

Planted: Learning How to Defend Your Faith

Table of Contents	1
Chapter 1: Plant Your Flag	2
“The Absolute”	
Causality, Limitation, and Relativism	
What Is Truth?	
What Is Christian Apologetics?	
Chapter 2: Worldviews	4
Antisupernaturalism: Atheism, Humanism, Materialism, Naturalism	
Supernaturalism: Panentheism, Pantheism, Polytheism	
Monotheism: Judaism, Christianity, Islam	
Chapter 3: Principles and Beliefs	6
Schrödinger's cat	
Nature of Reality, Knowledge, and Values	
Problem of Pain, Suffering, and Evil	
Does God Exist?	
Christian Teachers and Philosophers	
Chapter 4: Can We Trust the Text of the Bible?	9
What Is Textual Criticism?	
What Is a Textual Variant?	
Old Testament Textual Criticism	
Canonicity	
Chapter 5: Physical Evidence	11
What is Science?	
Artifacts	
Tell el-Dab'a / Goshen	
1 st Century AD Literature	
Genetics	
Living Fossils and Macroevolution	
Chapter 6: Fulfilled Prophecy	16
What Is Biblical Prophecy?	
Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel	
Chapter 7: Other	20
Universal Moral Code	
Contradictions	
Factions	
Faith Statement	

Chapter 1: Plant Your Flag

“There are two ways to be fooled. One is to believe what isn't true; the other is to refuse to believe what is true.” - Soren Kierkegaard

There is a philosophical term called “The Absolute” which refers to an ultimate reality or supreme principle that underlies all existence. It is the fundamental truth that everything else depends upon, yet which itself depends on nothing. “The Absolute” is characterized by complete perfection and self-sufficient independence. It transcends all forms of causality, limitation, and relativism.

Causality

Causality is related to having a beginning or an origin. To state a lack of causality is to state that “The Absolute” had no beginning. It is transcendent of time. It is consistent to state that “The Absolute” has no cause, therefore, it is omnipresent. It always was, always is, and always will be.

Read Exodus 3:14, John 8:58, and Revelation 1:8. What is being stated in these Bible verses?

Limitation

Limitation describes an inherent constraint or boundary. It describes activities that cannot be achieved from one's own ability. “The Absolute” is not limited or constrained. Therefore, it is all-knowing (omniscient) and all-powerful (omnipotent).

Read Genesis 1:1, Jeremiah 32:17, and Matthew 19:26. What is being stated in these Bible verses?

Relativism

Relativism is the act of comparing one thing to another. Inherent in relativism is the idea that something is no better or worse than something else. It is just different. The opposite of relativism is absolutism, which states that there is an ultimate reality and an ultimate standard. Absolutism believes that there is an ultimate reality of existence and standard of good and bad, right and wrong. Relativism does not.

Read Psalm 119:160, John 14:6, and 1 John 5:20. What is being stated in these Bible verses?

What Is Truth?

The philosophical construct known as “The Absolute” describes an absolute reality and a universal standard of morality. It points to universal truth.

Read John 18:33-38. What is being stated in these Bible verses?

Truth is not blind and without reason. Proper reasoning can improve our understanding of truth. Reason is the capacity to acquire and analyze knowledge, and to formulate rational conclusions. Inductive reasoning = drawing conclusions by going from the specific to the general.

Discovering truth: Proverbs 2:1-11

Deductive reasoning = drawing conclusions by going from the general to the specific.

Defining truth: Psalm 25:4-5, John 14:6

Truth corresponds to reality: a statement is true only if it lines up with what is actually happening.

Read Jeremiah 44:16-18, John 8:32, and Romans 2:1-3. What is being stated in these Bible verses?

What Is Christian Apologetics?

Ability to articulate and defend why you believe that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior. What is the ultimate goal of apologetics?

Read 1 Peter 3:15 and Romans 8:7.

What is being stated in these Bible verses?

Read Galatians 5:17-23 and Ephesians 4:11-16

What is being stated in these Bible verses?

We want to lead with love, grace, kindness, and mercy. It is about building relationships.

“Truth without grace has no compassion. Grace without truth has no conviction, and we need both.” - Michael Beaumont

It is important to have a firm foundation in truth. It is okay to have questions. Honestly seek answers with an open mind. Find that undeniable core reality and standard that you compare everything else to.

Read Matthew 7:7

Chapter 2: Worldviews

“Love and fear represent two different lenses through which to view the world. Which I choose to use will determine what I think I see.” - Marianne Williamson

What Is a Worldview?

Read Romans 12:2

What is Paul stating in this passage?

Conceptual framework for how one understands and interprets the biggest questions of life:

Is there a God?

What is the purpose / meaning of life?

What happens after we die?

Why are certain behaviors good and others bad?

Is truth and morality absolute or relative?

Do we have free will?

Is suffering / pain a necessary part of the human existence?

Worldview informs our moral code, self-worth, purpose, and priorities.

Every worldview contains a distinct set of beliefs and values.

Formed over time through experiences and interactions.

Direct: Experiences through our five senses.

Indirect: Perception and interpretation of physical data.

Worldview influences: family / community, education / information, life experiences, personal choices.

To change a worldview: different experiences, new perspectives, personal reflection, and choices.

Different Worldviews

Antisupernaturalism: Atheism / Humanism / Materialism / Naturalism

Have their roots in Greek philosophers.

These worldviews believe that all we see and experience are the result of purely natural phenomena.

There is nothing beyond the physical world.

God does not exist. Truth is a philosophical construct. There is nothing after death.

They differ in their ethical frameworks and focus.

Does not explain: Biblical prophecy, consciousness, near death experiences, how life came from non-life, our desire for purpose in a universe built upon perceived randomness.

Supernaturalism: Panentheism / Pantheism / Polytheism

There are multiple gods or powerful beings. Complex mix. Syncretism common.

Syncretism = merging or assimilation of beliefs and practices.

Panentheism = God is in everything, and everything is God. The Creator and created are one.

Pantheism = God is an impersonal force present in all things.

Polytheism = Many gods exist.

Examples: Buddhism, Hinduism, Ancient Egypt, Star Wars

The most common types of worldviews prior to Alexander the Great.

Does not explain: origin of the universe, pain, suffering, ignorance, purpose.

Monotheism: Judaism, Christianity, Islam

There is one omnipotent omnipresent transcendent God. All three have roots in Abraham.

First Christians were Jews. Separation was a process as Christianity became more gentile. (Acts 15)

Early Islamic history has very limited documented resources.

Muhammad's genealogy open to interpretation. Which son of Ishmael? Nebaioth or Kedar?

Older versions of Qur'an destroyed. Oral history tradition. Not sure of the original text of Qur'an.

Researcher Keith Small concludes: "...the available sources do not provide the necessary information for reconstructing the original text of the Qur'an from the time of Muhammad. Neither do they yet provide the necessary information for reconstructing the text from the time immediately after Muhammad's death until the first official edition of the Qur'an traditionally ordered by the Caliph Uthman ... there never was one original text of the Qur'an. The Uthmanic destruction of variant texts around 850 CE eliminated many texts which had equally good claims to containing authentic readings."

Chapter 3: Principles and Beliefs

"The moment you doubt whether you can fly, you cease for ever to be able to do it."

- Sir James Matthew Barrie, Peter Pan

Philosophical exercise: Schrödinger's cat.

A cat is placed in a sealed box with a radioactive atom, a Geiger counter, and a vial of poison. If the atom decays, the Geiger counter triggers the release of the poison, resulting in the cat's death.

Is the cat alive or dead?

Concepts that explore the nature of reality, knowledge, and values.

Ontology = Study of being and existence

What is real?

Absolutism (There is an ultimate authority) v relativism (There is not an ultimate authority)

Epistemology = Study of knowledge and belief

How do we know what is real?

Quantitative (numerical data) v qualitative (characteristics)

Axiology = Study of values and ethics

What is its value? Good v bad

Law of non-contradiction = contradictory propositions cannot both be true at the same time and in the same sense.

Fundamental law of apologetics and philosophy.

Example: The door cannot both be opened and closed at the same time.

If there are two truly contradictory statements, either one is true or both are false.

Problem of pain, suffering, and evil

Is physical pain real or imagined?

Is emotional pain real or imagined?

Is pain objective or subjective?

Dilemma of reconciling the existence of suffering with the belief in a good and omnipotent God.

God's purpose is to make us happy.

(God's purpose is to make us holy). Read 1 Peter 2:9.

Why do bad things happen to good people?

(None of us are good). Read Romans 3:9-12.

What is the purpose of pain, suffering, and evil?

One feels pain when burned by fire. What is the end result? It is to train.

God's holiness v our happiness.

Does God exist?

Ontological argument – God must be all knowing, ever present, all powerful, morally perfect

God = “The Absolute”

Law of non-contradiction

Pro: God may exist in some possible universe

Con: God does not exist in any possible universe

Even a fool who denies God's existence can conceive of such a being in his / her mind.

If God exists only in the mind, then a greater being could be conceived.

God must exist in reality to be the greatest possible conceivable being.

ie: God must be greater than anything we can imagine.

Cosmological argument = the universe had a beginning, therefore it had a Creator

Whatever began to exist had a cause. If the universe had a beginning, it had a cause.

If the universe had a beginning and a cause, the cause must exist outside the known universe.

Read Genesis 1:1

Cosmological argument corollary – Contingency argument

Everything that exists has a cause of its existence.

If the universe has a cause of its existence that explanation must transcend the known universe.

Only God exists outside the known universe.

Therefore God is the explanation of the existence of the universe.

Teleological argument = if there is a design, there must be a designer

Cause: necessity, chance, or purposeful design.

There are a number of natural laws and mathematical constants:

speed of light, gravitational constant, Einstein's cosmological constant, Avogadro constant,

Faraday constant, Planck constant, ideal gas law, universal gravitation, thermodynamics, etc.

Are these constants and laws by chance or by design?

These many constants and laws are in tight balance with each other which allow for life.

There is a clear difference between knowing about Jesus and actually being in a personal relationship with Him. What is faith? - Read Hebrews 11:1

It is a firm belief in the truth of God's word and its declarations.

It is a deep and developed trust in God and His promises.

Faith in action: Love God and love others. Read Matthew 25:35-40

Cultural differences: Read Matthew 18:18

Binding: A community decides to restrict a certain behavior where the Bible is quiet.

Loosing: A community decides to allow a certain behavior where the Bible is quiet.

Is the Christian belief based on intolerance?

It is true that Judaism and Christianity are exclusive and not inclusive. Read Exodus 34:14, John 14:6.

OT and NT God are one and the same. Just a different context.

“Truth by definition is exclusive. If truth were all-inclusive, nothing would be false.”

Walter Ralston Martin

Intolerance = unwillingness to accept views, beliefs, or behaviors that differ from one's own.

A lack of freedom of thought means that everyone must think the same exact way.

A lack of freedom of action means that everyone must act the same exact way.

Read Leviticus 11:44, John 10:10, Galatians 5:13, and 2 Corinthians 3:17.

God wants us to have a free abundant life. This does not mean a carefree life with no consequences.

Exclusivity and intolerance are not related. It is a false argument.

Why is it important that Jesus died on the cross? Read Matthew 5:17-18 and John 3:16-17.

Christian Teachers and Philosophers

Polycarp (69-155): Disciple of Apostle John, earliest teacher whose writings survived.

Justin Martyr (100–165): Early apologist in the Christian church, quoted Scripture extensively.

Clement of Alexandria (150-215): Christian theologian heavily influenced by Hellenism.

Origen of Alexandria (185-253): Produced about 2000 writings on many Christian topics.

Jerome (345-420): Translated Bible into Latin Vulgate.

Augustine of Hippo (354–430): His writings strongly influenced Western Christianity.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274): Influential theologian in Western tradition and natural theology.

Natural theology: study of God and the divine based on human reason and observation of the natural world, distinct from revealed theology which relies on divine revelation. Psalm 19:1, Romans 1:20

Martin Luther (1483-1546): Leader in the Protestant Reformation (Lutheran).

Michael Sattler (1490–1527): Leader in the Anabaptist Movement (Amish / Mennonite).

John Calvin (1509–1564): Leader in the Protestant Reformation (Calvinism).

Denominations: Presbyterians, Reformed Baptist Church

Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609): Founder of Arminianism.

Denominations: Methodist-Wesleyan, Church of God, Assembly of God

CS Lewis (1898–1963): Influential Christian novelist and thinker.

Chapter 4: Can We Trust the Text of the Bible?

“History is a gallery of pictures in which there are few originals and many copies.”

Alexis de Tocqueville

What did Abraham Lincoln actually say at Gettysburg during his address on November 19, 1863?

There are no videos. How can we be sure of the actual words said?

What we do have are five early copies written by his secretaries, numerous eye-witness accounts from those who were there when the speech was given, and journalist notes from the event that were published in various newspapers. All this information is then analyzed to determine what Abraham Lincoln actually said.

What is textual criticism?

Academic discipline that seeks to reconstruct the exact wording of the original text of a document by analyzing and comparing various existing manuscripts when the original is unknown or non-existent.

What is a textual variant?

Prior to the printing press, copies were made by hand. Because of this, variants exist in each document. A textual variant is any place where at least one manuscript deviates from a base text.

There are about 400,000 documented textual variants for the New Testament from all material available. With all these variants, can we trust the Bible?

If only one manuscript existed, there would be no variants. But at the same time, how confident would we be that we knew what the original text was?

1611 KJV: Based on 7 Greek manuscripts. Earliest from the 11th Century AD.

Modern translations: 5800 Greek manuscripts of NT (earliest is from the 2nd Century AD), 10,000 Latin manuscripts, and over a million quotations by early church fathers. Over 43% of all verses in the NT identified in manuscripts date to within 125 years of its original authorship.

Meaningful variants = change the meaning of the text.

grey v gray, color v colour – does not change the meaning

Gergesenes v Gadarenes (Matthew 8:28) – does change the meaning

Viable variants = enough evidence to support a change to the underlying base text.

What is considered enough evidence?

Four outcomes for each variant: not meaningful / not viable, not meaningful / viable, meaningful / not viable, meaningful / viable. Only meaningful / viable truly matters.

How many ways in English to say “John loves Mary”? One

How many ways in Greek to say “John loves Mary” w/o substantially changing meaning? Thousands

About 1/4 of 1% of variants are meaningful and viable.

There are about 138,000 words in the Greek NT. Only a very small percentage are suspect.

Old Testament Textual Criticism

More complicated but same process. Further removed from the original sources.

Over 200 citations of the Old Testament in the New Testament.

Oldest manuscripts: Dead Sea Scrolls (3rd C BC-1st C AD), Codex Sinaiticus / Vaticanus (4th C AD), Codex Alexandrinus (5th C AD)

Codex Sinaiticus: contains majority of Greek OT and NT, origin St Catherine's Monastery

Codex Vaticanus: near complete Greek OT and NT, in Vatican Library

Codex Alexandrinus: contains majority of Greek OT and NT, was in Constantinople in 1300's

Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek

Book	Scrolls Found (#)	Book	#
Psalms	39	Ezekiel	6
Deuteronomy	33	Job	6
Genesis	24	Kings	4
Isaiah	22	Samuel	4
Exodus	18	Judges	4
Leviticus	17	Song of Solomon	4
Numbers	11	Ruth	4
Book of the 12	10	Lamentations	4
Daniel	8	Ecclesiastes	2
Jeremiah	6	Joshua	2
Esther	0		

Scribal Corruptions

Intentional: Scribe was fixing an error thought to exist.

Unintentional: Scribe may have added an error without knowing, such as spelling error.

Canonicity

Criteria for identifying books in the Bible.

Authoritative, historic / prophetic accuracy, consistent with other books, near universal acceptance.

OT accepted in sections over time: Law (Torah), Prophets (Nevi'im), Writings (Ketuvim).

LXX / Septuagint: OT Greek translation 3rd C BC, 72 scholars.

During Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285 BC – 247 BC) .

NT: Canon list accepted over time, mostly settled by 300's AD.

Textus Receptus / Received Text: Compiled Greek NT by Erasmus 1516 AD.

Source for KJV, Luther, Tyndale, RVA.

Revelation 13:18 – 666 or 616 – which is correct?

Chapter 5: Physical Evidence

What is science?

Movie: Genesis Code (2010) – Perspective on Creation.

Science and Bible are complementary, not antagonistic.

Systematic study of the natural world through observation, experimentation, and the testing of theories against evidence obtained.

Cyrus Decree / Cyrus Cylinder

Ezra 1:1-4 – Not exact wording but consistent with purpose and message

1st Year of Cyrus II = 539 BC. Found in 1879 in Esagila Temple Complex, Babylon



Mesha Stele / King Mesha of Moab

2 Kings 3:1-5

Dated c 840 BC. Found in Jordan in 1868.

Written in Canaanite. Moabite version.

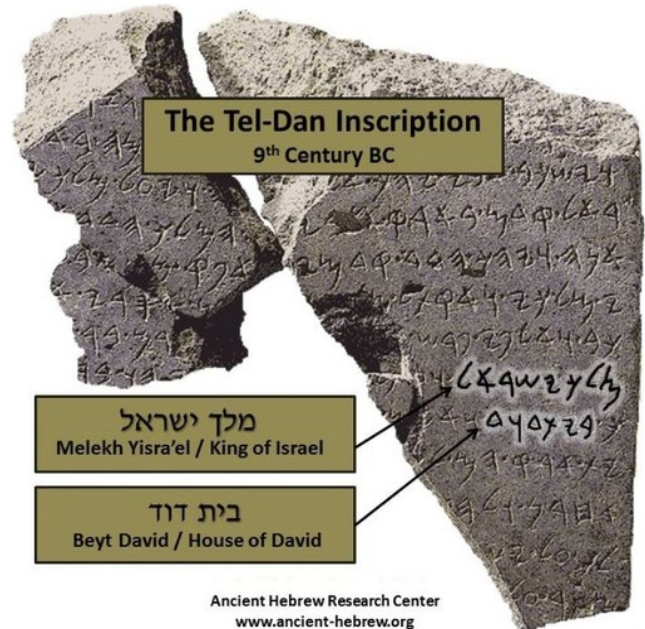


Tel Dan Stele

2 Kings 9:21-24, 2 Kings 12:17–18

Discovered in 1993 at Tel Dan

A person killed King Jehoram of Israel and King Ahaziah of Judah



Kurkh Monoliths

1 Kings 20:13-15

Ahab battled Aram-Damascus et al

Battle of Qarqar 853 BC

“Karkar... I destroyed... 1,200 chariots, 1,200 cavalry,
20,000 soldiers, of Hadad-ezer, of Aram... 2,000 chariots,
10,000 soldiers of Ahab, the Israelite.”



Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III

Jehu king in 841 BC

Discovered in 1846 at Nimrud

Features King Jehu giving tribute

Year 18 of Shalmaneser III



Jezebel Seal

Wife of King Ahab of Israel

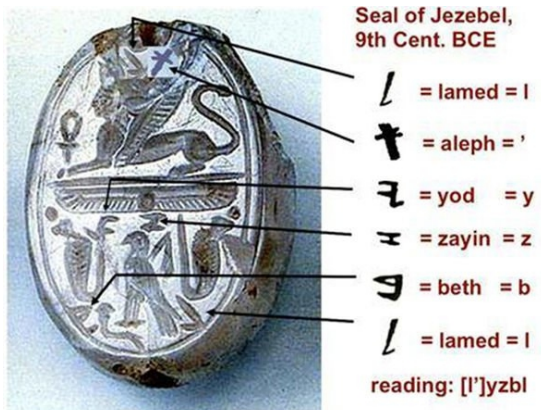
Daughter of Phoenician King Ithobaal I

Reigned 879 BC – 846 BC

Great-aunt of Queen Dido, founder of Carthage

Killed by Jehu

Found: 1960's antiquities market



Bubastite Portal

1 Kings 14:25-26, attacked Israel c 926 BC

Temple of Amun-Re, Karnak – Shishaq Relief

Translated using Rosetta Stone

Shoshenq I: 1st Pharaoh 22nd Dynasty

Meshwesh Libyan Berber Origin

Reigned 943 BC – 922 BC



Joseph Pyramid Burial in Goshen (Tell el-Dab'a) region of Egypt



Source: Patterns of Evidence: The Moses Controversy (2019)

Life of Christ in Literature

Cornelius Tacitus (56 AD – 120 AD) – Roman historian and public official

Annals – Roman history (14 AD – 96 AD)

Annals (15.44): “Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus”

Flavius Josephus / Yosef ben Mattityahu (c 37 AD – c 100 AD)

Hellenistic Jewish historian and military leader

Father was a Jewish priest from the order of Jehoiarib. Mother was of royal Hasmonean ancestry.

Provides historical context to the Maccabees, Hasmonean Dynasty, Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, Zealots, Dead Sea Scrolls, Quirinius's Census, Pontius Pilate, Herod the Great, Agrippa I, Agrippa II, John the Baptist, James the brother of Jesus, Jesus, Siege of Jerusalem, and Siege of Masada.

He was a general of Jewish forces in Galilee at the beginning of the First Jewish–Roman War.

Was captured and then began to collaborate with Vespasian and Titus.

Antiquities 18:63-64: “Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.”

Cohen Gene

Kohen = Priest

Tested surnames with history of priesthood: Coen, Cohen, Cowen, Kohen

The Kohanim appeared to share a different probability distribution compared to the rest of the Jewish population for two Y-chromosome markers.

48% of Ashkenazi Kohens and 58% of Sephardic Kohens have the J1 Cohen Modal Haplotype

Compared to 5% of general Jewish male population.

Points to a common origin of at least half the modern Kohanim

Indo-European Origins



Indo-Europeans include a very diverse group: Anatolians, Armenians, Celts, Cimmerians, Circassians, Germanics, Greeks, Hindi, Hittites, Iranians, Latins, Persians, Scythians, Sikhs, Slavics, and Thracians. Evidence shows that these tribal groups started in the region around the Caucasus Mountains and spread into much of Asia and Europe.

According to Genesis 10, Japheth ben Noah is the father of these tribes.

Variations of the name Japheth show up in Indo-European mythology.

Iapetus (or Japetus) is a Greek Titan born of Uranus and Gaia.

Jupiter, son of Saturn and Opis, is the Roman god of the sky, lightening, and thunder.

Prajapati is the lord of creation in Vedic Hinduism.

Genesis 8:4: Noah's ark came to rest in the mountains of Ararat (Caucasus Mountains)

Macroevolution: change over time from one species into another

Arguments against macroevolution.

Something cannot randomly come from nothing. Law of entropy. Order cannot come from disorder.

There is little to no evidence of transformational intermediates between documented fossil species.

The Earth may not be as old as some scientists state.

Living Fossils: Coelacanth (410 MYA), Horseshoe Crab (250 MYA)



According to some geneticists, Y-Chromosomal Adam (Y-MRCA) is the most recent ancestor of all men who lived in northwestern Africa about 300,000 years ago. Mitochondrial Eve (mt-MRCA) is the most recent ancestor of all women who lived in southeastern Africa about 150,000 years ago.

How did researchers obtain these results? It is related to the math equation: $\text{time} = \text{distance} / \text{rate}$. They analyzed the DNA of chimpanzees and humans. In evolutionary thought, chimpanzees and humans had a common ancestor. We can look at the number of differences in the genetic code (distance). We can observe how fast these changes occur (rate). We can then use these numbers to calculate how long ago this common ancestor lived (time). We use this same process to calculate how long ago the common male and female ancestors of all mankind lived.

Geneticists argue that humans and chimpanzees are 99% genetically similar and that DNA mutation rate is about 60 DNA changes per generation. Geneticist Dr. Nathaniel Jeanson has stated that genetic researchers look at only specific types of DNA for comparison. When the DNA of chimps and humans are compared in their entirety, the similarity between them shifts from 99% to 88%. This means that the amount of time required to produce that amount of mutations has significantly increased to the point of near impossibility.

Dr. Jeanson analyzed Mitochondrial DNA in women. It has been observed that the mutation rate for this DNA is about 1 mutation every 6 generations. If Mitochondrial Eve lived 180,000 years ago, the number of DNA differences should be about 2200. If Biblical Eve lived about 6000 years ago, the number of DNA differences should be between 30 and 114. With these vast differences in expected outcomes, we should be able to quickly identify which concept is more correct. The actual number of observed DNA differences is 53 to 103. This validates the young Earth model. This means that our common female ancestor lived thousands (not hundreds of thousands) of years ago, and it is unlikely that there is a common genetic ancestor between chimpanzees and humans.

Chapter 6: Fulfilled Prophecy

“Will the world end in darkness because it is foretold? Or because there will be those who believe it so strongly they will make it so?” - Patrick Ness

What is Biblical prophecy?

Its primary purpose is to communicate God's truth to the present generation, call for repentance, and reinforce covenant faithfulness. Read Psalm 25:10, 2 Peter 1:16-21.

Prophetic v Apocalyptic Literature:

Prophetic literature is about covenant faithfulness.

Apocalyptic literature is about showing what is from God's perspective.

Isaiah

When was Isaiah written? 700's BC.

Isaiah 1:1 - in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Did Isaiah write the book of Isaiah?

Based on changes in literary styles and other evidence, there are those who believe that the Book of Isaiah was written over a period of time by several different authors?

“If you know Luther, you know table talk, his comments sitting at table that were collected together. I'm not at all sure that Isaiah himself wrote the book as we have it. However, I do believe that all that is in the book originated with Isaiah and probably that his disciples then were the ones who collected what he said and commented on and put it in its present form.” - Dr. John Oswalt (OT Theology)

22 scrolls of Isaiah found as part of Dead Sea Scrolls.

Great Isaiah Scroll found in 1946 in Cave 1. Written between 100 BC and 125 BC. Nearly complete. Although there are variants, it points to remarkable content preservation of the Bible.

Comparing Great Isaiah Scroll to Masoretic Text and Septuagint:

Of the 166 words in Isaiah 53, there are only 17 letters in question.

10 letters are spelling differences.

4 letters are minor stylistic changes, such as conjunctions.

The 3 remaining letters comprise the word LIGHT, which is added in verse 11 and which does not significantly affect the meaning. This word is supported by the Septuagint (LXX).

Only one word (three letters) is in question after a thousand years of transmission - and this word does not significantly change the meaning of the passage.

Isaiah is extensively quoted or referenced in the New Testament.
It is the second most quoted book in NT after Psalms.

Isaiah 1:9	Romans 9:29
Isaiah 5:9	James 5:4
Isaiah 6:3	Revelation 4:8
Isaiah 6:9	Matthew 13:14, Mark 4:12, Acts 28:26
Isaiah 6:10	John 12:40
Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:23
Isaiah 8:10	Matthew 1:23
Isaiah 8:12-13	1 Peter 3:14-15
Isaiah 8:14	Romans 9:33, 1 Peter 2:8
Isaiah 8:17-18	Hebrews 2:13
Isaiah 9:1	Matthew 4:15-16
Isaiah 10:3	1 Peter 2:12
Isaiah 10:22	Romans 9:27
Isaiah 11:2	1 Peter 4:14
Isaiah 11:10	Romans 15:12
Isaiah 12:2	Hebrews 2:13
Isaiah 13:10	Matthew 24:29, Mark 13:24
Isaiah 22:13	1 Corinthians 15:32
Isaiah 25:8	1 Corinthians 15:54, Revelation 7:17, Revelation 21:4
Isaiah 26:13	2 Timothy 2:19
Isaiah 26:19	Matthew 11:5, Luke 7:22
Isaiah 26:20	Hebrews 10:37
Isaiah 27:9	Romans 11:27
Isaiah 28:11	1 Corinthians 14:21
Isaiah 28:16	Romans 9:33, Romans 10:11, 1 Peter 2:6
Isaiah 29:10	Romans 11:8
Isaiah 29:13	Matthew 15:8-9, Mark 7:6-7
Isaiah 29:14	1 Corinthians 1:19
Isaiah 29:16	Romans 9:20
Isaiah 29:18	Matthew 11:5, Luke 7:22
Isaiah 34:4	Matthew 24:29, Mark 13:25, Luke 21:26
Isaiah 35:4	John 12:15
Isaiah 35:5	Matthew 11:5, Luke 7:22
Isaiah 37:16	Acts 4:24
Isaiah 40:3	Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:3, Luke 3:4, John 1:23
Isaiah 40:4-5	Luke 3:5-6
Isaiah 40:6	1 Peter 1:24
Isaiah 40:8	1 Peter 1:25
Isaiah 40:13	Romans 11:34, 1 Corinthians 2:16
Isaiah 42:1-4	Matthew 12:18-21
Isaiah 42:18	Matthew 11:5, Luke 7:22
Isaiah 45:21	Mark 12:32, Acts 15:18
Isaiah 45:23	Romans 14:11
Isaiah 49:6	Acts 13:47

Isaiah 49:8	2 Corinthians 6:2
Isaiah 49:10	Revelation 7:16
Isaiah 49:18	Romans 14:11
Isaiah 52:4	2 Corinthians 6:17
Isaiah 52:5	Romans 2:24
Isaiah 52:7	Romans 10:15
Isaiah 52:11	2 Corinthians 6:17
Isaiah 52:15	Romans 15:21
Isaiah 53:1	John 12:38, Romans 10:16
Isaiah 53:4	Matthew 8:17, 1 Peter 2:24
Isaiah 53:5-6	1 Peter 2:24-25
Isaiah 53:7-8	Acts 8:32-33
Isaiah 53:9	1 Peter 2:22, Revelation 14:5
Isaiah 53:12	Luke 22:37, Hebrews 9:28, 1 Peter 2:24
Isaiah 54:1	Galatians 4:27
Isaiah 54:13	John 6:45
Isaiah 55:3	Acts 13:34
Isaiah 55:10	2 Corinthians 9:10
Isaiah 56:7	Matthew 21:13, Mark 11:17, Luke 19:46
Isaiah 59:7	Romans 3:15-17
Isaiah 59:20	Romans 11:26
Isaiah 61:1-2	Luke 4:18-19
Isaiah 62:11	Matthew 21:5
Isaiah 65:1	Romans 10:20
Isaiah 65:2	Romans 10:21
Isaiah 65:17	2 Peter 3:13
Isaiah 66:1-2	Acts 7:49-50
Isaiah 66:14	John 16:22
Isaiah 66:22	2 Peter 3:13
Isaiah 66:24	Mark 9:48

Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1-2 in Luke 4:16-21.
What does Jesus state and claim?

Isaiah 53 (v1-5): Clearly describes the Messiah as the Suffering Servant.

Daniel

When was Book of Daniel written, and why is this significant?

Daniel contains many very specific prophetic messages related to Greece and Rome.

Bible claims it was written during Babylonian exile.

Some claim it was written c. 160 BC after the fact because foretelling the future is not possible.

Problem with the late date and reasoning is that some prophecies are fulfilled during the life of Jesus.

8 scrolls of Daniel found in Dead Sea Scrolls.

Is Daniel looking forward or looking back? Why is this significant?

Ezekiel 26:1-14

Related to major port city of Tyre in Phoenicia near Beirut, Lebanon.

I will bring up many nations against you. I will scrape her soil and make her a bare rock.

You shall be a place for the spreading of nets. You shall never be rebuilt.

The words of Ezekiel have been demonstrated to be true over 2500 years later.

King Hiram of Tyre (978 BC - 944 BC) joined two reefs with landfill to enlarge the city.

By the time of Nebuchadnezzar II, Tyre was a prosperous commercial and cosmopolitan center.

After the capture of Jerusalem in 587 BC, Nebuchadnezzar II turned his attention to Tyre.

He defeated the mainland, but after a 13-year siege, he was incapable of capturing the island.

The mainland part of the city went under Persian rule in 572 BC.

In 332 BC, Alexander the Great of Macedon built a causeway between the mainland and the island.

He used the rubble from the old part of the city to construct it.

The rubble was so thoroughly cleaned and stripped to bare rock that no trace of the ancient city can be found today.

In 274 BC, the city was given independent status by Ptolemy II.

In 63 BC, the Romans gained control of the city.

In 638 AD, the Arabs gained control of the city.

In 1124 AD, the European Crusaders gained control of the city.

In 1291 AD, Muslims gained control of the city and completely destroyed it.

In 1517 AD, Ottoman Turks gained control of the region.

From the 18th Century AD, Tyre has served as a source of building materials for the whole coast.

In 1943 AD, Lebanon became an independent country.

There are no inscriptions and no structures from the time of Ezekiel. It is as if the city never existed.

Chapter 7: Other

“There is no real ending. It’s just the place where you stop the story.” - Frank Herbert

Is there a universal moral code?

Moral argument = the transcendent existence of right and wrong

If God does not exist, objective morality does not exist.

If God does exist, objective morality does exist.

If objective morality exists, God exists.

Near universal laws against murder and kidnapping.

General revelation – God exists as seen through His creation.

Read Job 12:7-10, Psalm 19:1-4, Romans 1:20.

Special revelation – God's direct and specific communication to humanity.

Read Genesis 12:1-3, John 1:14, Hebrews 1:1-2, 2 Peter 1:20-21.

Bernard Gert (1934 – 2011): American philosopher on morality and ethics

Morality is an informal public system applying to all rational persons, governing behavior that affects others, and includes what are commonly known as the moral rules, ideals, and virtues and has the lessening of evil or harm as its goal.

Harm is the central moral concept. Harm is what all rational creatures seek to avoid.

Death, pain, disability, loss of freedom, loss of pleasure.

More about discouraging bad than encouraging good.

Contradictions in the Bible

Is the Bible the inerrant word of God, or does it contain discrepancies and contradictions?

What we often see as a contradiction is typically human error in interpretation.

The Bible does not defy the Law of Non-contradiction.

Genealogy of Jesus: Matthew 1 and Luke 3 are different

Matthew 1 represents legal royal lineage. Matthew describes His royalty. - Paternal

Luke 3 represents biological lineage. Luke describes His humanity. - Maternal

Faith v Works: Ephesians 2:8-9, James 2:20

We are justified unto God through Jesus by faith – Romans 5:10, Galatians 3:24

Works are a product or outward manifestation of our faith – Matthew 3:8, Titus 2:14

How many wives did Esau have, and what were their names?

Esau's wives: Genesis 26:34, Genesis 28:9, Genesis 36:2-3

Wife 1: Judith (or Jehudith) daughter of Beerli son of Ephraim family of Heth (Genesis 26:34).

Wife 2: Basemath (or Bosmath or Adah) daughter of Elon family of Heth (Genesis 26:34; 36:2).

Wife 3: Mahalath (or Machlath or Basemath or Bosmath) daughter of Ishmael sister of Nebaioth (Genesis 28:9; 36:3).

Wife 4: Oholibamah (or Ahlibamah) daughter of Anah daughter of Zibeon the Hivite (Genesis 36:2).

Factions - Federalist Papers #10

As long as there is freedom of thought there will be factions / denominations.

“By a faction I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community. There are two methods of curing the mischiefs of faction: The one, by removing its causes; the other, by controlling its effects. There are again two methods of removing the causes of faction: The one by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests.”

Faith Statement

I believe the 66 books of the Christian Holy Bible are the inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God.

I believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe Jesus Christ is God, the living Word, who became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. Hence, He is both fully God and fully man.

I believe Christ, the Messiah, died for our sins, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to Scripture, and that He appeared to many before He was translated to heaven where He will once again return.

I believe that human life is sacred from conception to its natural end, and that mankind is made in the image of God.

I believe in the spiritual unity of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and that all true believers are members of His body, the Church.

I believe that true observational science and the Holy Bible are complementary of each other, not contradictory.