(26)
1 073 741 824	(27)
2 147 483 648	(28)

By 1930 AD the world’s population was approximately two billion, so it is clear from the table above that a total of approximately two billion is reached in just 28 doublings of population. Dividing the number of years (2500 + 1930 = 4430 years) by 28 gives 158.2 years as the average number of years for each doubling of world population.



Mt Ararat

(dreamstime photos)

Bible chronology—Israel

The Bible also gives accurate genealogical and chronological records of God's people the Jews. The reason for choosing 1930 AD above is that the Jews' population at that time was known to be about 18 million—before the Nazi holocaust. As noted in chapter two, the Jews are the children of Israel (Jacob), who had 12 sons around 1800 BC approximately. The first doubling of population gives 24 people; the second 48; the third 96 etc., as in the table below:

Jacob's sons:

12	
24	(1) (first doubling)
48	(2) (second doubling)
96	(3) (etc.)
192	(4) (etc.)
384	(5)
768	(6)
1 536	(7)
3 072	(8)
6 144	(9)
12 288	(10)
24 576	(11)
49 152	(12)
98 304	(13)
196 608	(14)
393 216	(15)
786 432	(16)
1 572 864	(17)
3 145 728	(18)
6 291 456	(19)
12 582 912	(20)

Continuing the process, it can be shown that 18 million is reached after 20.52 doublings. By dividing the number of years ($1800 + 1930 = 3730$ years) by 20.52 gives 181.8 years, as the average for each doubling of Jewish population. Just as there have been variables in the total world population, so the Jews have suffered many persecutions and wars over the years, reducing their population drastically. The Bible records many of the losses through battles with surrounding nations but, as previously noted, they also lost a million people in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 by the Romans and another million were lost in the Bar Kochba revolution of AD 135, also inflicted by Roman troops. Persecution in Europe by the Roman Catholic Church kept their population from expanding at all until the Reformation and, even then, pogroms in Russia and elsewhere kept a check on their

numbers. The Jewish population only began to increase again in the 1700s. Free of persecution the Jews have the capacity to increase their population more rapidly than the rest of the world's because of their stringent health requirements under the Law of Moses. In the past this has only happened in times of stability and protection by God, firstly in Egypt before the exodus (Exod. 1:19–20), then under such people as Joshua and the Maccabees. Nevertheless, persecution has taken such a huge toll that Jewish population, as a percentage of world population in the dark ages, was less than it was during the time of Joshua.²⁰

Evolutionary model absurd

Keeping these facts in mind it is hardly surprising that the average number of years for doubling of Jewish population is somewhat higher than for the world average.

It could be argued that the above mathematical process is too simplistic and fails to account for variables. However, such an argument is of no practical value because, using the formula for population growth in paragraph four, the Jewish and world population growths are almost identical.

Whichever method is used, the growth rates are still much more realistic than for the evolutionary model. David Attenborough wrote, “Upright man was in Europe in some numbers about a million years ago,”¹⁹ however most evolutionists vary in their opinions. Using the same formula for population growth mentioned already, it can be calculated that after one million years, the world's population would be 3.7×10^{2091} people, which is absurd, as the number of electrons in the universe is only 10^{90} .

Even if we take a very conservative amount of time, quite outside the evolutionary model, and say for argument's sake that man has existed for only 100 000 years—with a population of two billion in 1930, that's 30 doublings since 98 070 BC, giving 3333 years for each doubling of population! Which is the more reasonable number—158 years on average, or 3333 years on average?

Population facts prove that the Bible is true. They prove that the world was deluged in Noah's day and only his family survived. The theory of evolution has again been shown to be unproven and unprovable, and the Bible emerges triumphant.



Jews at the Wailing Wall

(iStock photos)

6. Bible numerics

Genesis chapter 1

The very first statement in the Bible is, “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). Such has been the influence of Darwin’s theory of evolution that many people, upon reading those words, refuse to read on. Little do they know that God has placed his Divine seal upon them, which cannot be denied and has not been denied, by even the most vehement sceptic.

Bible numerics is one of those treasures hidden below the surface for thousands of years in the very words of the Bible. God has been pleased to reveal His extraordinary treasure in the closing stages of gentile times, when most people now accept the theory of evolution as a fact, thereby discrediting the Bible.

The language of the Old Testament is Hebrew. Like most ancient languages each letter of the alphabet had a numeric value. The letters were then used as numbers for general use and in mathematical calculations by those ancient people.

Numerics in Genesis 1: 1

Consequently, each word, phrase, sentence, paragraph and book of the Bible has a definite arithmetical sum. Now consider the sentence: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” in terms of the arithmetical sum of words and parts of the sentence, as written in the Hebrew language (from *Structure of the Bible* by Dr Ivan Panim):

There are 7 Hebrew words	1 x 7
The 7 Hebrew words have 28 letters	4 x 7
There are three nouns: value 777	111 x 7
There is one verb, “created”; value 203	29 x 7
The subject of the sentence has 14 letters	2 x 7
The predicate of the sentence has 14 letters	2 x 7
The 4th and 5th words have 7 letters	1 x 7
The 5th and 6th words have 7 letters	1 x 7
The nouns in the object of the sentence have 7 letters	1 x 7
The first, middle and last letters of the verb have a value of 133	19 x 7
The value of the first and last letters of all words, is 1393	199 x 7
The particle ‘eth’ and article ‘the’, have a total value of 406	58 x 7

Numerics in Matthew 1

The Lord is called “The Wonderful Numberer” in the Bible, (Dan. 8:13—margin), so each number has certain significance as well. For example, the number 7 is God’s number of spiritual perfection and that is why it is so

prominent in this new revelation of Bible numerics. The remarkable fact is that each sentence, phrase and paragraph of the Old Testament of the Bible is constructed along the same lines. What is more remarkable still is that the New Testament, which was written in Greek, is also constructed along the same lines. Consider this section of the New Testament, the first chapter of Matthew, verses 1—11 (from Dr Panin's work):

There are exactly 49 Greek words	7 x 7
28 of the words begin with a vowel	4 x 7
21 begin with a consonant	3 x 7
7 end with a vowel	1 x 7
42 end with a consonant	6 x 7
The 49 words have 266 letters	38 x 7
Of the 266 letters, 140 are vowels	20 x 7
Of the 266 letters, 126 are consonants	18 x 7
Of the 49 words, 7 are in more than one form	1 x 7
Of the 49 words, 42 are in one form only	6 x 7
Of the 49 words, 14 occur once	2 x 7
Of the 49 words, 35 occur more than once	5 x 7
42 are nouns	6 x 7
7 are not nouns	1 x 7
35 are proper names	5 x 7
7 are common nouns	1 x 7
The 7 common nouns have 49 letters	7 x 7
The common nouns occur 63 times	9 x 7
Of the 35 proper names, 28 are male ancestors	4 x 7
Of the 35 proper names, 7 are not male ancestors	1 x 7
Male names occur 56 times	8 x 7
For the three women, there are 14 Greek letters	2 x 7
"Babylon" has 7 Greek letters	1 x 7

Dr Ivan Panin had this to say about these amazing facts:

"There is not a single paragraph in this gospel that is not constructed in the same way as (the one) already shown. It would have taken Matthew over one thousand years to have constructed the gospel on these lines, even assuming it to have been possible for him to do so, which of course it was not, because of the many circumstances over which he had no control. But is it possible that Matthew had some supernatural power? Well, he certainly was controlled by a supernatural power as is plainly stated in 2 Tim. 3:16, but if we credit Matthew with this power, we must also credit Mark, Luke, John, James, Peter, Jude and Paul with the same, for the records of each reveal the same supernatural phenomena."

The concept of the numeric value of alphabetical letters should not be hard to comprehend. Most school children learn quite early that some letters of

the Roman (Latin) alphabet have numerical equivalents. They learn them at school because those same Roman numerals are still widely used today, e.g. I = 1, V = 5, X = 10, L = 50. It is a good example of an ancient language, similar to Hebrew and Greek, in terms of the allocation of numerical values to letters. The reason ancient people used letters as numbers was because the base 10 number system that we use was not invented until 800 AD—the Hindu/Arabic system.



Scribe at work

(biblepicturegallery.com)

Dr. Panin, who discovered the numerical structure of the Bible, was a converted Russian Nihilist (unbeliever), Harvard scholar and mathematician. He devoted 50 years of his life to Bible numerics, publishing a book, *Structure of the Bible*. As he implied in the quote above: Either each writer of scripture was an unparalleled mathematical genius or he wrote as he was moved by the Holy Spirit.

His findings also proved that the 27 books of the New Testament, which were received into the canon of scripture at the Councils of Carthage in 397 and 419 AD, were selected under Divine providence, because other books that were considered and rejected have no such patterns of seven as illustrated in this chapter. The apocryphal books, added by the Roman Catholic Church to their Old Testament, had no numerical features in them; neither did the New Testament apocryphal books, of which there were dozens.

In considering the Old Testament or the New Testament, or the Bible in its entirety, Dr Panin discovered:²²

- 1.The number of words in the complete vocabulary will divide by the number 7.
- 2.The number of words beginning with a vowel will divide by 7.
- 3.The numbers of words beginning with a consonant will divide by 7
- 4.The number of letters in the vocabulary will divide by 7.
- 5.Of these letters, those that are consonants and those that are vowels both divide by 7.
- 6.The number of words in the vocabulary occurring more than once will divide by 7.
- 7.The number of words occurring in more than one form will divide by 7. The number of words occurring in only one form, likewise divide by 7.
- 8.The number of nouns will divide by 7. The number of words that are not nouns will divide by 7.
- 9.The number of proper names will divide by 7. The male names divide by 7. The female names divide by 7.
- 10.The number of words beginning with each of the letters of the alphabet will divide by 7.

The patterns of seven revealed so far barely scratch the surface of Bible numerics that Ivan Panin discovered. He challenged nine noted Bible critics through the medium of the *New York Sun* newspaper, 9 November 1899, to refute publicly, or give an explanation of his few facts presented. Four made lame excuses. The rest were silent.²³

He also challenged by way of newspapers anyone to write one paragraph of 300 words intelligibly and produce some numeric structure similar to the Bible's, completing it in six months. No one took up the challenge.²²

Another discovery of Dr. Panin was that the writer of the first gospel book, Matthew, used certain words not found in any other New Testament book. He posed the question: How did he know he would use words not found in any of the other 26 books? He would have needed to have in front of him all the other books, and to have written his book last, to complete the overall pattern of numbers. However, each of the other books displays the same feature, so each of the other writers would have had to have written his book or books last! Since that is impossible, the only explanation is that God's holy spirit controlled what each author wrote, yet still allowed him his own style of writing. This confirms what one Bible author wrote:

“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of men but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy spirit” (1 Pet. 1:21).

Nobel Research Foundation findings

Sir Ambrose Fleming, the great scientist and inventor had this to say:

“The work of Dr Panin has been investigated by the Nobel Research Foundation of the USA, and regarding his statement that the Bible could not possibly have been written except by inspiration of God himself, their verdict is as follows: ‘So far as our investigation has proceeded, we find the evidence overwhelmingly in favour of such a statement’.”

The challenge

Having placed these facts before our readers, should we now expect sceptical unbelievers to embrace God's word with open arms and express their complete belief in the Bible? Unfortunately, we cannot! Dr Panin himself wrote:

“When I first made the discovery, I was of course taken off my feet...I thought people would be delighted to embrace the new discovery, but I found human nature is always the same. So I quickly withdrew and did my work all by myself.”²³

Jesus made a similar observation during his ministry: “Men love darkness rather than light,” but it is hoped that honest people with open minds will see finally that God has spoken to us all through his word the Bible.

The challenge is there for those still unconvinced to look into Bible numerics for themselves, for those who reject these amazing facts are not rejecting believers in God’s word; they are rejecting God himself.

The study of Bible numerics is wonderful proof that the Bible is God’s word; it is another very good reason to believe the Bible.

7. Bible morality

All drivers would be familiar with this example from their own experience: Driving at the speed limit, regularly being overtaken by speeding vehicles, but when a police car suddenly becomes visible, everyone immediately becomes a model citizen, obeying all the road rules.

Similarly individuals, communities and nations are more responsible when they are accountable to a higher authority. The purpose of this chapter is to show that the highest authority of all is God, who gave correct moral behaviour in His word, the Bible.

Morals, science and humanism

Morals are defined as, “concerned with character, or with right and wrong; good, virtuous...”²⁴ and therefore involve those good virtues of honesty, integrity and right conduct, which are fast disappearing. The decline in morals began in earnest in the second half of the twentieth century for a number of reasons. First of all scientists and science became elevated in public esteem with the explosion of the first atom bomb in 1945. Instead of scientists recognizing the scientific fact that matter is pent-up energy, the source of which was God, they used their newly gained esteem to bolster their views about evolutionary science. Secondly, religious leaders were slow to challenge evolutionary ideas, finally compromising with evolutionary science. A former Brisbane Anglican Archbishop and Governor-General is a good spokesman for this truth-destroying compromise, under the headline, ‘Creation not serious’:

“A properly balanced faith should be based on Holy Scripture, the teaching tradition of the Church and the application of God-given reason... The Genesis stories in the first book of the Old Testament form part of an early, oral teaching tradition of an ancient people living in a pre-scientific age.”²⁵

The views of the former archbishop reflect the views of most mainstream churches. But ‘science’ is only one of the more recent agents attacking Bible authenticity and morality. For an explanation of the decline in morality we need to go back to the time of the French philosopher Rene Descartes, who put ‘reason’ above faith in the Bible.



Laws are needed

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He claimed that the Bible was irrelevant to philosophy. Philosophy, he claimed, is the love of wisdom or knowledge, and moral philosophy is the study of human actions and conduct. Whereas the Bible says that, “fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Psa. 111:10), Descartes’ ideas put human wisdom above fear of the Lord, his ungodly reasoning becoming known as Rationalism and was used in framing the French Constitution after the French Revolution. Descartes’ Rationalism spread throughout Europe, setting the foundation for the movement known as the Enlightenment, which proceeded to darken men’s minds to the light and truth of God’s word. The Enlightenment led to the 19th century movement of Higher Criticism inside the established church, which attacked the historical truth and accuracy of the Bible.²⁶

(dreamstime photo)



Statue of Stalin

Belief in evolution and decline in morals

The belief that we are responsible for our actions and accountable to our Creator for them declined rapidly, as the church embraced Higher Criticism and evolution. This accounts for the actions of those German people, who, under Hitler, carried out his policy of genocide of the Jews with general enthusiasm. Hitler was an evolutionist, albeit a Roman Catholic one, who taught survival of the fittest and elimination of the weak. In fact the bloodthirsty regimes of both Hitler and Stalin were based on evolutionary principles.¹⁰

Further evidence of the link between belief in evolution and moral decline has come from a recent survey conducted by the Australian National University. The survey found for example that people who believe in evolution were more likely to favour pre-marital sex and abortion.²⁷

Morals and the Bible

“Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” so if we want to learn wisdom concerning our moral behaviour we must consult our Creator’s own hand book. The two parts of the Bible, the Old and New Testaments, are consistent in their teaching. The Old Testament laws are known as the Law of Moses and the New Testament laws are the commandments of Christ. Christ’s commandments are relative to our time period. Jesus summarized the laws of the Old Testament into two basic commandments:

“Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart” and “Love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matt. 22:37,39).

Love of God is a fine concept, but how do we show our love for God? God’s word shows us : “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15).

Love of neighbour is encapsulated in the royal law, or golden rule: “As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them” (Matt. 7:12), but both the Old and New Testaments leave us in no doubt regarding the love-of-neighbour elements of this moral behaviour.

• **“Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother”**

This commandment has been undermined by modern humanistic views of tolerance and children’s rights. The result has been a generation of young people, many of whom dishonour their parents, and also are disrespectful of anyone in authority. Young people who are unaware of, or ignore, this God-given law think it’s acceptable to show disrespect for their parents, but there is nothing as ugly as a disrespectful child and, more importantly, it’s abhorrent in the sight of God as well. Today, God’s law, if it is accepted at all, is modified so it reads, “Honour your father and mother provided they have earned your respect first,” but God’s law is clear, and reads in full, “Honour thy father and thy mother... that thou mayest live long on the earth” (Eph. 6:2–3). Hence God rules out modern humanistic modification of His law.



Jewish scroll

(iStockphotos)

• **“Thou shalt not kill”**

Darwinian evolutionism as already noted flies in the face of this law. It overrules the sanctity of human life, allowing the development of views such as involuntary euthanasia for disabled newborns. There are no exceptions with God’s commandment not to kill. The Greeks expressed amazement at this aspect of the Law of Moses.

Aristotle’s pupil Theophrastus commended the Jews for failing to expose newborn babies to the elements to kill off the weakest, a common practice in Greek and Roman societies. The Roman historian Tacitus expressed contempt for the fact that, “The Jews even consider it a crime to kill a newborn infant.”

• **“Thou shalt not commit adultery”**

This requirement of our Maker applies to married couples. It shows that faithfulness in marriage is required when couples have committed to the marriage bond. In this age, however, such standards are either unknown or ignored, for adultery is a way of life for many, or marriage is now regarded as old fashioned and out of date. Many people no longer marry for life. Divorce rates have soared from virtually nil in the 19th century to almost 50 per cent

(iStockphotos)



Marriage is God's way

of all marriages throughout the English-speaking world; that is, if legal marriage is entered into at all. God expects high moral conduct from unmarried couples as well. Jesus said, "For from within, out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications..." (Matt. 7:20).

Therefore the modern practice of unmarried couples co-habiting before marriage is an infraction of this law of Christ. "Christian" leaders turn a blind eye to the practice, explaining it away as lack of commitment, whereas they should discourage and condemn it for what it really is—fornication and morally wrong.

God provided marriage as a lifelong relationship for a man and a woman, for men and women are clearly made for each other (Gen. 2:18–19). For that reason, homosexuality is abhorrent in the sight of God. Homosexuals claim that society is intolerant towards them, for they are merely exercising their human rights of equality with others of "different orientation". Yet these same people show their own intolerance towards the majority, with words like this:

"From my point of view, I would ban religion completely. Organized religion doesn't seem to work. It turns people into really hateful lemmings and it's not really compassionate."²⁸

God's word is clear and concise on homosexuality: it is wrong. Sodom and Gomorrah were both destroyed because of rampant homosexuality (Gen. 19:1–25).

• "Thou shalt not steal"

The rapid expansion of police forces and the increasing use of a variety of security devices bear testimony to the problem of theft across communities world-wide. Clearly, social morals have declined as achievements in science and technology have increased.

Stealing, in whatever form it takes, is directed against our neighbour and does not manifest the love Christ spoke of. Citizens can steal from the government with a false tax return. They can steal from the shop assistant if they don't speak up when given too much change. Stealing in any form is morally wrong and directly or indirectly affects our neighbour.

- **“Thou shalt not bear false witness”**

Bearing false witness can be neatly summarized as telling lies, which is roundly condemned throughout scripture. Many people tell lies today without even blushing because they're so used to doing it.

Bearing false witness, whether it is in personal matters or a court of law, is morally wrong, and does not show love for our neighbour.

- **“Thou shalt not covet”**

Coveting is a way of life for most members of society and it keeps a great many extremely poor. Coveting riches is the motive behind participation in lotto, gambling and raffles. It is an infringement of the commandment of Christ:

“But... covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints” (Eph. 5:3).

Whatever form the coveting takes it demonstrates lack of faith in God to provide for all our needs. Jesus said:

“And seek not ye what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather, seek ye the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Luke 12:29–31).

Needless to say, Bible morals have only been superficially examined so far, but it can be seen that the Bible is the most morally correct book ever written. That is because, “...holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21) and so wrote of the high moral standards our Creator expects from us. Many of those who live by the high standards of the Bible are happier, healthier and generally live longer than those who do not. If all people lived by these same high standards, how much better this world would be!

Laws are needed

It is not exaggeration or self-aggrandizement to say that true Christians have higher moral standards than the rest of the community. Gibbon the historian noted as much when he wrote about the zeal of the early Christians. He wrote of:



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The Bible provides morals to live by

“...the pure and austere morals of the Christians ... (their) humility, meekness and patience. The more they were persecuted, the more closely they adhered to one another. Their mutual charity and unsuspecting confidence has been remarked by infidels and was too often abused by perfidious friends.”⁷

Wherever true Christianity is practised today these virtues may be seen in abundance, for an assembly of believers endeavours to heed the advice of the apostle Peter:

“Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge and to knowledge temperance and to temperance patience and to patience godliness and to godliness brotherly kindness and to brotherly kindness charity (love). For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 1:5–8).

Modern criticism of God's laws

Unable to deny that Bible morality is the highest form there is, critics resort to the ruse of claiming that the Law of Moses was copied from an ancient source, namely the code of Hammurabi. The Babylonian king Hammurabi lived approximately 17 centuries before Christ and his laws were found inscribed on a stone plaque in Susa, now in modern Iran.

Hammurabi certainly lived before Moses but his 282 laws dealt mainly with the protection of property. Moses' laws dealt mainly with the welfare of people, who were of more value than property. In Hammurabi's time the people were strictly divided into three classes: nobility, commoners and slaves. If a nobleman killed or injured a commoner or slave his punishment would have been paltry compared with what he might have received had he killed or injured one of his own class. The Law of Moses stated, “Thou shalt not kill,” with no distinction as to class of any kind.

The Law of Moses, in the form of the Ten Commandments, was given to Moses directly by God on Mt. Sinai. These laws, known as the Decalogue to the Jews, have influenced civilized societies down through the ages, but hundreds of other commandments covering all aspects of human life were also given to the Jews. They comprised issues such as sexual morality, rules for good hygiene, responsibility for the welfare of the poor and disadvantaged, compensation for injury and conservation of nature. The Mosaic realization of possible contamination by vermin, excrement and corpses, was thousands of years ahead of its time. The Jews protected themselves by various techniques outlined in the Law (e.g. Deut. 23–24).

Confirmation of these aspects of the law in relation to good health came only in the 18th century AD with the discovery of microbes. God also forbade his people from eating easily contaminated food such as shellfish and pork. It must be asked: How did the Jews get it so right? The simple answer is that God, as Creator, knew about microbes and their deleterious effects on health long before man invented the microscope. It is undeniable that countless non-Jewish medical sources have noted that whenever people have been forced to live in adverse conditions the Jewish communities have stayed the healthiest.⁸

Rather than acknowledge the superiority of the Jewish laws men remained ignorant for centuries because of their indifference to, or outright hatred of, the Jews. It is the same with those who reject the Bible. They cannot admit that its superior morals came from God Himself so they would rather invent ways and means to discredit God's word. Try as they might they fight a losing battle for, without doubt, Bible morality has no equal in any other book on earth.

Bible morality is another good reason to believe the Bible.



Code of Hammurabi

(iStockphotos)

ConclusionConclusion

We believe we have shown to the satisfaction of reasonable people that the Bible is God's word. If you number yourself among those reasonable people, dear reader, you now have a decision to make: Will you be like the men of Athens who told Paul, "We will hear you again on this matter" (Acts 17:32), but did nothing, or will you be like the Bereans, who "searched the scriptures daily" (Acts 17:11) until they'd checked for themselves whether Paul's words were true or not?

You are now at a crossroads. Will you leave your Bible on the shelf to gather dust or will you take it down to find God's message for mankind? We sincerely recommend that you won't be like the men of Athens, but dare to be a Berean and examine God's word for yourself. It's all very well to agree that the Bible is God's word; it's what you now do with that conviction that matters. In chapter one we quoted the words of the apostle Paul, "He that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6). Hopefully you are now over the hurdle of believing that "He is", and has revealed Himself to mankind through the Bible.

Notice however that God only rewards those who "diligently seek Him." Since we have shown that God has revealed Himself through His word the Bible it is now up to you to seek God diligently by reading the Bible. You need to have a plan for reading His word.

Genesis (the beginning) is a good place to start. The first eleven chapters are mainly about creation and Noah's flood. But don't stop there. The next fifteen chapters of Genesis are about Abraham, mentioned already in chapter two of this book. He is the "father of the faithful," to both Jews and Gentiles. God promised that his descendant Christ would share the land of promise with him (Gen. 13: 15 and Gal. 3:16). If you wish to be a part of God's plan for this earth then you need to start reading His word on a regular basis.

God's plan for the earth

Just as there is design and purpose in creation God has a plan for the most intelligent of his creatures—men and women—but they have to put in some effort, to reap the benefits of His plan for this earth and its people. In Numbers 14:21 God wrote by Moses His servant:

"As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."

Using modern terminology, this is God's mission statement, and shows clearly that earth, not heaven, is the reward of the righteous. This is further confirmed by the prayer, which some Christians recite so often, yet give no thought to its meaning. The Lord's Prayer states, after its initial praise to God, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." It is both a statement of fact and a prophecy.

Once we realize that earth, not heaven, is the reward of the righteous, much rubbish can be swept away. The idea of immortal souls spending an eternity in heaven or hell is unscriptural and dishonouring to God. It comes from paganism and gradually found its way into church doctrine in the first, second and third centuries AD. The terms "immortal soul" and "immortality of the soul" are never found in the Bible. The Bible teaches from Genesis to Revelation that God's kingdom will be set up on earth for the benefit of mankind. The absolute necessities for a kingdom are:

1. A king.
2. Co-Rulers.
3. Laws.
4. Land.
5. A capital.
6. Subjects.
7. A common language.

All seven requirements are taught in God's word.

1. The king will be Jesus Christ:

"He shall be great and shall be called the son of the highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David (Jerusalem)" (Luke 1:32).

Pilate had a sign put on Jesus' cross, which read, "Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews." Jesus has not been king yet, because his kingdom is still in the future.

2. The co-rulers will be Jesus' disciples and his saints (the faithful baptized):

"And Jesus said unto them (his disciples), 'Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel'" (Matt. 19:27-28).

And for his baptized followers:

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Cor. 15:22-23).

3. The laws will be righteous laws:

“Give the king thy judgements O God and thy righteousness unto the King’s son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness and thy poor with judgment” (Psa. 72:1–2).

4. The land governed by Christ will be the whole earth. This is very clear from Num. 14:21, already mentioned:

“All the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.”

5. The land will have a capital. Dozens of verses substantiate this claim, but Psa. 48:2 will suffice:

“Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion (Jerusalem) on the sides of the north, the city of the great king.”

6. The subjects of the kingdom will be from all nations:

“And it shall come to pass that everyone that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the king the Lord of hosts and to keep the feast of tabernacles.” (Zechariah 14:16)

This verse not only shows that people of all nations will be subjects of this kingdom, but they will have to follow its laws as well. It also prophesies Christ’s return, his kingship and his capital.

7. There will be a common language in the kingdom:

“For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent” (Zeph. 3:9).

We have noted previously that seven is God’s number of spiritual perfection, but sometimes it is hidden from view. The seven elements of Christ’s kingdom identified above comprise another example but more importantly they prove:

“The earth hath He given to the children of men” (Psa. 115:16), and “The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein for ever” (Psa. 37:29).

Since it is God’s mission to fill the earth with His glory (Num. 14:21), then it is His primary goal that as many as possible should be saved in order to participate in the wonderful new order. 2 Peter 3:9 reads:

“The Lord is...longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

The reign of Christ over his kingdom will last 1000 years (Rev. 20:4). This time period has become known as the Millennium, as this quote from the historian Gibbon shows:

“The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was intimately connected with the second coming of Christ. As the works of the creation had been finished in six days, their duration in their present state, according to a tradition, which was attributed to the prophet Elijah, was fixed to six thousand years. By the same analogy it was inferred that this long period of labour and contention, which was now almost elapsed, would be succeeded by a joyful Sabbath of a thousand years; and that Christ, with the triumphant band of the saints and the elect who had escaped death, or who had been miraculously revived, would reign upon earth till the time appointed for the last and general resurrection...The assurance of such a Millennium was carefully inculcated by a succession of fathers from Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, who conversed with the immediate disciples of the apostles, down to Lactantius, who was preceptor to the son of Constantine. Though it might not be universally received, it appears to have been the reigning sentiment of the orthodox believers; and it seems so well adapted to the desires and apprehensions of mankind that it must have contributed, in a very considerable degree, to the progress of the Christian faith. But, when the edifice of the church was almost completed, the temporary support was laid aside. The doctrine of Christ’s reign upon earth was at first treated as a profound allegory, was considered by degrees as a doubtful and useless opinion, and was at length rejected as the absurd invention of heresy and fanaticism.”⁷

The doctrine of the Millennium was ‘laid aside’ because of the inroads of the unscriptural doctrine of immortal souls, whose rewards were either heaven or hell; nevertheless, the ‘gospel of the kingdom’ which Jesus preached was the belief of the early Christians.

To the writings of Gibbon may be added the words of Sir Isaac Newton:

“The world is inexorably moving toward a cataclysmic end, not of water but of fire, when the works of men will be burned up with fervent heat, with the wicked probably punished thereby. This is to be followed by a renewal, a Millennium, an eternal Sabbath following the Judgement Day. The final return of the Jews’ captivity at the day of judgement will lead to a righteous and flourishing kingdom on earth, to be inhabited by mortals and ruled over by Jesus Christ and those to whom he has given eternal salvation.”

The Millennium to be the kingdom of Israel restored

Every prophet of the Old Testament spoke of this wonderful kingdom to

come. Jesus' disciples showed that it was firmly implanted in their minds when they asked him, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Jesus replied:

"It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:7).

(Wikimedia.org)



Edward Gibbon the historian

Even though the disciples were premature in their timing, their basic understanding was correct. The kingdom will be a time of healing, a time of peace and righteousness. Even the animals will be at peace with one another (Isa. 11:7).

The gospel briefly is the "good news concerning the kingdom of God" (Luke 8:1), but participation in the good time to come is conditional. People can either accept the good news and do something about it, or reject it. The choice, dear reader, is up to you. Having heard the gospel a believer must then take the next step.

Many people, having heard this good news, perhaps even believing it, do not follow through to the next step of baptism. (Baby sprinkling is not baptism, because hearing and belief must come first.) Baptism becomes a stumbling block for many, as pride prevents them from following God's command. Such an attitude is unfortunate, because there is a deep significance in baptism, connecting it to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, which makes it essential to salvation.

As we have seen already, the Bible is a book of many symbols. The earth represents people, (Mark 4:3–20) but in the earth are many precious stones. (Rev. 21:19–20). For a gem to shine in all its glory it has to be taken out of the earth, inspected in the light of the sun, which corresponds to the light of God's word, and washed in water, symbolic of baptism. Even then, what might appear to be a high quality gem may, upon close inspection, have imperfections. Similarly the trials of life can reveal imperfections in the character of baptized people, who then may fall away from the truth of God's word and return to the earth whence they came.

Tumbling gems in water or polishing improves the quality of the stones by removing rough edges. Using the same comparison, faithful brethren and sisters of Christ improve their character by associating one with the other,

immersed in the water of life, which is God's word. Not all gems are of equal quality, and not all of Christ's brethren and sisters are given the same number of talents. What talents we have however, must be put to the best possible use. This involves effort on our part, obedience to the commands God has given us in His



word, and a close observance of the signs of the times, which indicate Christ's near return. Failure to be on our guard will ultimately result in our being rejected, as in the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-28).

There is a final process with natural gems – close inspection and faceting. The counterpart of this for the brethren and sisters of Christ is the judgment seat. Only those whose character is suitable will be selected to shine forth in immortal glory.

What choice will you make? The fact that you have read this far means you may have the qualities of character God can use in His kingdom. We have mentioned numerous times so far that we are living in “the last days of the gentile times”. What this means is that the sad state of affairs in this present “kingdom of men”, or “gentile times”, will be replaced by God's kingdom, whether you desire to be a part of it or not, for Jesus prophesied:

“Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the gentiles, until the times of the gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24).

As both Gibbon and Newton correctly interpreted from Bible prophecy, gentile times of 6000 years will be followed by a “Sabbath of rest” of 1000 years of peace, that is, the Millennium.

Will you put in the effort and search out the light of God's truth for yourself, or will you be like the vast majority of mankind who prefer darkness? Should you need assistance we will gladly send a Bible Correspondence Course and Bible reading plan. Simply write to the librarian, or visit the website shown on the first page of this book. Perhaps it is possible for you to attend a Christadelphian Bible presentation or seminar?

The decision is now up to you. In the words of Moses to Israel:

“See, I have set before thee this day life and good and death and evil...Therefore choose life that both thee and thy seed shall live” (Deut. 30:15, 19).

(dreamstime photos)

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