

“The Bible Doesn’t Claim to Be a Science or History Book”—Or Does It?

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People trying to dismiss the Bible often deny that it is a science or history book. While this seems to answer a perceived dilemma between the Bible and science, careful thinking reveals that books from fields other than science or history also can be true and that the Bible in particular is demonstrably accurate.

The accounts recorded in Scripture present themselves in a fashion that is typical of other historical documents. For example, the claims of the Bible regarding numerous historical figures match precisely what is known of them from outside sources in ancient recorded history from non-Christian authors. The historical details of the Bible (such as listings of the kings) parallel the details of other ancient writings, such as the Amarna tablets.

Dr. R.D. Wilson of Princeton Theological Seminary noted that the names of 29 kings from ten nations (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, etc.) are mentioned not only in the Bible but are also found on monuments of their own time. “Every single name is transliterated in the Old Testament exactly as it appears on the archaeological artifact—syllable for syllable, consonant for consonant. The chronological order of the kings is correct.”

The Moabite Stone, the Gezar Calendar, the Sumeria Ostraca, and the Lacish Letters all contain materials which verify the Biblical accounts. The writings of ancient Assyrian kings Sargon II and Sennacherib described the battles of Samaria (721 BC) and Jerusalem (701) similarly to the Bible.

In 2005 Israeli archaeologist Dr. Eilat Mazar found the palace of King David by using the Bible as her primary source. She writes, “What is amazing about the Bible is that very often we see that it is very accurate and sometimes amazingly accurate.”

The Smithsonian Department of Anthropology put out this statement:

Much of the Bible, in particular the historical books of the Old Testament, are as accurate historical documents as any that we have from antiquity and are in fact more accurate than many of the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, or Greek histories. These Biblical records can be and are used, as are other ancient documents in archaeological work. ... [The] historical events described took place and the peoples cited really existed.

Following the Apollo moon landing, NASA engineer Dr. Donald DeYoung wrote:

The single tenth chapter of Genesis has five times more geographical data of importance than the whole of the Koran. ... By making so many detailed statements about history, chronology and geography, as well as astronomy, geology and zoology, the Author of Genesis is showing His hand as the One who expects to be taken seriously and who actually provides material suitable for investigation, in contrast to the sacred writings of other ancient religions.

What about the long lifespans of the patriarchs—which seem like legend, not history? Geneticist John Sanford has shown that the deterioration of the human genome correlates precisely with the declining ages mentioned in the book of Genesis from the patriarchs to the time of Moses.

The description of Jesus’ death in the Gospels matches precisely what is expected from physiology:

The evidence, taken in concert, supports the concept that the Gospels represent a reliable historical account of Jesus’ death. Furthermore, the writings of ancient Christian and non-Christian authors and modern archaeological findings seem to provide accurate information concern Roman scourging and crucifixion practices. Accordingly, we stand by our initial premise that we have a “reliable testimony from which a modern medical interpretation of Jesus’ death may be made.”

The Bible has never been shown to be wrong when it speaks about science or history. But more importantly, the Bible itself provides a reliable testimony concerning the power of Christ’s resurrection to bring salvation to sinners like us.

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www.els.org/apologetics

Sources: R.D. Wilson, *A Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament*; www.inplainsight.org; John C. Whitcomb and Donald B. DeYoung, *The Moon: Its Creation, Form & Significance*; John Sandford, *Genetic Entropy*; *J. of the Am. Med. Assoc.* 255:11.