

II TIMOTHY 3:16-17
OLD TESTAMENT TEXT!
PART 2

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to II Timothy chapter 3 as we continue our in-depth study of Paul's second letter to his son in the faith, Timothy!

We are in part 2 of our study on the reliability of the Scriptures, can we trust in them?

This morning we are going to look at the – ***OLD TESTAMENT TEXT!***

Here's the thing. I think we are all in agreement on this. People disagree on all kinds of different issues. And for the most part, who cares. Sorry, but in the big picture, it does not really matter.

But there is one thing that if we disagree on, someone is wrong on that issue. And that is our faith. If we disagree that Jesus is Almighty God, that He became flesh and dwelt among us, went to the cross of Calvary to pay for all our sins, that He rose from the grave the third day according to the Scriptures, and unless you repent of your sins and ask Jesus to be Lord and Savior in your life, you will die in your sins.

You see, there is no negotiation, there is no compromise here. You either believe it or you don't. And, again, if you don't, then there are consequences. You will be eternally separated from God!

Peter reminds us in Acts 4:12, "**Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**"

That is very clear, but I am sure that a Muslim would disagree with that. And for that matter, the Mormon, the Hindu, the other world religions would all disagree with that. They have different views, completely different views on God, Jesus and Salvation!

It is not that they are giving a different perspective on the same God. Not at all! They are speaking of different gods altogether.

So why are we right and they are wrong? What makes us think that we only have the truth?

Here's the thing. The reason I believe we have the truth, and no other religion does because they worship false gods, is not because of what I feel or my experience, but because the Word of God, the Bible, God's revelation to us tells us so!

But how do we know that what we have in our hands is accurate, since it has been passed down for thousands of years. There must be a lot of mistakes.

Some feel that others have put their own thoughts, their own ideas into the text.

And like I have said, as some have tried to copy the text honestly and correctly, they messed up and thus, there are many mistranslations as they copied the texts.

Why do they feel that way?

Their thought process is like this, and we have seen this played out in our own lives.

Imagine if we got together with 10 people and began telling them a story. But instead of telling the whole group the story, I whispered it to one person.

And this story was not long, only about 15 to 20 sentences. And that one person was to tell that story to the next person, and-so-on, till all 10 people heard the story.

Then, if I asked each person to repeat the story they heard, you would most likely hear vastly different stories, at least different than the one that was told to that first person.

You see, things can easily get distorted as the story is passed on. Names and events can all change, and the story can become distorted and inaccurate in a very short period of time.

Think about how that works with the prayer chain when I would call people instead of e-mailing them like I do now.

I would tell people to write down what was said instead of trying to remember it from memory.

The story may go something like this when it starts out.

“Steve is having abdominal pain and is going to the hospital; they think he needs an appendectomy, so please pray for him.”

By the time the last person gets the message, it goes something like this.

“Steve is having pain in his abdomen and is having a hysterectomy!”

Close but I don't think Steve would appreciate the doctors trying to do a hysterectomy on him!

And what people do is then they apply that to the Scriptures, and they say that over the many years, things have been distorted and inaccurate in their transmission.

Because of that, because it is not accurate, then we can't trust it anymore!

Make no mistake about it, the Bible is not like any other book that has ever been written. It stands alone.

The Bible has been the most analyzed book, the most studied book, people have come against it to destroy it, and yet, here we are today, and the Bible stands strong, and these men are gone!

Let me share this with you because it speaks of that fact. We are told in this poem,

*Last eve I paused before a blacksmith's door
and heard the anvil ring the vesper chime.
And looking in, I saw old hammers on the floor,
Worn by the beating years of time.*

*"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he, then with a twinkle in his eyes,
"The anvil wears the hammers out you know."*

*And so I thought, the anvil of God's word,
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon.
Yet though the noise of falling blows was heard
The anvil is unharmed - the hammers gone!*

- Source Unknown

How true that is! My prayer as we go through this study on the Old Testament Scriptures is that you would see that we can trust them, from Genesis through Malachi. They are accurate!

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in II Timothy chapter 3, beginning in verse 16 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we look at the topic – ***OLD TESTAMENT TEXT!***

II TIMOTHY 3

VERSES 16-17

Please understand that God's Word is not written by man, but God spoke these words to them, and they wrote them down. God used men, from various backgrounds, with various writing styles to speak to us as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit!

Again, the critics tell us, “*The Bible has been translated and copied so many times down through the centuries, we can’t trust what it says!*”

I find that interesting because if they just do some research, they will see how accurately the text has been copied. But again, that is not what they want people to know, so they bring forth this lie, and many people believe it and repeat it!

Let me show you what I mean.

To show you how the text was transmitted and copied over the years you need to look at the facts of how this was done.

The scribes were not allowed to copy sentence for sentence or even word for word.

Then how did they do it?

They had to copy **LETTER** for **LETTER**.

After a page was copied and checked by another, still a third person would check to see what the middle word was on the page.

Then, when the whole book was finished, another would count the phrases.

Do you see the great lengths they went to in order to keep the text pure, to keep it accurate!

And these are just a few examples of the great detail that went into safeguarding the accuracy of the Scriptures.

There were many more steps taken in the process.

All of this could be characterized as a . . .

fence to the Scriptures (Massorah [The word Massorah is from the root masar, to deliver something into the hand of another, so as to commit it to his trust. Hence the name is given to the small writing referred to, because it contains information necessary to those into whose trust the Sacred Text was committed, so that they might transcribe it, and hand it down correctly.]) because it locked all words and letters in their places. . . .

It records the number of times the several letters occur in the various books of the Bible; the number of words, and the middle word; the number of verses, and the middle verse; the number of expressions and combinations of words, etc. . . .

All this . . . for the set purpose of safeguarding the Sacred Text and preventing the loss or misplacement of a single letter or word.”

- Bullinger's Companion Bible

Because of all that they did, these men had no worry whatsoever that there might have been an error.

For that reason, they felt no more need to keep their older copies than a data processing manager feels a need to keep his older printouts when he knows his current hard copies are accurate.

And thus, as we can see, we can trust the Old Testament text and I will not leave it at that.

We will be going over many other reasons to show that the text we have before us, specifically this morning, that the Old Testament text is very accurate.

Why is this so important to us today?

Let me explain it like this.

The Wall Street Journal reported that nearly one thousand different cookbooks are published each year in America, many of them glossy, full-color, and very expensive.

But at the same time, fewer and fewer people are cooking, and increasing numbers are eating in restaurants.

The reporter for the Journal interviewed one lady, a portfolio manager in New York; she has acquired sixteen cookbooks in the last four years and subscribes to two cooking magazines.

But the last time she prepared a sit-down meal was four years ago, *“and,”* she said, *“It didn’t turn out.”*

There are more Bible translations, study aids, and devotional books now than ever.

Christian publishing is a big business in America. But for all that, people are reading and studying the Bible less and less.

- Robert J. Morgan, Nelson’s Complete Book of Stories,
Illustrations & Quotes, p. 63

Do you understand what we have in our hands?

The Bible is God speaking to us.

How do I know that?

Think about this. Over 2,600 times in the Old Testament we see the phrase “**And God said**” or its equivalent and thus, that tells me that it is God who is speaking to us, and we need to listen.

This book, the Bible should be treasured by us and many times it is not. Listen to this story and you will see what I mean.

We are told,

Alexander Duff, the first foreign missionary of the Church of Scotland, got off to a rough start. He was young, only twenty-three, and bright and innovative.

But on his way to India in 1829 with his new wife, he was shipwrecked – not once but twice!

The most serious wreck occurred when his ship, the Lady Holland, was within a few miles of India.

At ten o'clock P.M., Duff was half-undressed when a shock and shudder ran through the vessel.

He rushed to the deck where the captain met him with terrifying words, ***“Oh, she’s gone! She’s gone!”***

[Not words you want to hear from the captain!]

The ship split apart, but a portion clung precariously to a reef.

Through the night the passengers huddled in terror in the surviving portion, expecting every moment to be swept away.

They were saved the next day, but their clothes and prized possessions were lost, including Duff’s entire library of eight hundred volumes.

Later, standing on the shore and looking sadly toward the reef, Duff saw a small package bobbing atop the water.

He watched and waited as it floated close enough for him to wade out and retrieve.

It was his Bible.

Of all his precious books, it alone survived. His heart soared, for he took it as a sign from the Lord that this one book alone was worth more than all the others put together.

He assembled his fellow survivors and read Psalm 107, the Traveler's Psalm.

Soon, using the same Bible, he began his first calls with a little group of five boys under a banyan tree.

Within a week the class had grown to three hundred, and it soon became a school that evangelized and educated the higher classes in India, producing a qualified generation of leaders for the nation's young church.

- Robert J. Morgan, Nelson's Complete Book of Stories,
Illustrations & Quotes, p. 53

That is what Peter tells us in II Peter 1:2-4, **“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”**

God has given to us all we need to grow in Him, and it is all found in His Word and then applying that to our lives, walking by faith!

And the only way you are going to do that is if you truly believe God's Word is living, it is powerful, it is able to change your life!

What do we know about the authenticity and the accuracy of the Old Testament text?

Well, let's begin with the book of Genesis, and listen to what Professor Albright has to say regarding the Table of Nations found in Genesis chapter 10.

He says that, *“It stands absolutely alone in ancient literature without a remote parallel even among the Greeks. . . . ‘The Table of Nations’ remains an astonishingly accurate document. . . . (it) shows such remarkably ‘modern’ understanding of the ethnic and linguistic situation in the modern world, in spite of all its complexity, that scholars never fail to be impressed with the author’s knowledge of the subject.”*

We should not be surprised because the author is God!

Now why in the world would I start out with the book of Genesis?

Because if the book of Genesis is not historically trustworthy, if it were not true, then simple logic would tell us that the rest of the Bible is not true also.

Higher critics tell us that Genesis could not have been written by Moses, for writing was not yet established yet.

Thus, this information, especially the first 11 chapters of Genesis, was derived from myths and the ancient Babylonians.

But, Ralph Linton, an evolutionary anthropologist admits, *“Writing appears almost simultaneously some 5000 - 6000 years ago in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Indus Valley.”*

Imagine that! I guess Moses could have written Genesis onward just as we are told!

Also, what I want you to notice here is that he is not trying to support the Bible, he is an evolutionist and thus, does not believe in the six literal days of Creation and yet, he is substantiating for us that there was writing at the time of Moses.

Again, that means that Moses could have easily written the book of Genesis, as well as the rest of the Pentateuch.

Now I like to go to an even higher source to substantiate that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible.

Jesus tells us that Moses not only wrote Genesis, but the Law of Moses, the Torah in the Hebrew, which consisted of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, which we call the Pentateuch.

In Luke chapter 24, Jesus said, “**And beginning at *Moses* and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. . . . These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the *Law of Moses* and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.**” Luke 24:27, 44.

Just because we have not found outside sources, other than the Bible, to substantiate this man doesn't mean we won't, but even if we can't find the name “*Moses*” in any historical record outside of the Bible, understand how old these records would have to be, and I think it would be easy to understand why we can't find any outside record.

You see, time has a way of destroying the record, but that does not negate the words found in the Bible, not one bit.

What is interesting to me is that magazines, newspapers, news reporters, and others will put down the Bible and say that someone like David has no record that he ever existed and thus, the Bible made that up.

Make no mistake about it, we have found many of the names of the people of the Bible and places that the Bible speaks of.

On the other hand, the Book of Mormon can make no such claim!

I like the way that Nelson Gluek puts it; he is one of the leading Palestinian archaeologists of our times.

This is what he said, *“As a matter of fact, however, it may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible.”*

Absolutely!

And for those who believe the oldest parts of the Bible were written during Israel’s captivity in Babylon, I have some bad news for you.

Back in 1979 Israeli archaeologist Gabriel Barkay found two tiny silver scrolls inside a tomb in Jerusalem. They were dated around 600 B. C., shortly before the destruction of Solomon’s Temple and the deportation of the Southern Kingdom of Judah to Babylon.

As they carefully unrolled the scrolls at a museum in Israel, they found a benediction from the book of Numbers etched into their surface.

Thus, parts of the Old Testament were written and copied long before their exile in Babylon.

In 1990 Frank Yurco, an Egyptologist at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, discovered these writings on a stele, which is an upright stone slab or pillar engraved with an inscription or design.

On this stele there is a description of a military victory by the Pharaoh Merneptah. It reads, *“Israel is laid waste.”* This stele is dated 1207 B. C. and it tells us that the Israelites were a distinct population more than 3,000 years ago, and not just because the Bible tells us so!

And also note that it is not the land of Palestine, but Israel. How sad it is to see maps in our Bible speak of the land of Israel as Palestine and even many commentators speak of the land being Palestine. It is Israel!

In speaking of King David, did you know that up until 1993 many considered David to be just another mythological invention of the writers of the Bible!

No shred of evidence supporting this person named David!

I guess there was no shred of evidence *UNTIL* 1993 when they discovered a nearly 3,000-year-old inscription in the ancient ruins of Dan that mentioned the name of David the King of Israel!

It was Avraham Biran of Hebrew College - Jewish Institute of Religion and Joseph Naveh of the Hebrew University, announced they had found an inscription bearing the phrases "*House of David*" and "*King of Israel.*"

Interestingly enough the writing dated to the 9th century B. C., only a century after David's reign.

Thus, it is hard to defend the skeptic's claim that King David never existed, for here is proof!

This inscription is on display at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem!

And as much as magazines and skeptics struggled with this, Time magazine had to say, "*The skeptics' claim that King David never existed is now hard to defend.*" (Are the Bible's Stories True? Archaeology's Evidence, Time Magazine, December 18, 1995)

Then there is Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea at the time of Jesus and the one who oversaw the trial of Jesus and sentenced Him to death. Many thought of this man as a legendary figure, not real!

That was *UNTIL* 1961 when archaeologists were digging in Caesarea, on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea there in Israel and they uncovered a limestone block that bore an inscription in Latin that dated to the early part of the first century!

On this block is mentioned this, “*Pontius Pilate, Perfect of Judea.*”

Not only was Pontius Pilate an historical figure but he reigned in the same position that the Gospels tell us.

And with this idea of “*Perfect*” it speaks of Pilate having the authority to condemn or pardon Jesus, just as we see in the Gospels!

Others say that there is no evidence that when the Romans crucified their victim that they used nails to hold them to the cross.

But the Bible tells us that Jesus was nailed to the cross of Calvary. (John 20:25)

That was *UNTIL* 1968 when a crew of builders accidentally discovered an ancient Jewish cemetery.

This cemetery contained the remains of several men that were killed during the Jewish revolt against Rome in around 70 A. D.

One of the bone ossuaries contained the skeleton remains of a young man and it had his name on it, Yohanan Ben Ha’galgol.

Nothing too big so far. That is until they found in this ossuary box not just his bones but an iron spike that was driven through his heel bone. The Romans usually removed the nails because iron was expensive, but this one was bent and must have been stuck in this victim.

So the Romans did crucify their victims with nails just like the Bible says!

And there is so much more.

We find extrabiblical accounts of the flood from around the world!

There is Hezekiah’s tunnel that was built to channel water secretly into the city of Jerusalem in around 700 B. C. (II Kings 20:20)

We find the ancient ruins of Babylon, including the ruins of King Nebuchadnezzar's palaces, the temples, the city walls, houses and inscriptions mentioning "*Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon*" just like the book of Daniel tells us!

And there is much more. What I want you to take from this is that the Bible is accurate, these people and places are real, and thus, we can trust the Bible.

Now some may argue that even though some of the history of the Bible may be correct, its transmission over the years has changed the truth!

In other words, it has been embellished, things added, and things taken away from the original text.

Thus, to come to the conclusion of the higher critics, the stories we have in our Bible today are completely different than what actually took place.

They understand that passing a story on from one person to another can easily change the story, let alone passing these stories over thousands of years.

Now that may be true of my brothers and me when we get together for Christmas or some other family party. We tell the same stories, but they are embellished just a little each time.

But just because we do that does not mean that the writers and scribes did that with the Scriptures. They held them in such high esteem they would not think of adding to or taking away from the Scriptures.

The Bible even warns them and us of doing that! (Deuteronomy 4:2, Revelation 22:19)

And think about this for a minute. Remember what Peter tells us in II Peter 1:19-21, **“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”**

You see, prophecy is not just speaking of some future event; it is also speaking forth the words of God.

And Peter is saying that God’s Word is surer than what he saw with his own eyes. If you read that chapter, you will find that Peter is speaking of what he saw on the Mount of Transfiguration, the Glory of the Lord.

In other words, he trusted more in God’s Word than what he saw with his own eyes.

Why did he feel that way?

It is very simple. Because God’s Word was not written by man, but the Holy Spirit. You see, man was only the instrument in which God used to pen these words.

Think of writing a letter, the pen did not write it, you did, but the pen was the instrument that was used to pen those words. God used holy men, as instruments, to pen His Words.

Secondly, like I have said, we have to understand how meticulous the writers were in copying the various Old Testament Scriptures.

Listen to what the First-century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus recorded regarding the reverence they had for the Scriptures.

He wrote, ***“We have given practical proof of our reverence of our own Scriptures. For, although such long ages have now passed, no one has ventured either to add, or to remove, or to alter a syllable; and it is an instinct with every Jew, from the day of his birth, to regard them as the decrees of God, to abide by them, and if need be, cheerfully die for them. Time and time again ere (before) now the sight has been witnessed of prisoners enduring tortures and death in every form in the theaters, rather than utter a single word against the laws and the allied (associated) documents.”***

Thus, throughout the centuries the Jewish scribes took great care in copying the Scriptures, for they believed they were copying God’s Word, and they were!

Because of that, William F. Albright, dean of American archaeologists, said, ***“We may rest assured that the consonantal text of the Hebrew Bible . . . has been preserved with an accuracy perhaps unparalleled in any other New Eastern literature.”***

Now the oldest complete manuscript of the Old Testament, the scroll of Isaiah, came from 916 A. D.

That is some 1400 years after it was written, and many argued that it had to be unreliable since all that time has passed from the original writings to the manuscript of 916 A. D.

That was until 1947 when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered.

The Dead Sea Scrolls is the term that is used of the manuscripts that were discovered in 1947 in caves some 500 yards from the Dead Sea, in the area known as Qumran, along the Northwestern shore of the Dead Sea.

The story goes that back in 1947 a shepherd boy was herding his goats when one of them got lost in this area.

And this Arab shepherd boy named Mohammed was looking for this stray goat in the Judean wilderness when he tossed a rock into the air. When the rock landed it fell into a cave and broke some pottery that was in this cave.

In hearing the breaking of the pottery, it raised his curiosity, and he went into this cave, which is now called cave number 1, and to his surprise he found jars filled with ancient scrolls, which lead to the search for other caves that nearly lasted a decade.

And during that time, they found 11 caves producing over 800 scrolls and scroll fragments written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, covering a time period of almost 1000 years.

As they examined the Dead Sea Scrolls, they broke them down into three chief categories. They are as follows,

1. BIBLICAL - All the books of the Bible, the Old Testament, are represented in these finds, except one. The only book that was not found was the book of Esther.

2. APOCRYPHAL OR PSEUDO EPIGRAPHICAL - These books are omitted from various canons of the Bible, for they are not inspired books but do contain some historical information.

3. SECTARIAN - These scrolls relate to various ordinances that this community adhered to.

Also, we find Biblical commentaries, apocalyptic visions, and liturgical works.

Now as they analyzed these scrolls, by using carbon dating methods, it showed that most of them were written between 100 B. C. and 68 A. D.

But who were these people who lived out in the desert, away from civilization, and kept such accurate records of the Words of God, writing commentaries on the various books of the Old Testament, and adhered to a strict code of living?

It is believed that the people that wrote these scrolls were the Essenes, who were a separatist Jewish sect of the Second Temple period.

They, in a sense, were religious zealots who withdrew from the corruption of the Greco-Roman culture, and the worldliness that crept into the priesthood.

Thus, they separated themselves in the wilderness of Judea, in the area of the Dead Sea, known as Qumran, keeping themselves pure and awaiting the coming of the Messiah.

Some believe that John the Baptist lived out in this area.

Now they lived in this area known as Qumran from around 150 B. C. to 68 A. D., 2 years before the Romans burned down the Temple and destroyed the city of Jerusalem, causing many to flee for their lives.

The most famous of the Dead Sea Scroll caves is also the most significant in terms of finds.

More than 15,000 fragments from over 200 books were found in this cave, nearly all by Bedouin thieves.

122 biblical scrolls (or fragments) were found in this cave.

From all 11 Qumran caves, every Old Testament book is represented except Esther, as I have said.

The largest cache of scroll fragments was found in 1954 here in Cave number 4.

Cave number 1 is where the scroll of Isaiah was found.

Why are the Dead Sea Scrolls so important to us?

Yes, we have found every book of the Old Testament there except for Esther but one of the most important finds was discovered in cave number 1, where two scrolls of Isaiah were found, as I have said.

One was damaged, but the other one was complete, along with other scrolls.

This 24-foot leather scroll of Isaiah could tell us the accuracy of the text transmission over a 1000-year period.

You see, this scroll of Isaiah dates back to 100 years before Christ and the next closest text we have dates all the way back to 916 A. D.!

The fascinating thing about this is you can go to Israel today, and visit the museum called the *Shrine of the Book*, which holds this priceless Biblical manuscript, and if you were able to read Hebrew, you would discover your New King James Bible's reading of Isaiah is almost identical to this text that is over 2000 years old!

There is no major difference between the two!

Imagine that. The book of Isaiah has 66 chapters, 1292 verses, 37,044 words, and the integrity of the text has held up all these years, for over 1000 years between those two manuscripts.

According to Norman Geisler and William Nix, in their book *A General Introduction to the Bible*, they said, “Of the 166 words in Isaiah 53, there are only seventeen letters in question. Ten of those letters are simply a matter of spelling, which does not affect the sense. Four more letters are minor stylistic changes, such as conjunctions. The remaining three letters comprise the word ‘light’ which is added in verse 11, and does not affect the meaning greatly . . . ***Thus, in one chapter of 166 words, there is only one word (three letters) in question after a thousand years of transmission - and this word does not significantly change the meaning of the passage.***”

After comparing the entire Isaiah manuscript from the Dead Sea Scrolls with the present Hebrew text of Isaiah, Old Testament scholar Gleason L. Archer concluded that the Dead Sea Scrolls “Prove to be word for word identical with our standard Hebrew Bible in more than 95 percent of the text. The 5 percent variation consisted chiefly of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling.”

Not bad when you consider they did not have computers, spell-checking, and so on, as we have today. And we still mess up!

Let me give you a few examples from the Dead Sea Scroll of Isaiah from 125 B. C, from the Aleppo Codex from 930 A. D. and then from the Modern Translation, the New King James Version.

Watch how accurate this is.

Isaiah 53:1

Who has believed our report
and the arm of YHWH to whom
has it been revealed?

Isaiah 53:3

He is despised and rejected of men,
a man of sorrows and knowing
grief and as though hiding faces
from him he was despised, and we
did not esteem him.

Isaiah 53:4

Surely our griefs he is bearing and
our sorrows he carried them and we
esteemed him beaten and struck by
God and afflicted.

Isaiah 53:5

And he is wounded for our
transgressions, and crushed for our
iniquities, the correction of our
peace was upon him and by his
wounds he has healed us.

Isaiah 53:6

All of us like sheep have wandered
each man to his own way we have
turned and YHWH has caused to
light on him the iniquity of all of
us.

Isaiah 53:7

He was oppressed and he was
afflicted and he did not open his
mouth, as a lamb to the slaughter
he is brought and as a ewe before
her shearers is made dumb he did
not open his mouth.

Isaiah 53:1

Who would have believed our
report? And to whom hath the arm
of the LORD been revealed?

Isaiah 53:3

He was despised, and forsaken of
men, a man of pains, and
acquainted with disease, and as one
from whom men hide their face: he
was despised, and we esteemed
him not.

Isaiah 53:4

Surely our disease he did bear, and
our pains he carried; whereas we
did esteem him stricken, smitten of
God, and afflicted.

Isaiah 53:5

But he was wounded because of
our transgressions, he was crushed
because of our iniquities: the
chastisement of our welfare was
upon him, and with his stripes we
were healed.

Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep did go astray, we
turned every one to his own way;
and the LORD hath made to light
on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:7

He was oppressed, though he
humbled himself and opened not
his mouth; as a lamb that is led to
the slaughter, and as a sheep that
before her shearers is dumb; yea,
he opened not his mouth.

Isaiah 53:1

Who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the
Lord been revealed?

Isaiah 53:3

He is despised and rejected by men,
A Man of sorrows and acquainted
with grief. And we hid, as it were,
our faces from Him; He was
despised, and we did not esteem
Him.

Isaiah 53:4

Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows; Yet we
esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.

Isaiah 53:5

But He was wounded for our
transgressions, He was bruised for
our iniquities; The chastisement for
our peace was upon Him, And by
His stripes we are healed.

Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his
own way; And the Lord has laid on
Him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:7

He was oppressed and He was
afflicted, Yet He opened not His
mouth; He was led as a lamb to the
slaughter, And as a sheep before its
shearers is silent, So He opened not
His mouth.

Why am I making such a big deal about this?

Because Isaiah chapter 53 speaks about the life, the death and the resurrection of Christ and I covered some of them for you to see.

Keep in mind that Isaiah was not written after Jesus Christ, but 700 years before His birth! And it speaks of things that He would do for us as clearly as we see in the New Testament. It speaks of our Messiah!

That means God told us beforehand the events that would take place and as we come to the New Testament, we see them fulfilled, which speaks of the Divine authorship of the Bible!

And, if you still have any doubt of the accuracy of the Old Testament, then the Dead Sea Scrolls should help clear that matter up right away.

Yes, we don't have any of the original manuscripts of the Old or the New Testament, but looking at the various texts it shows how accurately they were copied and passed on.

And we will look at the *New Testament Text* next time and see how accurate it is and why we believe that.

As the renowned archaeologist William F. Albright has said, ***“There can be no doubt that Archaeology has confirmed the substantial historicity of the Old Testament tradition.”***

In saying that, we should be in awe of the Word of God. We should cling to it, believe it, and apply it to our lives!

We should cry out to God to teach us the truths of His Word, to open our eyes and our heart to the things of God, and not just to cling to worthless things. To see the rich and deep treasures that God has in His Word for us!

Let's think about this for a minute and see how precious God's Word is to us.

How much time do we spend in front of the television set?

How much time do we spend playing sports or reading books or magazines?

How much time do we spend shopping?

How much time do we spend on the computer?

Now don't get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with any of these things unless we let them steal our time away from God.

You see, when compared with these activities, how much time do you spend in the Word of God?

Ask God to revive your hunger for His Word, to help you to believe and apply His truth to your life.

The archaeologist, John Elder, offers a fitting conclusion to the issue of the Old Testament's reliability.

This is what he said, *“It is not too much to say that it was the rise of the science of archeology that broke the deadlock between historians and the orthodox Christian. Little by little, one city after another, one civilization after another, one culture after another, whose memories were enshrined only in the Bible, were restored to their proper places in ancient history by the studies of archaeologists. . . . The over-all result is indisputable. Forgotten cities have been found, the handiwork of vanished peoples has reappeared, contemporary records of Biblical events have been unearthed and the uniqueness of Biblical revelation has been emphasized by contrast and comparison to the newly understood religions of ancient peoples. Nowhere has archaeological discovery refuted the Bible as history.”*

Thus, not only are the places, persons, and events listed during the different periods of the Old Testament history matched up to the facts and evidence from history and archaeology, but the transmission has been accurate.

And if you want a stamp of approval, well, Jesus put His stamp of approval by quoting from the Old Testament. He believed in it and so do I!

As the Psalmist said, **“Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; You established the earth, and it abides. They continue this day according to Your ordinances, For all are Your servants. Unless Your law had been my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction. I will never forget Your precepts, For by them You have given me life.”** Psalm 119:89-93.

Why are Christians ashamed of the Word of God, the Bible?

It is because they are listening to the Bible critics who put down the Word of God, who mock the Word of God instead of searching it out to see if what God has said is true.

You see, who are you going to trust, God or man?

Man has failed many, many times and will continue to fail but God will never fail me.

And think about this, there is no other book like the Bible around today, ***NONE!***

Listen to what Professor Monier Williams, the former Boden professor of Sanskrit, who spent 42 years studying Eastern books, has to say regarding the Bible. He wrote,

“Pile them, if you will, on the left side of your study table, but place your own Holy Bible on the right side, all by itself, all alone, and with a wide gap between them. For there is a gulf between it and the so-called sacred books of the East which severs the one from the other utterly, hopelessly and forever.”

In other words, after 42 years of studying Eastern books, they don't belong in the same place as the Bible!

Let me give you an example to show you what I mean.

Look at the Hindu Bible and see what fantastic nonsense is spoken and yet, the Bible is not at all like the Hindu Bible.

It reads, ***“The moon is 50,000 leagues higher than the sun, and shines by its own light. Night is caused by the sun setting behind a huge mountain several thousand feet high located in the center of the earth. This world is flat and triangular and is composed of seven stages, one of honey, another of sugar, a third of butter and another of wine. And the whole mass is borne on the heads of countless elephants which, in shaking, produce earthquakes.”***

Well, thank God we understand where earthquakes come from now!

How foolish, even saying the earth is flat and triangular while the Bible clearly teaches the earth is round, a sphere and it hangs on nothing, not even elephants!

That is the sacred writing of the Hindus.

Do you want to believe what it is telling you?

If you do, see me after our study this morning and we will talk, and maybe we will travel to the seven stages of the earth, the honey stage or sugar stage.

Sounds like Willey Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, it is a story, and it is not true.

But the Bible is true, we can trust it for when it speaks of science it is 100% accurate and the Old Testament Text has been copied very carefully throughout the years and thus, we can also trust it!

James Orr, speaking of the Moslem, Zoroastrian and Buddhist Scriptures, said this, ***“It is the simple fact that there is nothing that can be properly called history in these other sacred books of the world. They are, as every student of them knows, for the most part, jumbles of heterogeneous [assorted] material loosely placed together without order, continuity or unity of any kind.”***

And yet, when you come to the Bible you can easily see that it is unique. And you understand that when you come to the Bible you find one unfolding story of God's love for sinful man.

There is creation and everything was very good.

We see sin enter the world and man's separation from God because of his sin.

We see God establish the Jewish people who would point people to the way to God and that was going to be and is through the Messiah, through Jesus Christ.

We see God become man to dwell among us, the fulfillment of what the Old Testament prophets spoke of.

We see that He paid in full the penalty for our sins. We see that God will deal with the ungodly and will rule and reign for 1,000 years from Jerusalem, from the throne of David as He promised in the Old Testament.

And then we see the creation of a new heavens and a new earth.

Remember what Geisler and Nix wrote, *"The 'Paradise Lost' of Genesis becomes the 'Paradise Regained' of Revelation. Whereas the gate to the tree of life is closed in Genesis, it is opened forevermore in Revelation."*

That is what we find as we read through the Scriptures!

Let me close our study this morning with these words from Sir Frederic Kenyon.

He wrote, *"The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true word of God, handed down without essential loss from generation to generation throughout the centuries."*

Do you believe that?

I hope so! I pray that you have a love for God and His Word and that you have a hunger to know Him more and more through His Word!

Remember what David said in Psalm 119, **“Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, And I shall keep it to the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; Indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it. Incline my heart to Your testimonies, And not to covetousness. Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, And revive me in Your way. Establish Your word to Your servant, Who is devoted to fearing You. Turn away my reproach which I dread, For Your judgments are good. Behold, I long for Your precepts; Revive me in Your righteousness.”** Psalm 119:33-40.

May we have that kind of love for God and His Word knowing that we can trust what He has told us and then live accordingly!



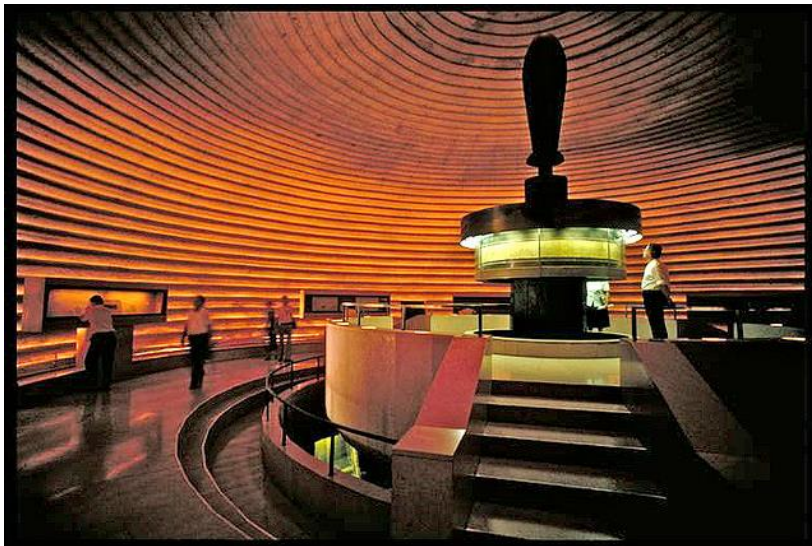
Cave Number 4

This most famous of the Dead Sea Scroll caves is also the most significant in terms of finds. More than 15,000 fragments from over 200 books were found in this cave, nearly all by Bedouin thieves. 122 biblical scrolls (or fragments) were found in this cave. From all 11 Qumran caves, every Old Testament book is represented except Esther. The largest cache of scroll fragments was found in 1954 here in Cave number 4. Cave number 1 is where the scroll of Isaiah was found.

The Shrine of the Book/Isaiah Scroll Pictures



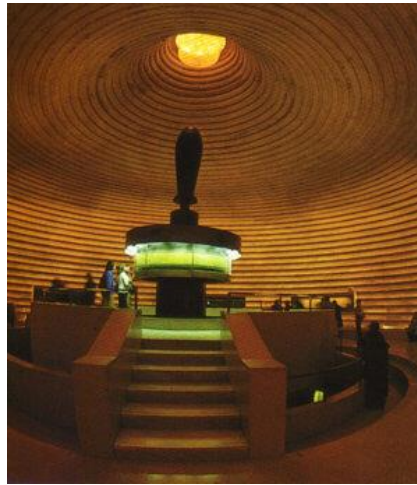
Scroll of Isaiah found in Cave number 1



Scroll of Isaiah in background



The Shrine of the Book



The Tel-Dan Inscription
9th Century BC

מלך ישראל
Melekh Yisra'el / King of Israel

בית דוד
Beyt David / House of David

Ancient Hebrew Research Center
www.ancient-hebrew.org

A photograph of the Tel-Dan Inscription, a fragment of ancient Hebrew text on a stone tablet. The text is written in ancient Hebrew script. Callouts point to specific lines of text, identifying them as 'Melekh Yisra'el / King of Israel' and 'Beyt David / House of David'. The background is a light, textured surface.

Victory Stele of Hazael **841 BC**
(King of Aram 841-800 BC)

Tel Dan inscription

8 kings

- ✓ Hazael
- ✓ Ben-Hadad II
- ✓ Ahab
- ✓ Joram
- ✓ Ahaziah
- ✓ Jehoram
- ✓ David
- ✓ Jehu

“I killed Joram son of Ahab & Ahaziah, son of Jehoram, of the house of David”

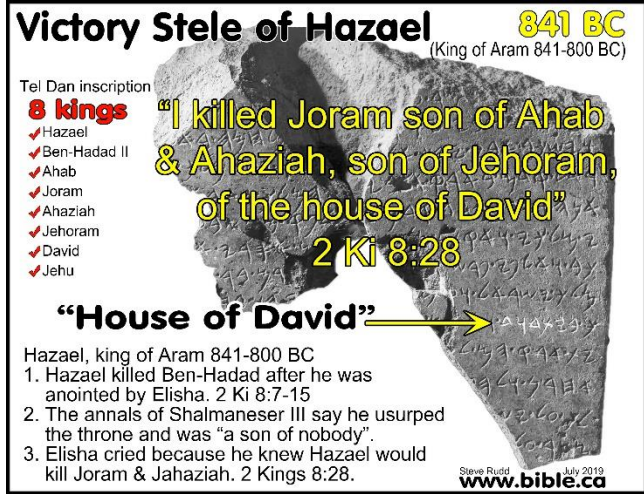
2 Ki 8:28

“House of David” →

Hazael, king of Aram 841-800 BC

1. Hazael killed Ben-Hadad after he was anointed by Elisha. 2 Ki 8:7-15
2. The annals of Shalmaneser III say he usurped the throne and was “a son of nobody”.
3. Elisha cried because he knew Hazael would kill Joram & Jahaziah. 2 Kings 8:28.

Steve Rudd July 2019
www.bible.ca




“Pontius Pilate, Perfect of Judea.”



The practice of crucifixion in antiquity was brought to life as never before when the heel bones of a young man named Yehohanan were found in a Jerusalem tomb, pierced by an iron nail. The discovery shed new light on Roman crucifixion methods and began to rewrite the history of crucifixion in antiquity.



Hezekiah's Tunnel