

**Psalm 33:4** *“For the word of the Lord holds true, and everything He does is worthy of our trust.” (NLT)*

### **EVIDENCE FOR THE RELIABILITY OF THE BIBLE**

1. MANUSCRIPT Evidence: We have very good manuscripts that have not changed theologically.
  - a. We have lots of documents to compare.

#### **Manuscript Evidence of Ancient Writings**

Ancient Documents	Number of Manuscripts
Homer’s Iliad	1,900
Herodotus—History	About 106
Sophocles’ Plays	About 226
Plato’s Tetralogies	238
Caesar’s Gallic Wars	251
Livy’s History of Rome	About 473
Tacitus’s Annals	36
Pliny the Elder’s Natural History	200+
Thucydides’ History	188
Demosthenes’ Speeches	444
OT Scrolls/Codices/Fragments	42,300+
NT Documents/Fragments	23,986+
<b>Bible Total Documents</b>	<b>66,286+</b>

- b. Some documents are close to the date of original writings.

- c. Scribes took extreme care when they copied a text.
- d. There are some copying mistakes, but none of them affect the theology of the Bible. Our modern translations reflect the best scholarship.

References:

- **The Origin of the Bible**, (newly updated), Tyndale House, 2012.
- **Why I Trust the Bible**, William Mounce, Zondervan, 2021.
- **Myths and Mistakes in New Testament Textual Criticism**, Elijah Hixson and Peter J. Gurry, IVP, 2019.
- **The Text of the New Testament, Transmission, Corruption, Restoration**, Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, Oxford, 2005.

2. HISTORICAL Evidence: The content of the Bible is accurate.

- a. What about the crazy stories? Are they myths?
- b. Did they make Jesus into a divine person?
- c. What about the Inconsistencies in the Bible?

- **The Big Book of Bible Difficulties** (Baker Books, 2008) – Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe
- **New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties** (Zondervan, 2001) – Gleason Archer

d. Can we trust the bible culturally?

- William Webb, **Slaves, Women and Homosexuals**, IVP, 2001.
- **The Cultural World of the Bible: An Illustrated Guide to Manners and Customs**, Victor H. Matthews.
- **Manners and Customs of Bible Times**, Ralph Gower, Moody, 2005.

3. ARCHEOLOGICAL Evidence: Discoveries verify the Bible.

Keith N. Schoville, retired from the Department of Hebrew and Semitic Studies at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, WI, says:

“It is important to realize that archeological excavations have produced ample evidence to prove unequivocally that the Bible is not a pious forgery. Thus far, no historical statement in the Bible has proven false on the basis of evidence retrieved through archeological research.”

- *Titus Kennedy, **Unearthing the Bible: 101 Archeological Discoveries that Bring the Bible to Life**, Harvest House Publishers, 2020.*
- *J. Randall Price and H. Wayne House, **Zondervan Handbook of Biblical Archeology: A Book by Book Guide to Archeological Discoveries Related to the Bible**, Zondervan, 2017.*

## **BOTTOM LINE**

Next week: Scientific, Prophetic and Secular History evidence.

**Psalm 119:89** “Your Word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.”  
(NIV)