

## Short List of Evidences

- Transmission of the text of the Bible
  - New Testament
    - The New Testament was not assembled by the Catholic church or by the Roman Emperor. A table of contents of the New Testament resides in a monastery in Europe from early in the 100's AD. It has almost all of the books we have, in the same order. Constantine paid for copies to be made of the existing New Testament. He did not decide what would go in it.
    - The New Testament may be reconstructed entirely from quotation written by people in the first couple of centuries.
    - Tens of thousands of fragments of New Testaments are in various museums that are from before 300 AD.
    - What the original authors wrote is no longer in doubt, although its translation to other languages is. Translators start over using the Greek text with the best evidence each time. They do not just re-translate an old translation. So, errors are constantly weeded out, not accumulated.
    - The New Testament is the best attested ancient document in the world. Nothing else is close. We know much less about the original works of Shakespeare (about 1600 AD).
  - Old Testament
    - Hebrew scribes were professional copyists. They made a good living being precise. After copying one panel of a scroll, they would stop and add the values of the letters horizontally, vertically, and diagonally. The sums were compared to the original. If errors were simple, they were fixed. Otherwise, the panel was scraped off and re-copied until it was correct.
    - When the KJV was translated, the oldest Hebrew manuscript was from about 900 AD, because scribes had been diligent to remove old scrolls from circulation. Because the ink was not acidic, it did not set into the vellum, so, over a few centuries of use, would flake off. So, the scrolls were in constant need of recopying. The scribes did not want scrolls with missing parts of letters to be misread.
    - As the Dead Sea Scrolls were opened (1950 to the present), the oldest available manuscripts of each book were pushed back to various dates between 500 BC and 200 BC. The scrolls had been hidden just before 70 AD, but were old when they were stored. The number of differences between the 900 AD copies and the 500 – 200 BC copies were negligible, with no differences in meaning, mostly in the spelling of names. The scribes had done an amazing job.
    - With archeology now a full-grown science, depositories of replaced scrolls have been found. Some scribes were hesitant to burn old Scriptures, so they had put them in long-term storage. The storerooms were buried under centuries of rubble from the huge number of wars in that region. Now, confirmation of the text from before Jesus is being found.
- Everyone needs to be able to put the famous characters and empires in the Bible in the right order, and know approximate dates.
  - Creation, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Judges, United Kingdom (David), Divided Kingdom, Captivity, Restoration, Maccabees, Jesus, Destruction of Jerusalem
  - Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome

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- Jesus birth: ~ 8 BC because Bishop Usher (who set the BC – AD calendar) didn't add his figures correctly. Herod the Great died in 6 BC.
- No errors in geography or history have been proved to be in the Bible. Many have claimed to find errors, but those claims have always been found to be false.
  - Nineveh was widely taught to be mythological, until it was found.
  - The wealth accumulated by David was widely taught to be unrealistic, until bigger treasuries were found.
  - The Exodus was widely taught to have happened in 1250 BC because that was when Pharaoh Ramses reigned. Exodus says the storage city was called Ramses, not the Pharaoh. This assumption made the history of the Exodus and interactions with other countries fall apart. But, using the date given in the Bible (1447 BC) makes the histories of the surrounding nations all line up correctly.
  - The death of 185,000 Assyrian soldiers at the walls of Jerusalem was widely taught to be mythological. Then, archeologists found the Assyrian and Egyptian accounts of the same event. They only disagree on who was responsible. The Egyptians attributed the deaths to the rat god because, when they got there, rats were everywhere because of the huge number of dead bodies.. The Assyrian king made no excuses, but was declared insane because of his story and was assassinated by his sons.
- Jesus was a real person. He really came back. The miraculous events around that time were recorded by unbelievers.
  - The Romans were professional executioners. They knew dead. No record of any survivor of crucifixion is known.
  - Two governments were desperate to find that body. They failed.
  - The cause for the darkness for three hours at mid-day was hotly debated in public for the next century. Advertising posters for the debates are in museums. The Jews claimed that the darkness was an eclipse. The Christians always won the debate by showing that an eclipse is impossible at the time of a full moon, and Passover was always on the day of the full moon.
  - Pilate's spies gathered intelligence about Jesus because of the potential for revolution. Pilate filed reports which were stored in the Roman Archives. Unfortunately, they were burned when the Gauls sacked Rome. But, several writers looked up the reports and cited them before that. Pilate's spies recorded Jesus' miracles.
- Christianity is the only religion based on evidence.
  - As early as 375 AD, the church had become authority-driven, so evidence was abandoned. Reasoned debate was replaced by authoritative doctrinal decrees, whether they made any sense or not. Hence, the Apocrypha were added to the Old Testament in 382 AD despite shocking errors in geography and history, and widely divergent texts supposedly of the same book.
  - As the Roman Empire declined, the economy collapsed. Successive invasions reduced the majority of the population to a hand-to-mouth existence. Therefore, education stopped (no money to pay teachers, children needed on the farm, etc.) Only monks, who had built walled compounds, maintained libraries. In that period, the monks were truly strange. So, when the economy revived and education restarted, all the teachers were very weird. Reason was replaced by scholasticism (quoting others).