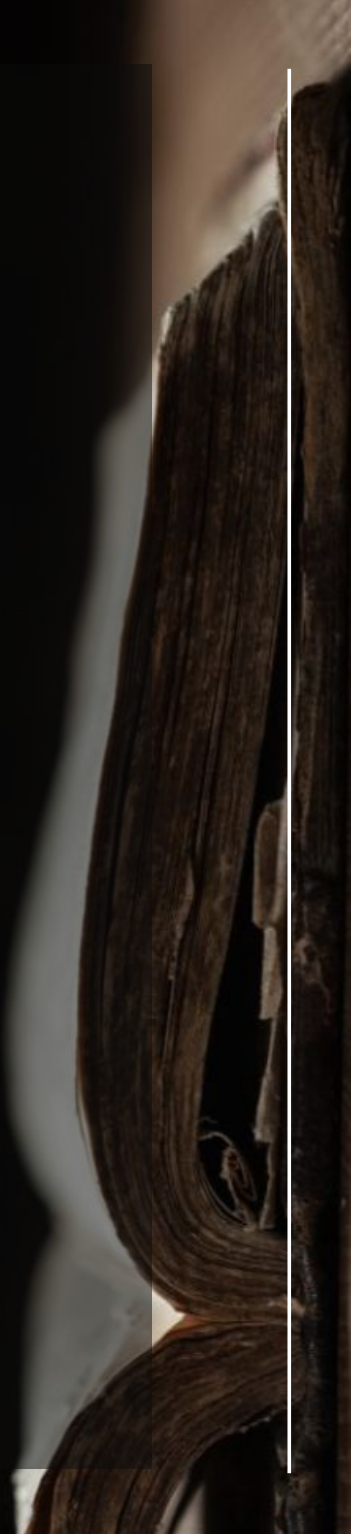


Christian Apologetics

The Bible

Challenges We Face

- The Bible is a work of fiction, with no historical basis.
 - We don't have the original texts.
 - Which version is correct?
 - The Bible was written by men, how can it be the Word of God?
 - The Bible is full of contradictions and error.
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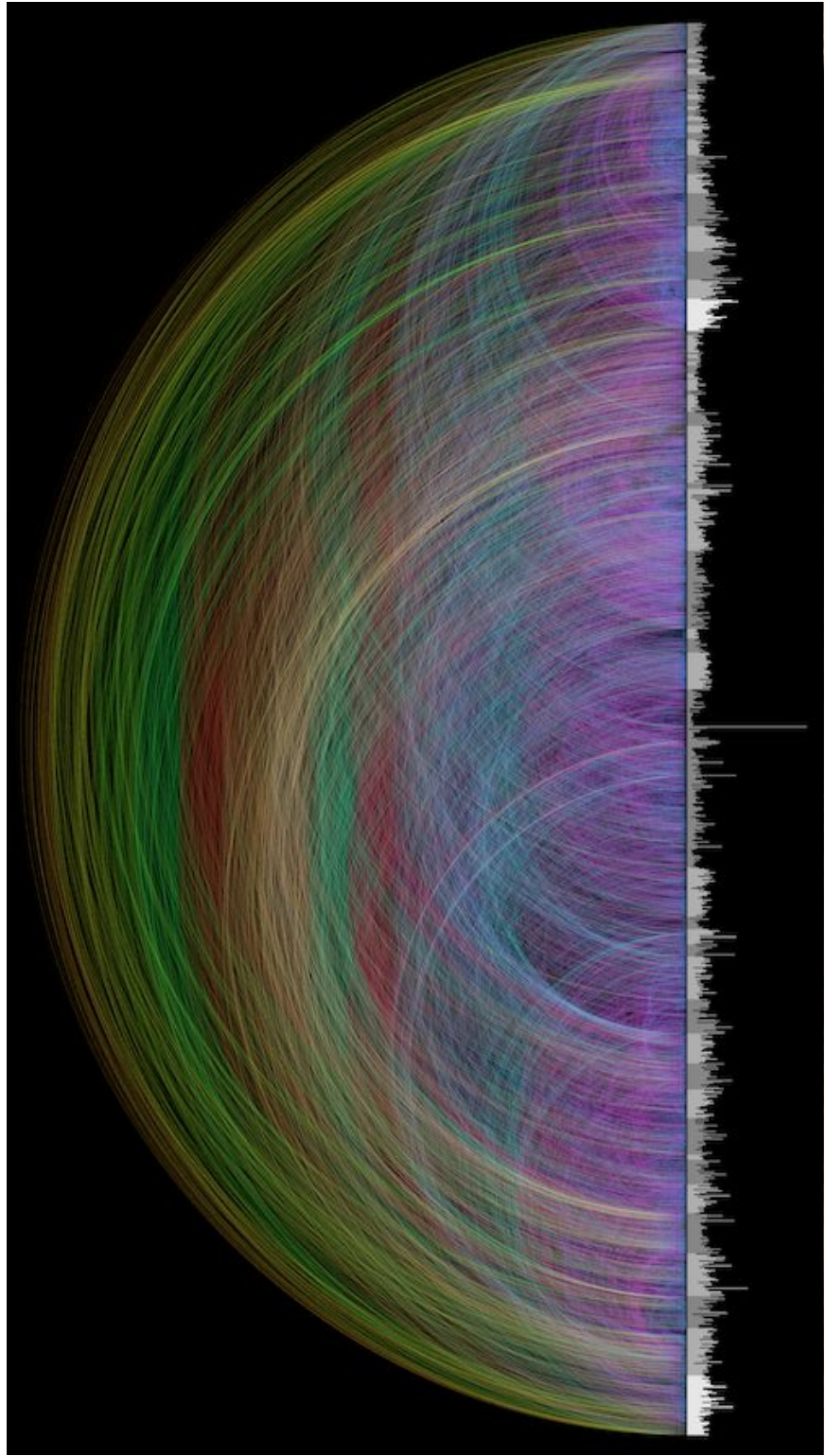
Agenda

- **Historicity**
 - Archaeological Finds
 - Non-religious Comparisons
 - Biblical Sources
 - Non-Christian Sources
- **Inspiration**
 - Properties of Inspiration
 - Views of Inspiration
 - Middle Knowledge
 - Inerrancy/Infallibility
- **The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy**
 - Transmission and Translation
 - Variants
 - Difficulties
 - A Defense of Biblical Inerrancy

Evidence for Historicity

- Evidence - The available body of facts or information indicating whether a belief or proposition is true or valid.
- The Bible is made up of 66 books, by at least 40 writers, across multiple continents, and written over the span of around 1500 years.





Archaeological Finds



The Tel Dan Stele(900-850 BC)

- Skeptics believed that David was a mythical person and carved in this stele is the expression "House of David".
- Furthermore, what we have is the location this stele was found. Tel Dan is the site of what is thought to be the ancient city of Dan.
- Genesis 14:14 – Lot had been taken and Abraham led 318 of his trained men against the kings of the land. He pursued them as far as Dan.
- Not only do we have evidence for a city that was thought to not be real, but we found this stele that gives evidence for David.

Archaeological Finds



The Meesha (Mesha) Stele (846 BC)

- This stele is also known as the Moabite Stone.
- It records the revolts of Mesha, King of Moab against Israel mentioned in 2 Kings 3.
- It mentions Mesha, Omri - King of Israel, David of the United Monarchy, and even Yahweh.

Archaeological Finds

The Nabonidus Cylinder(550 BC)

- This cuneiform cylinder is written from the perspective of King Nabonidus of Babylonia. It mentions his son Belshazzar by name
- whom critics claimed never existed, putting into question the account in the book of Daniel.
- Daniel 5:16 "...you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."
- The cylinder clearly showed Belshazzar did exist and his coregency with Nabonidus.



Archaeological Finds

Caiaphas Ossuary

- A container or room where bones of dead people are placed.
- This box was discovered in Jerusalem and belongs to Caiaphas, the high priest who presided at the sham trial of Jesus after raising Lazarus.
- John 11:49-52 – “But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all. Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.”
- Caiaphas was part of the chief priests and elders who handed Jesus over to the Pilate.



Archaeological Finds

Pilate Dedication Stone(30 A.D)

- A limestone block found at a Roman amphitheater.
- It gave evidence to the existence of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea mentioned in the gospel accounts.
- Pilate presided over the trials and crucifixion of Jesus.



Non-Religious Comparisons

- Julius Caesar
 - Less than 50 manuscripts primarily by Cesar himself, in addition to Cicero, Sallust, Plutarch, Suetonius, and a few others
 - *Gallic Wars* - 10 manuscripts in existence with the earliest being copied 1,000 years after the original
- Alexander the Great
 - Majority are third-hand accounts with roughly the same amount of manuscripts as Caesar
- Socrates
 - Three primary sources with the main being his student Plato. Plato wrote 34 dialogues with Socrates and with tremendous conflict in character across the dialogues

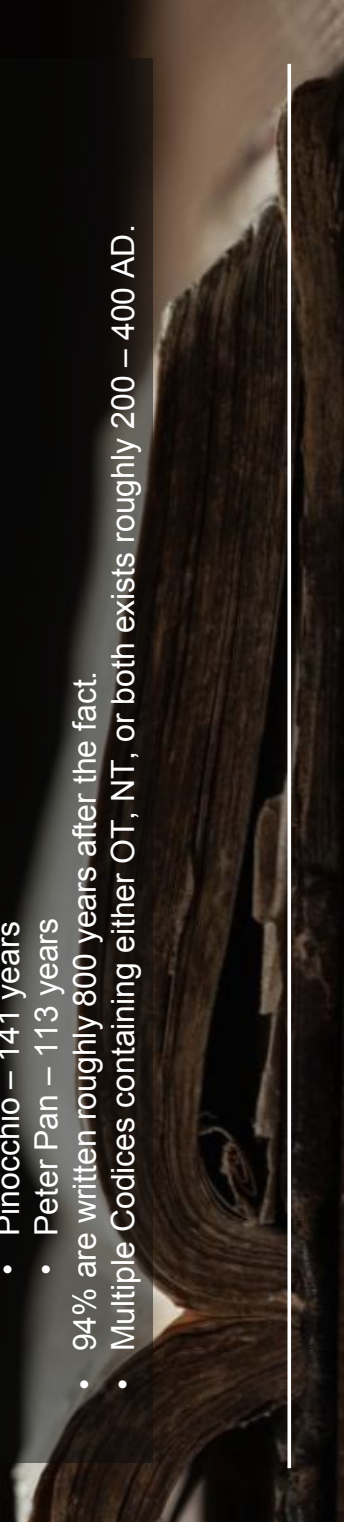
Non-Religious Comparisons

- Aristotle
 - *Poetics* – 5 manuscripts in existence with the earliest being copied 1,400 years after the original
- Herodotus
 - Wrote the history of the Greco-Persian Wars.
 - 9 manuscripts and 18 fragments



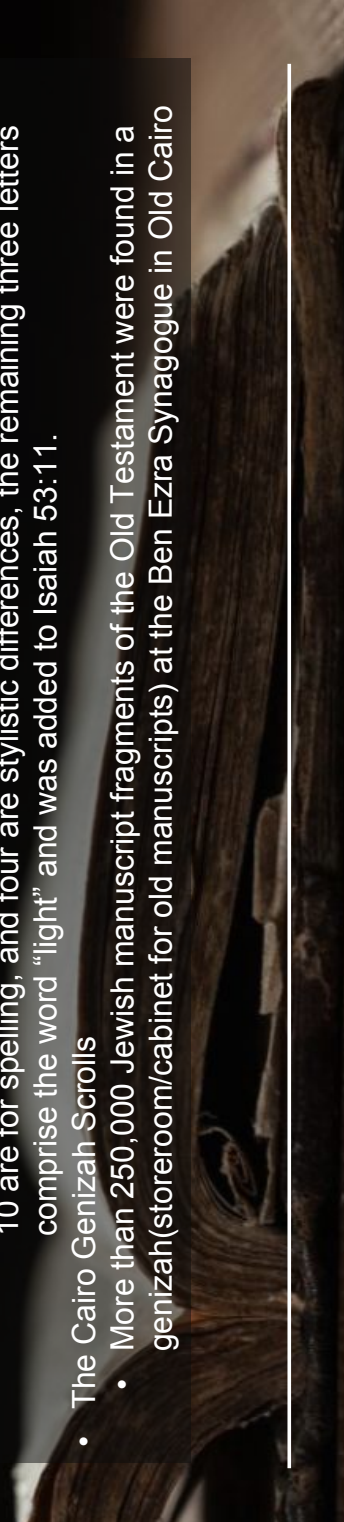
Biblical Sources

- We have over 25,100 manuscripts for the New testament alone
 - 5,800 Greek manuscripts
 - 10,000 Latin manuscripts
 - 9,300 manuscripts across other languages
- Though only a handful, the earliest written within 150 years of the events
 - For reference:
 - Pride and Prejudice – 211 years
 - The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn – 140 years
 - Pinocchio – 141 years
 - Peter Pan – 113 years
 - 94% are written roughly 800 years after the fact.
 - Multiple Codices containing either OT, NT, or both exists roughly 200 – 400 AD.



Biblical Sources

- We have over 17,000 manuscripts for the Old Testament
 - The Aleppo Codex – 925 AD
 - The Leningrad Codex – 1008 AD
 - The Qumran Scrolls(Dead Sea Scrolls) – Nearly 1,200 years before the Aleppo Codex
 - When compared to the modern Hebrew Bible, more than 95% of the text were identical, word for word.
 - The 5% are mainly spelling variations
 - For example, of the 166 words in Isaiah 53, 17 letters are in questions. Of those, 10 are for spelling, and four are stylistic differences, the remaining three letters comprise the word “light” and was added to Isaiah 53:11.
- The Cairo Genizah Scrolls
 - More than 250,000 Jewish manuscript fragments of the Old Testament were found in a genizah(storeroom/cabinet for old manuscripts) at the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Old Cairo



Non-Christian Sources

- List of Non-Christian Authors:
 - Tacitus – Late 1st Century Roman Historian
 - Lucian – Mid 2nd Century Greek Author
 - Suetonius – Early 2nd Century Roman Historian
 - Thallus – Mid 1st Century Historian
 - Pliny – Mid 1st Century Author
 - Talmud – 3rd Century Jewish account of the life of Jesus
 - Mara bar Serapion – Mid 1st Century Jewish Philosopher
 - Celcus – 2nd Century Greek Philosopher
 - Flavius Josephus – 1st Century Jewish Historian



Non-Christian Sources

- Claims these authors corroborate:
 - Jesus lived
 - Jesus spent part of his early life in Egypt
 - Jesus was a wise teacher
 - Jesus performed public wonders
 - Jesus healed • Jesus fed multitudes
 - Jesus raised people from the dead
 - Jesus proclaimed his deity
 - Jesus had a significant following during his life
 - Jesus was tried by Pontius Pilate
 - Jesus was crucified
 - Jesus' crucifixion happened at the behest of Jewish leadership
 - Jesus' support waned during the crucifixion
 - Jesus died during the reign of Tiberius
 - An unprecedented eclipse occurred during the crucifixion
 - An earthquake occurred during the crucifixion

Non-Christian Sources

- Claims these authors corroborate continued:
 - Christians believed in eternal life
 - Christians were martyred
 - Christians viewed themselves as brothers and sisters
 - Christians worshiped Jesus as God
 - Christians cared about morality
 - Christians shared their things in common
 - Christians met the needs of the poor
 - Christians met weekly
 - Christians sang worship to Jesus
 - Christians were evangelistic
 - Christianity included Gentiles, not just Jews
 - Christianity persisted after the crucifixion and quickly gained momentum
 - Rome viewed Christians as a threat by the 40s A.D.
 - Rome persecuted Christians in the first century
 - The authorities who opposed Jesus and the church never produced Jesus's body.

Biblical Inspiration

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 – “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”
- It is the *Scripture* that is God-breathed and it is *Scripture* itself that is inspired



Biblical Inspiration

- 2 Peter 1:19-21 – “And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”
- “carried along” – they were moved to speak what was from God




Properties of Inspiration

- Plenary – complete in every respect, absolute, full, entire
 - *All* Scripture is inspired by God
 - It speaks to the breadth of information given to us
 - This also means we cannot say one book is inspired and another one is not



Properties of Inspiration

- Verbal – the *individual* words of Scripture are inspired
 - This speaks to the depth of information given to us
 - Examples:
 - John 10:35-36 – “If he called them gods to whom the word of God came – and Scripture cannot be broken – do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?”
 - Galatians 3:16 – “Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “and to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, “And to your offspring,” who is Christ.
- 

Properties of Inspiration

- Propositional revelation (Philosophical)
 - English - A circle has no sharp corners
 - Spanish - Un círculo no tiene esquinas afiladas
 - German - Ein Kreis hat keine scharfen Ecken
- Sentential revelation (Theological)
 - The sentences are inspired by God



Properties of Inspiration

- Confluent – flowing or running together; blending into one
 - By this we mean the Bible is the product of human and divine authorship
 - We see the human personalities, vocabulary, emotions, etc. within Scripture



Mechanical

- The writer is physically moved to write by God.
- Each stroke of the pen is made by God as if the writer were a puppet.
- This does not allow for confluency.



Dictation

- The writer simply records what is told to him, taking dictation from God.
- Levicula (light weight/trivial):
 - Romans 16:6-14
 - 1 Timothy 6:20-21
 - 1 Peter 5L 12-14
 - 3 John 1
- Emotion:
 - Psalm 139:19-24
- Clear Dictation:
 - Jeremiah 3:12-15
- Conversations:
 - Throughout OT
- Dictation does not allow for confluency

Accommodation


- Form of Dictation where God accommodates himself to the limitations and the vocabulary of the human author so that what is written has these human qualities to it.
- God speaks/dictates in a “condescending manner” and the writer writes in that manner.
 - For Example: How one might speak to a younger child or infant or even someone with a different native language. We use “smaller” and/or simpler words to get the point across.
 - John Calvin - God already does so by speaking to the writer in Hebrew or Greek.
 - This does not really allow the writer to come through and so confluency is out the door.

Supervision/Superintendent

- God does not dictate what is written, but does supervise the writing of Scripture in such a way that they will write what God wants them to write.
- The human author is under the direction in spontaneously writing what is God's Word.
- This view of Biblical Inspiration allows for Scripture to be Plenary, Verbal, and Confluent.




Middle Knowledge

- God has natural knowledge and free knowledge
 - Natural Knowledge
 - God knowing all possibilities, including all necessary truths, such as the laws of logic, all the possible individuals as well as all possible actions and reactions of they might take and all possible worlds he could create.
 - God knows all that **COULD** be.
 - Free Knowledge
 - This knowledge is the result of the free act of God's will. God knows all things that are going to happen and this knowledge is contingent upon His free creative will.
 - God knows all that **WILL** be.
- 

Middle Knowledge

- Middle Knowledge
 - God knows what free choices individuals would make in whatever circumstance they might find themselves in.
 - God knows what each individual WOULD choose in a given circumstance
- Biblical evidence:
 - Counterfactual Knowledge – 1 Samuel 23:6-14 – God let's David know a truth to a counterfactual proposition. If David were to stay at Keilah, he would be handed over to Saul by the men of Keilah. God says they would and so David took his men and left.
 - Libertarian Free Will – 1 Corinthians 10:13 – “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”

Middle Knowledge

- Argument for God's Middle Knowledge – Tim Stratton
 1. If God is eternally omniscient, then God knows the truth value to all propositions logically prior to His creative decree.
 2. If God knows the truth value to all propositions logically prior to His creative decree, this includes counterfactual propositions.
 3. If God possesses counterfactual knowledge logically prior to His creative decree, God possesses middle knowledge.
 4. God is eternally omniscient.
 5. Therefore, God has middle knowledge.
- 

Middle Knowledge

“For, of course, these books were not produced suddenly, by some miraculous act – handed down complete out of heaven, as the phrase goes; but, like all other products of time, are the ultimate effect of many processes cooperating through long periods. There is to be considered, for instance, the preparation of the material which forms the subject-matter of these books: in a sacred history, say, for example, to be narrated; or in a religious experience which may serve as a norm for record; or in a logical elaboration of the contents of revelation which may be placed at the service of God’s people; or in the progressive revelation of Divine truth itself, supplying their culminating contents...”



Middle Knowledge

And there is the preparation of the men to write these books to be considered, a preparation physical, intellectual, spiritual, which must have attended them throughout their whole lives, and, indeed, must have had its beginning in their remote ancestors, and the effect of which was to bring the right men to the right places at the right times, with the right endowments, impulses, acquirements, to write just the books which were designed for them...



Middle Knowledge

When 'inspiration,' technically so called, is superinduced on lines of preparation like these, it takes on quite a different aspect from that which it bears when it is thought of as an isolated action of the Divine Spirit operating out of all relation to historical processes. Representations are sometimes made as if, when God wished to produce sacred books which would incorporate His will – a series of letters like those of Paul, for example – He was reduced to the necessity of going down to earth and painfully scrutinizing the men He found there, seeking anxiously for the one who, on the whole, promised best for His purpose; and then violently forcing the material He wished expressed through him, against his natural bent, and with as little loss from his recalcitrant characteristics as possible. Of course, nothing of the sort took place. If God wished to give His people a series of letters like Paul's He prepared a Paul to write them, and the Paul He brought to the task was a Paul who spontaneously would write just such letters."



Biblical Inerrancy

- With an understanding of Biblical Inspiration and affirming that it is plenary, verbal, and confluent, we come to the conclusion that the Bible is the Word of God and so it must hold the authority of God Himself.
- The Inspired Word of God is His special revelation to us.
- Argument for Inerrancy
 - God communicates to us through Scripture.
 - What God says is true.
 - Therefore, what is communicated to us through Scripture is true.



The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

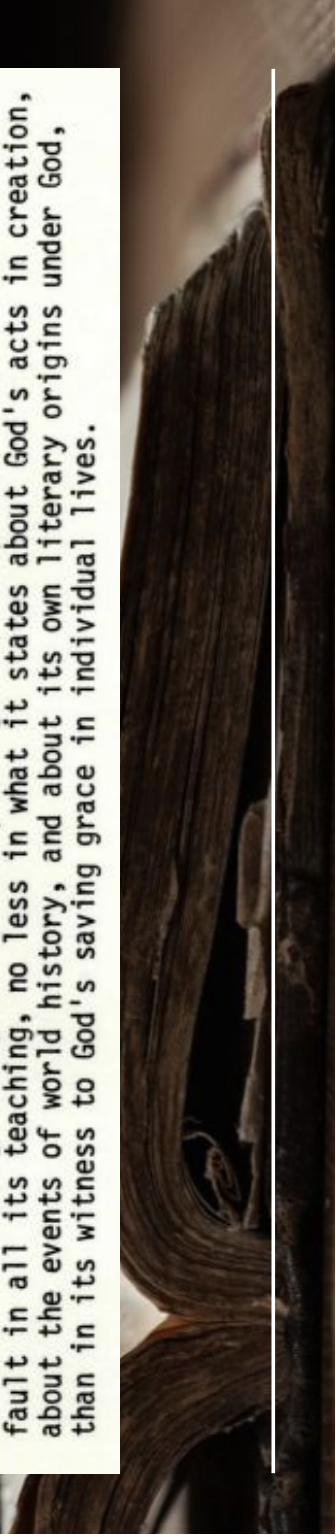
- In October 1978 the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy sponsored a conference in which several hundred Christians across forty-one churches and thirty-eight Christian denominations met to study, pray, and deliberate over the inerrancy of Scripture.
- e.g. : John F. MacArthur, R.C. Sproul, Josh D. McDowell



The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

2. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.

4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.



The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

Infallible signifies the quality of neither misleading nor being misled and so safeguards in categorical terms the truth that Holy Scripture is a sure, safe, and reliable rule and guide in all matters.

Similarly, *inerrant* signifies the quality of being free from all falsehood or mistake and so safeguards the truth that Holy Scripture is entirely true and trustworthy in all its assertions.



The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

So history must be treated as history, poetry as poetry, hyperbole and metaphor as hyperbole and metaphor, generalization and approximation as what they are, and so forth. Differences between literary conventions in Bible times and in ours must also be observed: since, for instance, non-chronological narration and imprecise citation were conventional and acceptable and violated no expectations in those days, we must not regard these things as faults when we find them in Bible writers. When total precision of a particular kind was not expected nor aimed at, it is no error not to have achieved it. Scripture is inerrant, not in the sense of being absolutely precise by modern standards, but in the sense of making good its claims and achieving that measure of focused truth at which its authors aimed.

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

Transmission and Translation

Since God has nowhere promised an inerrant transmission of Scripture, it is necessary to affirm that only the autographic text of the original documents was inspired and to maintain the need of textual criticism as a means of detecting any slips that may have crept into the text in the course of its transmission. The verdict of this science, however, is that the Hebrew and Greek text appear to be amazingly well preserved, so that we are amply justified in affirming, with the Westminster Confession, a singular providence of God in this matter and in declaring that the authority of Scripture is in no way jeopardized by the fact that the copies we possess are not entirely error-free.

Similarly, no translation is or can be perfect, and all translations are an additional step away from the *autographa*. Yet the verdict of linguistic science is that English-speaking Christians, at least, are exceedingly well served in these days with a host of excellent translations and have no cause for hesitating to conclude that the true Word of God is within their reach. Indeed, in view of the frequent repetition in Scripture of the main matters with which it deals and also of the Holy Spirit's constant witness to and through the Word, no serious translation of Holy Scripture will so destroy its meaning as to render it unable to make its reader "wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15).

Transmission and Translation

- Examples of Misprints:
 - **The “Adulterous” Bible**
 - In one 1631 printing of the King James Bible, the printer accidentally left out the word “not” in the commandment against adultery, so that it read: “Thou shalt commit adultery.” The printer was apparently fined £300 and the bibles recalled, although there are still 11 in existence.
 - **The “Sin On” Bible**
 - In a 1716 printing of the King James Version, Jeremiah 31.34 says “sin on more” instead of “sin no more.”



Transmission and Translation

- 138,000 words in new testament
- 1,400 words are uncertain, however no doctrine hangs on these words
- 1 John – We write this that our joy may be full vs we write this that YOUR joy may be full
- We have so many manuscripts that we can, with a 99% degree of confidence ascertain the original. While among the thousands of of manuscripts there may be variation but at different locations and because we have so many we can ascertain the original by comparing the copies.
- For example; one manuscript may say “our joy“, but the rest will say “your joy“.

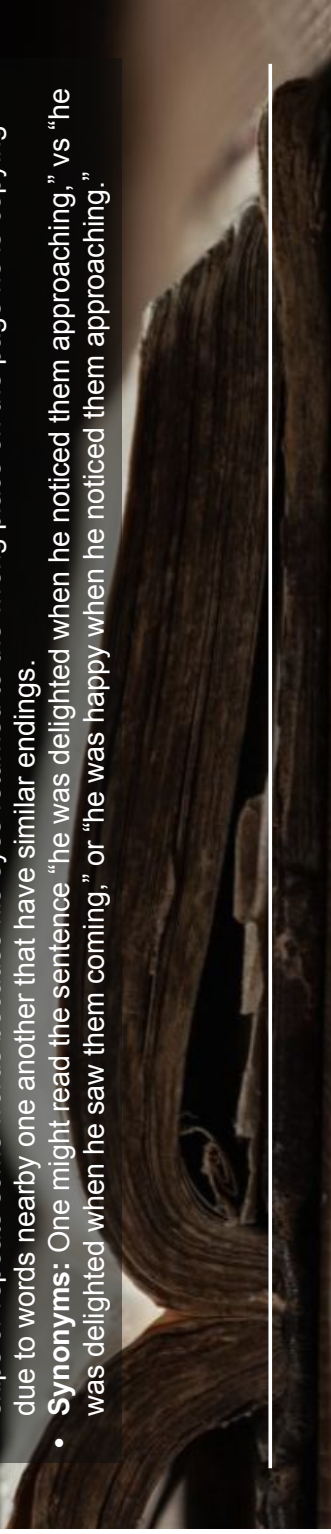


Variants

- The majority of textual variants are of such an insignificant nature that it is impossible to translate them.
- Even of the variants that can be translated, the vast majority have literally no effect on the meaning of the text. They are things like word order (Christ Jesus vs. Jesus Christ) the presence or absence of things like personal titles (Lord Jesus Christ vs. Jesus Christ vs. Christ our Lord) and the like.
- Among the small minority of variants that have any impact on meaning, in the majority of cases, it is extremely obvious which option is original and which was a later scribal mistake.
- Even among those very few meaningful variants where there is some reasonable question as to which option is the original, not a single one impacts any central Christian doctrine.
- In even the hardest cases, the evidence is sufficiently early and numerous that we can be sure that one of the options we have before us in the variants is the correct one. Nothing has been lost.

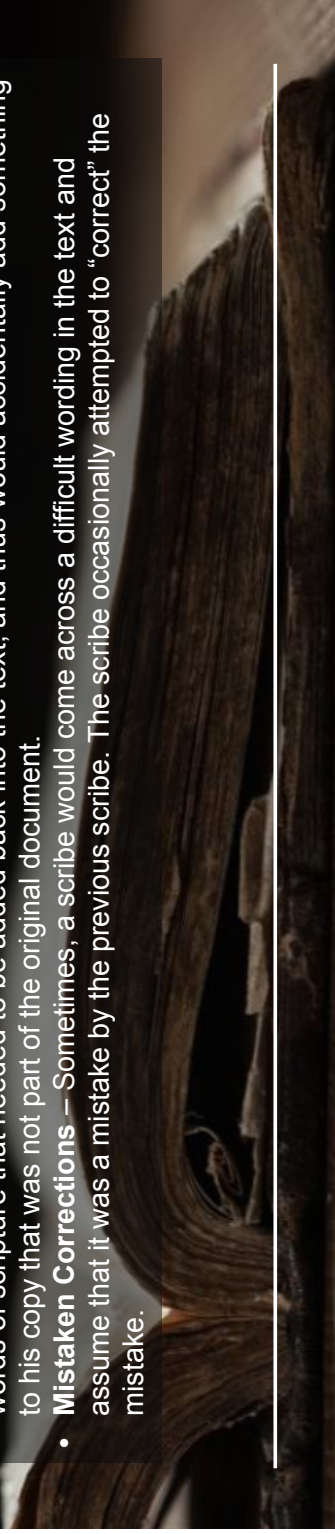
Variants

- **Spelling conventions:** Manuscripts may have the exact same word, only spelled differently. “who” versus “whom” in English.
- **Similar looking words:** Some variants happen because a scribe mistook one word for another that looks very similar.
- **Similar sounding words:** Sometimes scribes would work in teams and in some cases, a scribe would mishear a similar sounding word. In English, “rode” instead of “road”. Normally easy to identify.
- **Transposed words:** It was not uncommon for a scribe to accidentally transpose words. “Christ Jesus” vs “Jesus Christ.” Word order matters far less in Greek with essentially no effect on the meaning at all.
- **Homoeoteleuton:** The term means “similar endings” and refers to places where the scribe accidentally skips or repeats some words because his eyes returned to the wrong place on the page he is copying due to words nearby one another that have similar endings.
- **Synonyms:** One might read the sentence “he was delighted when he noticed them approaching,” vs “he was delighted when he saw them coming,” or “he was happy when he noticed them approaching.”



Variants

- **Parallel Influence** – There are many verses, phrases, and passages in Scripture that are similar, though not identical, in different books. This can sometimes lead to scribal mistakes, where the familiar wording in one passage is accidentally copied into a similar passage elsewhere.
- **Marginal Notes** – If a scribe accidentally skipped a line or phrase, he or a corrector looking over his manuscript afterward would often catch the mistake and write the missing words in the margin with some symbol noting where they belong. This way, the next time the manuscript was copied, the words could be copied back into the text and thus there would be no impact of the mistake on future manuscripts. Sometimes scribes or later owners of the manuscripts would write other things in the margins such as brief study notes or explanatory glosses. Occasionally, a later scribe would mistake these notes for actual words of scripture that needed to be added back into the text, and thus would accidentally add something to his copy that was not part of the original document.
- **Mistaken Corrections** – Sometimes, a scribe would come across a difficult wording in the text and assume that it was a mistake by the previous scribe. The scribe occasionally attempted to “correct” the mistake.




Difficulties

- Inconsistencies:
 - Matthew 27:5 – Judas threw down the silver and hanged himself
 - Acts 1:18-19 – Judas bought a field with the reward money and fell headlong, bursting open in the middle, bowels gushing out.
- Factual Mistakes:
 - Luke 2:2 – Quirinius is identified as governor of Syria.
 - Sources outside the Bible put Quirinius as governor far later in date than Luke wrote.
- Ethical “Errors”:
 - Slaughtering of the Canaanites
 - Slavery
 - Subjugation of women

A Defense of Biblical Inerrancy

Part One:

1. Whatever God teaches is true. (This is because God is a perfect being; he is the greatest conceivable being and therefore omniscient. God is not a deceiver, and so if he teaches you to believe something, that which he teaches you is true.)
 2. Historical, prophetic, and other evidences show that Jesus is God. (This is where you would introduce your typical apologetic arguments and Christian evidences for the person of Christ.)
 3. Therefore, whatever Jesus teaches is true. (If Jesus is God, and whatever God teaches is true, then what Jesus teaches us to believe is true.)
- 

A Defense of Biblical Inerrancy

Part Two:

1. Whatever Jesus teaches is true.
2. Jesus taught that the Scriptures are the inerrant Word of God.
3. Therefore, the Scriptures are the inerrant word of God.



Question of the Day

How would you approach Biblical inconsistencies when you encounter them?

The Sabbath Day

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." — Exodus 20:8

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." — Romans 14:5

The Power of God

"... with God all things are possible." — Matthew 19:26

"... The LORD was with Judah; and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron." — Judges 1:19

SOURCES

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