Can I Trust My Bible?

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Psalm 12:6-7-The words of the LORD are pure words, Like silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times. 7 You shall keep them, O LORD, You shall preserve them from this generation forever.

Introduction: Textual Variants (1)

The Transmission Of The Bible

Revelation (2), Inspiration (3), Confirmation, (4, 5) Canonization (6, 7, 8), Preservation (9), Translation

The Text Of The Bible

Three Sources (10), Manuscripts And Versions (11), Church Father Quotations (12), How Textual Variants Are Counted (13), Reasons For Textual Variants (14), Harmonization (15), Scribal Sample (16)

The Trustworthiness Of The Bible

Agreement Between Manuscripts (17), Consequences Of Textual Variants (18), Not Lost In Translation (19, 20), The Holy Bible (21)

Questions

1). List some reasons why people believe that the Bible is unreliable.

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2). Does the Bible teach that faith is opposed to reason (22)? Be specific in your answer.

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3). List some examples of how archaeology confirms the Bible (23).

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4). What were some things that led the famous (former) atheist Antony Flew to conclude that God exists?

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5). What does the word “moved” in 2 Peter 1:21 mean?

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6). What were some of the criteria which determined which Books go into the Bible?

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7). How many Greek and early version manuscripts of the New Testament are there remaining today?

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8). What are some of the most common reasons for the large number of textual variants in the Greek manuscripts?

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9). What are the three main sources of the New Testament?

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10). What are some reasons to believe that the Bible has not been "lost in translation?"

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Endnotes

1. Matthew 6:13 "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." (Many modern translations omit it from the main text or place it in a footnote) Matthew 17:21 "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting." (Most translations omit this entire verse). Matthew 18:11. "For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost." Most translations omit or footnote the verse.). Matthew 20:16. "For many are called, but few chosen."

(Many modern translations do not include that clause). Mark 7:1"If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Many modern translations omit or footnote the verse)

2). General Revelation (Through Nature-Psalm 19:1-4; Job 12:7-10; Matthew 5:44-45; Acts 14:17; Romans 1:18-20) And Special Revelation (Through Scripture-2 Timothy 3:16-17)

I now believe that the universe was brought into existence by an infinite Intelligence. I believe that this universe's intricate laws manifest what scientists have called the Mind of God. I believe that life and reproduction originate in a divine Source. Why do I believe this, given that I expounded and defended atheism for more than a half century? The short answer is this: this is the world picture, as I see it, that has emerged from modern science. Science spotlights three dimensions of nature that point to God. The first is the fact that nature obeys laws. The second is the dimension of life, of intelligently organized and purpose-driven beings, which arose from matter. The third is the very existence of nature. But it is not science alone that has guided me. I have also been helped by a renewed study of the classical philosophical arguments. (Antony Flew, *There Is A God: How The World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind,* 87-88 (Kindle Edition); HarperCollins E-Books)

We are in the position of a little child entering a huge library filled with books in many different languages. The child knows someone must have written those books. It does not know how. It does not understand the languages in which they are written. The child dimly suspects a mysterious order in the arrangement of the books, but doesn't know what it is. That, it seems to me, is the attitude of even the most intelligent human being toward God. We see a Universe marvelously arranged and obeying certain laws, but only dimly understand these laws. Our limited minds cannot grasp the mysterious force that moves the constellations. (Einstein, as quoted in Denis Brian, Einstein: A Life, New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1996, 186).

3). 2 Samuel 23:2-The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue.

Jeremiah 1:9-Then the LORD put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.

Matthew 10:19-20-19 But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should

speak; 20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

2 Peter 1:20-21-20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

The word for "moved' in this passage is very graphic. "...to carry; pass., to be carried, to be borne along. Pres. describes the action as it was in progress. The word was used of a ship carried along by the wind (s. Acts 17:15, 17). The metaphor here is of prophets raising their sails, the Holy Spirit filling them and carrying their craft along in the direction He wished. Men spoke; God spoke (Green). (Cleon Rogers Jr. & Cleon Rogers III, *The New Linguistic And Exegetical Key To The Greek New Testament,* 584; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan)

4). It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical reference.—Rabbi Dr. Nelson Glueck The man who delivered the above statement was among the most respected of his century. He was close to many Israeli statesmen, including David Ben-Gurion, Golda Meir, and Abba Eban, and for twenty-four years he was president of Hebrew Union College. In 1961 he delivered the benediction at President John F. Kennedy's inauguration, and in 1963 he was featured on the cover of Time. But Rabbi Glueck was most famous for his pioneering work in the field of biblical archaeology. When one considers that he was more on the theologically liberal end of the spectrum, his statement is the more remarkable. It continued: "Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible." When someone like Glueck says something as strong as "it may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery"—ever—has pointed away from the veracity of the Bible, it's hard not to take notice. It's also hard not to wonder whether the book that some think of as a cobbled-together compendium of ancient folktales—most of which are half-remembered and get many details wrong, even if there is some fundamental truth to them—is in fact the inerrant Word of God. How else can we understand Glueck's fantastic assertion that all of the archaeological discoveries confirm what the ancient scriptures say?… The track record of biblical archaeology baffled—and continues to baffle—those convinced that archaeology must eventually contradict the biblical accounts. One of these is James Agresti, an aerospace engineer who in his book Rational Conclusions describes being a twenty-five-year-old atheist determined to study the Bible to document its errors. But what he encountered surprised him, and by the time he was finished, he was instead persuaded of its truth. But one of the main

reasons for his about-face was what he learned about the archaeological record. Echoing Rabbi Glueck, Agresti concluded: "I have yet to encounter archaeological evidence that shows any part of the Bible to be inaccurate." (Eric Metaxas, Is Atheism Dead? 119-120 (Kindle Edition): Washington D.C.: Salem Books)

5). Because the Bible contains stories from the ancient world, written in a style different than the method of modern historians and paired with theology, many have assumed that the narratives in the Bible are myth, legend, and propaganda instead of accurate history. In fact, the majority of scholars, most media and educational sources, and many in the general public regard the Bible as a fairy tale and frequently portray it as unimportant or irrelevant beyond literary and religious studies. For years, the Bible has been routinely attacked and disregarded on the basis of history or archaeology. And yet when people look into what archaeologists have unearthed, a different story comes to light, showing that instead of fiction and fairy tales, archaeology indicates that the Bible preserves an accurate recounting of the history addressed in its pages. Specifically, hundreds of artifacts from the distant past have demonstrated the events, people, and places in the Bible to be historical. (Titus M. Kennedy, Unearthing the Bible: 101 Archaeological Discoveries That Bring the Bible to Life, 9(Kindle Edition); Eugene, Oregon; Harvest House Publishers)

6). How do we know what books belong in the Bible? There is a test for what books belong in the Bible or canonicity. The following questions which are grounded in a Theistic understanding of the world help us recognize what is Scripture or the word of God: 1. Was it written by a prophet of God? 2. Was the writer confirmed by acts of God? 3. Does the message tell the truth about God? 4. Did it come with the power of God? 5. Was it accepted by the people of God? The Bible is recognized as Scripture because its books pass the test of canonicity or they are recognized by another inspired book as being Scripture and does not teach or affirm anything opposed to the other books of Scripture. (Norman L. Geisler & Douglas E. Potter, The Bible: Its Origin, Nature & Collection (NGIM Guide to Bible Doctrine Book 1), 69-70 (Kindle Edition); Matthews, North Carolina; Bastion Books)

The 66 books that were chosen met the following strict standards: 1. Does the book possess a definite prophetic and inspirational quality; does it manifest a clear "Thus saith the Lord?" 2. Was the book written by a reputable prophet, authored by an apostle, or a contemporary intimately associated with an apostle? 3. Was the book accepted, collected, preserved, distributed, and read by God's people either in the Old Testament period or New Testament period? 4. Do its contents and

message harmonize with the standards of sound biblical teaching? Many of the false writings contained an abundance of fanciful legends, factual inaccuracies, and doctrinal heresies. 5. Does it possess a dynamic, life-transforming power which has a universal impact upon men? 6. Was it endorsed and accepted by successive generations of believers, such as the early church fathers? In other words, there seemed to be a consistent, prevailing witness of the overwhelming majority of the church concerning a book's divine inspiration. (Joanne Howe, *From Nun To Priest: Hope For Those Bound By Tradition,* 650-658 (Kindle Edition); Nashville, TN; Gospel Advocate Company)

7). The Inspired Prophets Gave The Confirmed Word Of God To The People Of God (Which Were Then Placed Into The Canon Of Scripture)

Deuteronomy 31:24-26-**24** So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished, **25** that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying: **26** "Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you;

Joshua 24:26-Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD.

Isaiah 30:8-Now go, write it before them on a tablet, And note it on a scroll, That it may be for time to come, Forever and ever:

Jeremiah 30:2-Thus speaks the LORD God of Israel, saying: 'Write in a book for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you.

Jeremiah 36:2-3-**2** "Take a scroll of a book and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah even to this day. **3** It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."

Habakkuk 2:2-Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision And make *it* plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it.

Colossians 4:16-Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.

1 Thessalonians 5:27- I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren.

8). The canon was substantially fixed long before Jamnia, and discussions there did not admit certain books into the canon but allowed these books to remain. 2 Additional evidence on the Old Testament canon comes from Josephus, a well-known Jewish historian of the first century....We can draw several conclusions from Josephus. 1. The number of books looked upon as having divine authority is carefully limited to twenty- two. By joining Ruth to Judges and Lamentations to Jeremiah, and remembering that the Jews enumerated their books differently, the twenty- two books mentioned by Josephus are the same as the thirty- nine books in our Bible today. 2. The division of the books is according to a three- part pattern. Although individual books are included in different categories, they form a threefold grouping similar to the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. 3. The time covered in these books is expressly limited. Josephus believed that the canon extended from Moses to Artaxerxes (464- 424 B.C.). This corresponds with the Jewish belief that prophetic inspiration ceased with Malachi, who apparently was a contemporary of Ezra and Nehemiah. 4 This was the period of Artaxerxes. Others indeed wrote later, but their writings are not on a par with the earlier writings. In other words, according to Josephus, the canon is closed. 4. The text of these books is sacred. No one has dared to cancel or alter it, since to every Jew these writings are "decrees of God. (Neil Lightfoot, *How We Got The Bible,* 154-156 (Kindle Edition); Grand Rapids, Michigan; Baker Books)

The Jewish teachers acknowledged that their prophetic line ended in the fourth century B.C. Yet, as even Catholics acknowledge, all apocryphal books were written after this time. Josephus wrote: "From Artaxerxes until our time everything has been recorded, but has not been deemed worthy of like credit with what preceded, because the exact succession of the prophets ceased" (Josephus). Additional rabbinical statements on the cessation of prophecy support this (see Beckwith, 370). Seder Olam Rabbah 30 declares "Until then [the coming of Alexander the Great] the prophets prophesied through the Holy Spirit. From then on, 'Incline thine ear and hear the words of the wise.'" Baba Bathra 12b declares: "Since the day when the Temple was destroyed, prophecy has been taken from the prophets and given to the wise." Rabbi Samuel bar Inia said, "The Second Temple lacked five things which the First Temple possessed, namely, the fire, the ark, the Urim and Thummin, the oil of anointing and the Holy Spirit [of prophecy]." Thus,

the Jewish fathers (rabbis) acknowledged that the time period during which their Apocrypha was written was not a time when God was giving inspired writings. (Norman Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia Of Christian Apologetics,* 33 (Kindle Edition); Grand Rapids, Michigan; Baker Books)

9). "Metzger had already mentioned the name of Sir Frederic Kenyon, former director of the British Museum and author of The Palaeography of Greek Papyri. Kenyon has said that "in no other case is the interval of time between the composition of the book and the date of the earliest manuscripts so short as in that of the New Testament." 5 His conclusion: "The last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed." 6". (Lee Strobel, Case for Christ Movie Edition: Solving the Biggest Mystery of All Time, 67 (Kindle Edition): Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan)

10). "1. It is well known that for determining the Text of the New Testament, we are dependent on three chief sources of information: viz. (1.) on MANUSCRIPTS, —(2.) on VERSIONS,—(3.) on FATHERS." (John William Burgon, The Last Twelve Verses According To Saint Mark, 363-368 (Kindle Edition): James Parker & Company)

11). The current number according to the Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung (Institute for New Testament Textual Research, hereafter the INTTR) in Münster, Germany, the official cataloger of Greek NT MSS, is c. 5,856. This includes papyri, majuscules, minuscules, and lectionaries (for more information about these manuscript types, see chapter 2). According to their tally from January 2017: minuscules = 2,937; majuscules (uncials) = 323; papyri = 131; lectionaries = 2,465 for a total of 5,856.…Wallace concludes that "all told, probably between fifteen and twenty thousand texts of the ancient versions of the New Testament remain. There are no exact numbers because not all the manuscripts have been carefully catalogued." (Wallace, correspondence to J. McDowell and M. J. Tingblad, June 3, 2016). (Josh McDowell, Sean McDowell, Evidence That Demands a Verdict: Life-Changing Truth for a Skeptical World, 48-51 (Kindle Edition): Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers)

12). Here's another astonishing fact: the early Church fathers—Origen, Clement, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Ignatius, Polycarp, etc.—prolifically cited the New Testament in their writings. Just a few of the early fathers alone account for 36,000 New Testament citations, but the number of such citations from all the Church fathers exceeds one million. "So extensive are these citations," say Komoszewski, Sawyer, and Wallace, "that if all other sources for our knowledge of the text of the New

Testament were destroyed, they would be sufficient alone for the reconstruction of practically the entire New Testament." 71 And as Sir Fredric Kenyon observes, "The number of manuscripts of the New Testament, of early translations from it, and of quotations from it in the oldest writers of the Church, is so large that it is practically certain that the true reading of every doubtful passage is preserved in some one or other of these ancient authorities. This can be said of no other book in the ancient world." 72. (David Limbaugh, Jesus on Trial: A Lawyer Affirms the Truth of the Gospel, 217 (Kindle Edition): Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing)

13). This large number is gained by counting all the variations in all of the manuscripts (above 5,300). For example, if one slight variant were to occur in 4,000 different manuscripts, this would amount to 4,000 "errors." But this is how one can arrive at the large number of 200,000 "errors." A person is either unlearned or of a skeptical mind who tries to take this large number of variations and use it in such a way as to undermine one's faith in the Word of God. (Neil Lightfoot, *How We Got The Bible,* 96 (Kindle Edition); Grand Rapids, Michigan; Baker Books)

Ironically, the way Ehrman counts "errors" (variants), there were 1.6 million errors in the first printing of his book. For there were 16 errors, and the book printed an alleged 100,000 copies.6 Yet Ehrman would be shocked if someone denied the credibility of his book based on this count. Similarly, no one should deny the credibility of the Bible on Ehrman's count. Ehrman himself admits the biblical variants do not affect the central message of the Bible. He wrote, "In fact, most of the changes found in early Christian manuscripts have nothing to do with theology or ideology. Far and away the most changes are the result of mistakes pure and simple—slips of the pen, accidental omissions, inadvertent additions, misspelled words, blunders of one sort or another. (Norman L. Geisler & William Nix, From God To Us: How We Got Our Bible, 243 (Kindle Edition); Chicago; Moody Publishers)

14). a. Unintentional changes of various kinds all arise from the imperfection of some human faculty. These constitute by far the vast majority of all transcriptional errors. 1. Errors of the eye • Wrong division of words that resulted in the formation of new words—early manuscripts were not punctuated, and letters were not separated into words by spaces. • Omission of letters, words, and even whole lines occurred when the astigmatic eye mistook one group of letters or words for another, sometimes located on a different line. • Repetition results in an error opposite the error of omission. Hence, when the eye picked up the same letter or word twice and repeated it, it is called dittography. • Transposition is the reversal of the position of two letters or words. This is technically known as metathesis. In

2 Chronicles 3:4, the transposition of a letter would make the measurements of the porch of Solomon's Temple out of proportion—for example, 120 cubits instead of 20 cubits as in the LXX (Septuagint). • Other confusion of spelling abbreviations or scribal insertions account for the remainder of scribal errors. This is especially true about Hebrew letters, which were also used for numbers and could be easily confused. These errors of the eye may account for many of the numerical discrepancies in the Old Testament (cf. 2 Kings 8:26; 2 Chronicles 22:2). 2. Errors of the ear occurred only when manuscripts were copied while listening to someone read them. This may explain why some manuscripts (fifth century onward) read kamelos (a rope) instead of kamēlos (a camel) in Matthew 19:24. In 1 Corinthians 13:3, kauthēsomai (he burns) was confused with kauchēsomai (he boasts). 3. Errors of memory. These are not so numerous, but occasionally a scribe might forget the precise word in a passage and substitute a synonym. 4. Errors of judgment. The most common error of this kind is caused by dim lighting or poor eyesight. Sometimes marginal notes were incorporated into the text under the misapprehension that they were part of the text. It is difficult to determine whether some variants are caused by faulty judgment or intentional doctrinal changes. No doubt I John 5:7 and Acts 8:37 fall into one or the other of these categories. 5. Errors of writing. If a scribe, due to imperfect style or accident, wrote indistinctly or imprecisely, he would set the stage for future error of sight or judgment. Rapid copying was no doubt responsible for many errors in writing. This is viewed especially in the parallel accounts of the Kings-Chronicles corpus. (Ed Hindson & Ergun Caner, *The Popular Encyclopedia Of Apologetics,* 98-99 (Kindle Edition); Eugenee Oregon; Harvest House Publishers)

15). Other passages that fall into the same category of inserted text from other places in the gospel accounts include Matthew 17:21 (borrowed from Mark 9:29); Matthew 18:11 (from Luke 19:10); Matthew 23:14 (from Mark 12:40 and Luke 20:47); Mark 11:26 (from Matthew 6:15); Mark 15:28 (from Luke 22:37 or Isaiah 53:12); Luke 17:36 (from Matthew 24:40); and Luke 23:17 (from Matthew 27:15 or Mark 15:6). In fact, nearly every verse that is displaced from the modern texts is a copy, so to speak, of a verse found in all the Greek manuscripts. Obviously, then, there is no purposeful agenda to remove any of these verses *for doctrinal reasons*. (James R. White, <u>The King James Only Controversy: Can You Trust Modern Translations?</u> 200 (Logos Edition): Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House)

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17). There are over five thousand manuscripts of the Greek New Testament, although only one manuscript contains a whole Testament. This number is far greater than the number of manuscripts supporting the Greek and Latin classics,

some of which have a mere handful of ancient manuscripts. The Greek manuscripts of the New Testament were written very soon after the writing of the original texts. The manuscripts are from various parts of the ancient world-Palestine, Asia Minor, Egypt, and the West. Because so much has been said about textual variants, many people have received the impression that the New Testament is on shaky ground. Not so! Fully eighty-five percent of the text is the same in all types of manuscripts. As for the other fifteen percent, we should point out that much of the material concerns details that do not even show up in an English translation. Such things as word order, spelling, and slightly variant forms of some verbs seldom are reproduced in translation. Most of the variations are caused by accidental copyists' errors. (Arthur L. Farstad, The New King James Version: In the Great Tradition, 104-105 (Kindle Edition): Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers)

18). 4. How significant are the variants? It is easy to leave the wrong impression by speaking of 200,000 "errors" that have crept into the text due to scribal mistakes and intended corrections. There are only 10,000 places where these 200,000 variants occur. The next question is, How significant are those 10,000 places? Textual critics have attempted to answer that question by offering percentages and comparisons. a. Scholars Westcott and Hort estimated that only about one-eighth of all the variants had any weight, as most of them merely involve mechanical matters such as spelling or style. Of the whole, then, only about one-sixtieth rise above "trivialities," or can in any sense be called substantial variations. Mathematically that would compute to a text that is 98.33 percent pure whether the critic adopts the Textus Receptus, Majority Nestle-Aland Text, or some eclectic text of the New Testament. b. Ezra Abbott gave similar figures, saying about 19/20 (95 percent) of the readings are various rather than rival readings, and about 19/20 (95 percent) of the remainder are of so little importance that their addition or rejection makes no appreciable difference in the sense of the passage. Thus the degree of substantial purity would be 99.75 percent. c. Philip Schaff (p. 177) surmised that of the 150,000 variations known in his day, only 400 affected the sense; and of those, only 50 were of real significance; and of this total, not one affected "an article of faith or a precept of duty which is not abundantly sustained by other undoubted passages, or by the whole tenor of Scripture teaching." d. A.T. Robertson (p. 22) suggested that the real concern of textual criticism is of a "thousandth part of the entire text That would make the reconstructed text of the New Testament 99.9 percent free from real concern for the textual critic. (Ed Hindson & Ergun Caner (General Editors), *The Popular Encyclopedia Of Apologetics: Surveying The Evidence For The Truth Of Christianity,* 99-100 (Kindle Edition); Eugene, Oregon; Harvest House Publishers)

The overwhelming majority of these four hundred thousand supposed variations stem from differences in spelling, word order, or the relationships between nouns and definite articles. In other words, a copyist simply switched a couple of letters, misheard a word, or skipped a line of text. Such variants are readily recognizable and, in most cases, utterly unnoticeable in translations!...In the end, more than 99 percent of the four hundred thousand or so differences fall into this category of variants that can't even be seen in translations! (Timothy Paul Jones, Conspiracies And The Cross, 1531-1540 (Kindle Edition); Lake Mary, Florida; FrontLine)

19). "First, no matter how wonderful a translation is, it has limitations. The Bible was originally written using 11,280 Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words, but the typical English translation uses only around 6,000 words. Obviously, nuances and shades of meaning can be missed, so it is always helpful to compare translations." (Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?, 405 (Kindle Edition) Zondervan)

20). Scholars have been studying Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, and English literally for centuries, and they are able to translate accurately and precisely between those four languages.…But what about the various translations themselves? Don't they render the Bible so differently from each other that we really can't be sure at all about the original meaning? That's a good question, but in reality, even when different translations use different words to render the same Greek or Hebrew phrase, that does not necessarily—or even very often at all—leave us with any doubt about what the original was saying.…My point here is simply to say that different translations do not prevent us from knowing what the original actually meant. In fact, reading two or three translations side-by-side can many times actually help fill out the picture of what's happening.…Certain words and phrases are indeed difficult to translate, and in those cases, different translators will often disagree about how to render those words or phrases. But even in those instances, we should keep at least a handful of things firmly in mind: Scholars significantly disagree about how to translate only an exceedingly small percentage of words or phrases in the Bible. These cases also represent an exceedingly small portion of any given book (or even any chapter) in the Bible. When there is such disagreement or uncertainty, the best translations of the Bible will acknowledge that in a footnote, making the reader aware of other possible translations or even noting (as the ESV puts it) that "the meaning of the Hebrew [or Greek] is uncertain."2 The point is, no one is trying to "slip anything through" without telling us, nor—at this point in the history of English translations—would they be able to do so even if they wanted to. The sheer number of scholarly translations actually helps us identify—and avoid!—deliberately misleading translations. For

example, when the New World Translation (NWT) of the Jehovah's Witnesses translates John 1:1 as "and the Word was a god," it helps to be aware that every other major translation renders that verse "and the Word was God." Clearly, the NWT has done something here that the other translations reject, and if you studied Greek long enough to understand its use of articles (a, an, and the), you would come to the same conclusion the other translators obviously did—that the NWT has tailored its "translation" of that verse to protect a particular, idiosyncratic theological doctrine. Once we identify and reject deliberate mistranslations like that, we can confidently say that not one major doctrine of orthodox Christianity rests on a disputed or uncertain translation of the Bible's original languages. We know what the Bible says, and we know what it means.3…I hope you can see the point in all this. Nothing in either the theory or the reality-on-the-ground of Bible translations introduces the slightest bit of doubt about whether we can really know what the Bible in its original languages says. In fact, we do know what it says, and the places where some scholars disagree are few and far between and ultimately of minor significance. The Bible can be and has been translated correctly, over and over and over again. (Greg Gilbert, Why Trust the Bible? (9Marks), 33-40 (Kindle Edition): Wheaton, IL: Crossway)

21). The Holy Bible (Author Unknown)

This Book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners and the happiness of believers.

Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable.

Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy.

It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you.

It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's character.

Here paradise is restored, Heaven opened, and the gates of hell disclosed.

Christ is its grand object; our good is its design, and the glory of God its end.

It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet.

Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully.

It is given you in life and will be opened in the judgment and will be remembered forever.

It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents.

22). Hebrews 11:1-Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

True faith is substance. It is evidence. The word "substance" in Hebrews 11 is ὑπόστασις hypostasis and it means "confidence" or "assurance." It has the connotation of a foundation or substructure, something stable and unmoving on which things can be built. It is substance that gives real existence. The word hypostasis was used in ancient title deeds as a guarantee of ownership. It refers to the real essence, the real content. Faith is the essence of a future reality, despite the appearances of the physical world around us....As a scientific term, hypostasis is antithetical to lack of knowledge. Hypostasis is the substance , the reality. It's something proven. It's the evidence of things not seen. The word ἔλεγχος elegchos is a legal term for evidence that is accepted for conviction. It's what makes us certain about something. In 2 Timothy 3:16 it is translated "reproof," but it is the information that leads to our being convinced, that gives us conviction. The person of faith lives out his belief based on what his mind and spirit are convinced is true...The writer of Hebrews tells us that our faith is not merely a hope or a fiat system of currency. Our faith is not a dream or wish or fantasy. It's reality. Our faith is substance. (Dr. Chuck Missler, *Beyond Perception: The Evidence Of Things Not Seen,* 55-80 (Kindle Edition); Coeur d'Alene, ID; Koinonia House).

23). Many scarab seals discovered in both Egypt and Canaan contain the names of rulers mentioned in the Bible, and in one case a personal name of one of the patriarchs known from the narratives in Genesis. At present, 27 scarab seals bearing the name "Yaqob" (Jacob) and the element "El" (perhaps meaning "protected by God") have been discovered in Egypt, Canaan, and Nubia dating to around 1800–1600 BC. 21 While the scarabs may not be referring to Jacob the patriarch and father of the 12 tribes, these inscriptions do attest to the usage of the name Yaqob/ Jacob in Canaan and Egypt during the time of the Jacob known from Genesis around the 18th century BC. Further, it is significant that the name does not appear to be common either before or after that period, demonstrating that the name Jacob was primarily used at the time of the patriarchs and therefore the

narratives in Genesis accurately reflect the historical usage of this name. (Titus M. Kennedy, Unearthing the Bible: 101 Archaeological Discoveries That Bring the Bible to Life, 38-39 (Kindle Edition); Eugene, Oregon; Harvest House Publishers)

Recent research conducted on previously overlooked Egyptian coins confirms the biblical story of Joseph and his role in government service in ancient Egypt. In 2009, archaeological authorities from the Egyptian National Museum announced that a cache of ancient coins had been "rediscovered." Initially discovered almost a century earlier, the coins had been in storage. They were uncovered in the vast storage vaults of the national museum and the Antiquities Authority. Cairo's Al Ahram newspaper reported that the coins bear the name and image of the biblical Joseph.21 The cache of more than five hundred coins had been set aside decades earlier in the belief that they were miscellaneous objects of worship and likely of no significance. However, scientists re-examined the coins using recently developed technology and discovered that a number of them dated to the time of ancient Egypt. Most of the coins were engraved with the year they were minted and their monetary value and the effigies or images of the pharaohs ruling Egypt when the coins were minted. Researchers concluded that the "Joseph coins" originated in the period when Joseph served as Pharaoh's treasurer—during the seven years of plenty and seven years of famine (see Genesis 41:41–45). Biblical history suggests a date for Joseph's high position in the Egyptian government that coincides with the date of the minting of the coins in the cache (approximately 2000 B.C.). Amazingly, some of the coins bear both Joseph's name and image. (Grant R. Jeffrey, *The Signature Of God: Conclusive Proof That Every Teaching, Every Command, Every Promise In The Bible Is True*, 69-70 (Kindle Edition); Waterbrook Press)