

# CHRISTIANITY

WHY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?

# TRANSLATIONS

- **Origin of the Bible -**

To many, the origin of the Bible can be summed-up as follows: "A mere translation of a translation of an interpretation of an oral tradition" - and therefore, a book with no credibility or connection to the original texts.

# ITS ORIGIN

- **Original manuscripts are dated from 1500 B.C.—A.D. 100**
- **66 books written by 40 divinely inspired writers over a period of over 1,400 years.**
- **The Old Testament contains 39 books written from approximately 1500 to 400 BC, and the New Testament contains 27 books written from approximately 40 to 90 AD.**
- **Although the Jewish Scriptures were copied by hand, they were extremely accurate copy to copy. The Jews had a phenomenal system of scribes, who developed intricate and ritualistic methods for counting letters, words and paragraphs to insure that no copying errors were made. These scribes dedicated their entire lives to preserving the accuracy of the holy books. A single copy error would require the immediate destruction of the entire scroll.**

**The O.T. is divided into the Torah (Law), Neviim (Prophets), Kethuvim (Writings, and contains the Megilloth—5 Books: Songs of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, & Esther).**

# NOT! OLD TESTAMENT EVIDENCE

There are more than **14,000 existing Old Testament manuscripts** and fragments copied throughout the Middle East, Mediterranean and European regions that agree dramatically with each other. In addition, these texts agree with the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, which was translated from Hebrew to Greek some time during the 3rd century BC. The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in Israel in the 1940's and 50's, also provide phenomenal evidence for the reliability of the ancient transmission of the Jewish Scriptures (Old Testament) before the arrival of Jesus Christ.

# NEW TESTAMENT EVIDENCE

The manuscript evidence for the New Testament:

- Over 5,000 known copies and fragments in the original Greek,
  - Nearly 800 of these were copied before 1000 AD.
  - Some manuscript texts date to the early second and third centuries,
  - The time between the **original autographs** and our earliest existing copies is only about 60 years.
- Interestingly, this manuscript evidence far surpasses the manuscript reliability of other ancient writings that we trust as authentic every day.

Early Manuscripts: Codex Sinaiticus (4<sup>th</sup> Century), Codex Vaticanus (4<sup>th</sup> Century), Codex Alexandrinus (Probably about the 4<sup>th</sup> Century).

# EXAMPLES OF SECULAR MANUSCRIPTS

- **Julius Caesar's** "The Gallic Wars" (10 manuscripts remain, with the earliest one dating to 1,000 years after the original autograph);
- **Pliny the Younger's** "History"(7 manuscripts; 750 years );
- **Thucydides'** "History" (8 manuscripts; 1,300 years );
- **Herodotus'** "History" (8 manuscripts; 1,300 years elapsed);
- **Sophocles** (193 manuscripts; 1,400 years);
- **Euripides** (9 manuscripts; 1,500 years);
- and **Aristotle** (49 manuscripts; 1,400 years).

# IN CONCLUSION OF MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

With more than 5,300 copies and fragments of the New Testament taken together, we are assured that nothing has been lost in the transmission of **the original manuscripts**.

In fact, all of the New Testament except eleven verses can be reconstructed from the writings of the early church fathers in the second and third centuries.

The New Testament was originally written in Greek, of which 5,650 handwritten copies have survived in Greek, over 10,000 in Latin. When other languages are included, the total of ancient copies approaches 25,000.

# WHY I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN

- Philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)—1950 awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, in his essay, "Why I Am Not a Christian," asserts, "Historically it is quite doubtful whether Christ ever existed at all, and if he did we do not know anything about him."
- Dr. D. James Kennedy quotes Russell as saying in his book *Character and Destiny*,
- "*When God and His purpose for the universe have been gotten rid of, it frees me up to pursue my erotic desires.*" pg. 61.

Otto Betz in his book, "What Do We know About Jesus?" states that,

***"No serious scholar has ventured to postulate the non historicity of***

***Jesus for the following reasons;***

- Facts: The Old Testament contains 333 prophecies concerning the coming of Christ which includes 456 specific facts or details concerning the Messiah to come. These prophecies can be objectively investigated for their veracity. 1.
- *Of the twenty-six books in the world that either claim to be or have been proclaimed to be Scripture, the issue of specific, predictive prophecy is glaringly absent. It's not found in the writing of Buddha, Lao-tzu, or Confucius.... The reason for this lack of prophecies is that they require supernatural ability." 2*

1. Philip Schaff, *The History of the Christian Church, vol. 2 of Ante-Nicene Christianity*, A.D. 100-325, (Grand Rapids Michigan: Eerdmans, 1910), pg. 22

2. Dr. James Kennedy, *Skeptics Answered*, (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, Inc., 1997). Pg. 37

# IS THE BIBLE CREDIBLE?

- Sir William Mitchell Ramsay, famous authority of the ancient world and educated at Oxford, decided that the great weakness of Scripture was the book of Acts. He embarked on his undertaking to destroy Scripture in 1881. 15 years he labored and in 1895 wrote, "*St. Paul the Traveler and Roman Citizen.*" His conclusion; *Luke was an infallible guide, prince of historians, accurate to the minutes detail.*

# IS THERE SOLID, OBJECTIVE, CRITERIA FOR BELIEF?

- Lee Strobel, graduate of Yale Law School and journalist for the *Chicago Tribune* concluded after his wife's conversion, No resurrection, no Christianity. After meticulous research he became a Christian and now pastors and specializes in helping skeptics find faith in Christ.

# THE BIBLE'S DECLARATION!

## **Habakkuk 2:14 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup> For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, As the waters cover the sea.

## **Isaiah 11:9 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup> They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.

# IT'S TRUTH

## **WHERE ARE THE GOD'S WHO DEFIED YAWEH?**

Where is the God the Ammonites worshipped? Molech, where they sacrificed their children as part of their worship. How about Baal & Ashtoreth whom the Phoenicians and Canaanites bowed down to, or Chemosh the god of Moab. What about Dagon whom the Philistines worshipped? What about Egypt, Apis, Scrapis, & Imoteth? Shall we mention the Greeks in Ephesus who shouted praise to their goddess Artemis, Diana the great god of the Ephesians? The Romans worshipped whole pantheons of gods, Zeus, Jupiter, deified emperors and the like.

# IS THE BIBLE THE WORD OF GOD?

- **1 Thessalonians 2:13 (NKJV)**

<sup>13</sup> For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

# THE PREPONDERANCE OF THE EVIDENCE!

- Based on the objective evidence, the conclusion is a resounding yes!

The Bible asserts a final proof:

## **Matthew 5:18 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup> For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law (*the testimony of the Law and the Prophets*) till all is fulfilled.