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On the Bible as Divine and Truthful Revelation

by Daryl E. Witmer

The little girl who asked me the question was probably only about nine years old. It was a Sunday morning. I was at the door of my study when she just walked up and said: "Pastor Daryl, how do you know that the Bible is true?"

That question is certainly among the most basic of all questions. In fact, if that question can be answered in a reasonable and satisfactory way, most of the scores of other questions waiting in line behind it can just turn around and go home.

It's true. Almost every other critical question about life is already answered if the Bible is an accurate communication from the great Creator of life. If we can be certain that the Bible is reliable, the search is already over when it comes to other questions about humanity's purpose, destiny, basis for morality, and more.

So is this Book of 66 Books, Old and New Testaments, really and truly a uniquely inspired revelation from the all-powerful and personal God of the Bible?

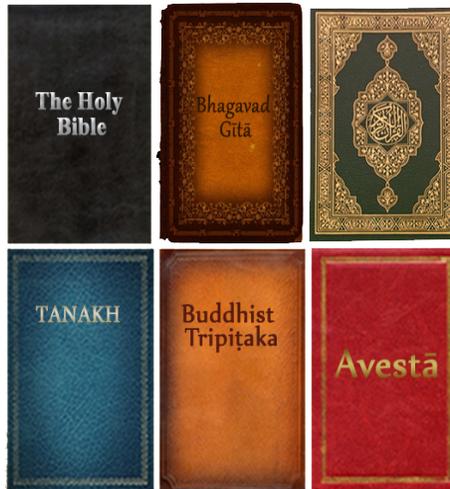
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If the answer is 'yes' then *only* the Christian Scriptures reveal ultimate truth.

How do we know that ultimate truth is not also found in the Koran, or in the Tripitaka, or in

the Bhagavad-Gita, or in the Book of Mormon, or in the Humanist Manifesto? Because ultimate truth, by definition, is exclusive. Contradictory assertions cannot both correspond to reality at the same time, in the same place, and in the same sense.

But couldn't a holy book *other than the Bible* represent ultimate truth?



Let's try to be objective here. What would someone who was never raised in any particular faith tradition choose to believe after carefully studying all the options? If a totally unbiased being landed on this planet from somewhere beyond our solar system, and if such a being carefully considered all of the holy writings of every religion and philosophy throughout human history, what would that being choose to believe?

We should acknowledge that no one is able to establish the scriptures of any religion or thought system as ultimately truthful, or as even being a Divine revelation, on the basis of rational thought alone, without faith, whether that belief system is Islam, Buddhism,

Humanism, or Christianity. By human knowledge and reason *alone* no scripture can ever be established as altogether truthful.

But here's the point — viewed dispassionately, there is overwhelmingly more and better evidence for the Bible being the true revelation of a Divine being than there is for the scripture of any other faith system in the history of the world.

What is that evidence?

1) **Archaeological discovery and verification** of Biblical assertions.

2) **The astonishing unity of the Biblical message.** Written by more than 35 human authors living on three continents over more than 1500 years, and yet the Bible entails a cohesive theme from beginning to end.

3) **The miraculous survival** of the Biblical manuscripts.

4) **The unparalleled circulation** of the Bible throughout history.

5) **The remarkable reliability of the Bible** — by all accepted standards of reliability.

6) **The unique record of its fulfilled prophecy.** Over 2,000 specific, precise, highly definitive prophecies in the Bible — many of them made four or five centuries previous to their actual realization — have been fulfilled in the most minute detail. In the Old Testament alone there exist over 300 references to the coming Messiah, His ministry, and His suffering. Want an example? Read and compare Psalm 22:18, written by David in 1012 B.C., to Matthew 27:35, written by Matthew in 33 A.D. The odds of so many prophecies like this being fulfilled in one person are exceedingly minute. No other sacred writing of any individual or religious system in history has ever even attempted to assert, let alone claim the fulfillment of, such far-ranging prophecies as does the Bible.