



PLANTED

Learning How to Defend Your Faith

Apologetics Workbook & Study Guide

Name: _____ Class: _____

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Course Map

Section	Focus	Learner outcome
1	Truth & "The Absolute"	Identify and define absolute truth.
2	Worldviews	Identify and compare foundational beliefs.
3	Does God Exist?	Present major philosophical arguments.
4	Can We Trust the Text of the Bible?	Explain manuscripts, variants, and Biblical canon.
5	Archaeology & History	Discuss physical evidence.
6	Fulfilled Prophecy	Build a cumulative historical case.
7	Final Thoughts	Active group discussion and development of Faith Statement..

Course covenant

- I will actively engage in course content and group discussion.
- I will be respectful of other people's opinions and thoughts.
- I will remember that the ultimate objective is not to win an argument but to demonstrate Jesus.

SECTION 1

Plant Your Flag: What Is Truth?

Soren Kierkegaard

"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."

Scripture Referenced: Genesis 1:1, Exodus 3:14, Psalm 25:4-5, Psalm 119:160, Proverbs 2:1-11, Jeremiah 32:17, Jeremiah 44:16-18, Matthew 7:7, Matthew 19:26, John 8:32, John 8:58, John 14:6, John 18:33-38, Acts 17:2-3, Romans 2:1-3, Romans 8:7, Galatians 5:17-23, Ephesians 4:11-16, Colossians 4:5-6, 1 Peter 3:15, 1 John 5:20, Revelation 1:8

Learning objectives

- Define truth.
- Define Biblical and Christian apologetics and their purpose.
- Explain causality, limitation, and relativism.
- Distinguish fact, opinion, and faith.
- Find the balance between truth and grace.

1.1 The "Absolute"

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.

1.1.A 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?

1.1.B 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?

1.1.C 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?

1.2 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?

1.3 Truth and Reason

Truth is not blind and without reason. A statement is true when it corresponds to reality. Reason is the capacity to acquire and analyze knowledge, and to formulate rational conclusions. Proper reasoning can improve our understanding of truth.

Term	Working definition	Example
Deductive Reasoning	Drawing conclusions by going from the general to the specific.	Defining truth: Psalm 25:4-5, John 14:6
Inductive Reasoning	Drawing conclusions by going from the specific to the general.	Discovering truth: Proverbs 2:1-11
Abductive Reasoning	Logical inference that seeks the simplest conclusion from a set of observations.	Observing truth: John 8:42–51, John 10:31-38

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

1.4 Evidence v Proof

Evidence is a collection of information that indicates or suggests the veracity of a claim, while proof is the conclusive determination that a claim is true, removing any lingering reasonable doubt.

How much evidence do you personally require to prove the primary claims of the Bible?

1.5 What Is Christian Apologetics?

The Greek word *apologia* refers to a reasoned defense. Christian apologetics gives reasons for the hope found in Christ, answers objections, and removes intellectual obstacles. It helps 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.

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.

SECTION 2

Worldviews: The Lenses We Use

Marianne Williamson

"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."

Scripture Referenced: Proverbs 18:17, Acts 15, Acts 17:22-31, Romans 12:2

Learning objectives

- Define worldview and understand its framework.
- Compare antisupernaturalism, supernaturalism, and monotheism.

2.1 What Is a Worldview?

Read Romans 12:2. What is Paul stating in this passage?

A worldview is a conceptual framework for how one understands and interprets the biggest questions of life. 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, a worldview influences: family / community, education / information, life experiences, and personal choices. Changing a worldview involves: different experiences, new perspectives, personal reflection, and choices.

Direct: Experiences through our five senses.

Indirect: Perception and interpretation of physical data.

2.2 Five Worldview Questions

1. Reality: Does God exist?
2. Humanity: What is the meaning and purpose of human life?
3. Morality: Why are certain behaviors good and others bad? Is truth and morality absolute or relative?
4. Participatory: Do we have free will? Is suffering / pain a necessary part of human existence?
5. Destiny: What happens after we die?

2.3 Different Worldviews

1. Antisupernaturalism: Atheism / Humanism / Materialism / Naturalism

These worldviews believe that all we see and experience are the result of purely natural phenomena. There is nothing beyond the physical world. These have their roots in Greek philosophy. They differ in their ethical frameworks and focus.

- a. Reality: Does God exist? God does not exist.
- b. Humanity: What is the meaning and purpose of human life?
Life is random and has no inherent meaning.
- c. Morality: Why are certain behaviors good and others bad? Is truth and morality absolute or relative?
Morality is relative and a human construct.
- d. Participatory: Do we have free will? Is suffering / pain a necessary part of human existence?
Pain is a random by-product of existence and is to be avoided.
- e. Destiny: What happens after we die? We cease to exist.

2. Supernaturalism: Panentheism / Pantheism / Polytheism

These were the most common types of worldviews prior to Alexander the Great of Macedon. It was a complex mix of beliefs, and syncretism was common.

Syncretism = merging or assimilation of beliefs and practices.

- a. Reality: Does God exist?
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
- b. Humanity: What is the meaning and purpose of human life?
Panentheism = God and humanity are united as one.
Pantheism = Humanity is an integral part of the Universe.
Polytheism = Each god has a specific function in how it interacts with humanity and the natural world.
- c. Morality: Why are certain behaviors good and others bad? Is truth and morality absolute or relative?
Panentheism = Morality is experienced as we experience God.
Pantheism = It does not have any specified moral code.
Polytheism = The gods mediate moral truth, not create it.

d. Participatory: Do we have free will? Is suffering / pain a necessary part of human existence?

Panentheism = Suffering can be transformed through divine presence.

Pantheism = It is unclear if humans have true free will.

Polytheism = Suffering is an inherent part of life, and humans are true free agents.

e. Destiny: What happens after we die?

Panentheism = Death is a natural process that brings us closer to the divine.

Pantheism = Humans emerge into a new type of existence after death.

Polytheism = Humans were judged based on their deeds while alive.

3. Monotheism: Judaism, Christianity, Islam

There is one omnipotent omnipresent transcendent God. All three of these religions have roots in Abraham. The first Christians were Jews, and early Islam was influenced by Judaism. Separation between Judaism and Christianity was a process as Christianity became more gentile. (Acts 15).

a. Reality: Does God exist?

There is one God.

b. Humanity: What is the meaning and purpose of human life?

Humanity was designed to have a relationship with the Creator of the Universe.

c. Morality: Why are certain behaviors good and others bad? Is truth and morality absolute or relative?

Holy Scripture clearly defines absolute moral behavior.

d. Participatory: Do we have free will? Is suffering / pain a necessary part of human existence?

Pain is part of the training process. We have the choice to follow God or not.

e. Destiny: What happens after we die?

We are judged by the Creator of the Universe.

Early Islamic history has very limited documented resources. Muhammad's genealogy is open to interpretation. Which son of Ishmael? Nebaioth or Kedar? Older versions of the Qur'an were destroyed. 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 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.

SECTION 3

Does God Exist? Principles and Beliefs

Sir James Matthew Barrie, *Peter Pan*

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

Scripture Referenced: Genesis 1:1, Exodus 34:14, Leviticus 11:44, Psalm 19:1-4, Matthew 5:17-18, Matthew 18:18, Matthew 25:35-40, John 3:16-17, John 10:10, John 14:6, Romans 1:20, Romans 2:14-15, Romans 3:9-12, Galatians 5:13, 2 Corinthians 3:17, Hebrews 11:1, 1 Peter 2:9

Learning objectives

- Understand the concepts of ontology, epistemology, and axiology.
- Understand the law of non-contradiction.
- What is the purpose of pain, suffering, and evil?
- State ontological, cosmological, contingency, teleological, and moral arguments.

3.1 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?

3.2 Nature of Reality, Knowledge, and Values

1. Ontology = Study of being and existence

What is real?

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

2. Epistemology = Study of knowledge and belief

How do we know what is real?

Quantitative (numerical data) v qualitative (characteristics)

3. Axiology = Study of values and ethics

What is its value?

Good v bad

3.3 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.

3.4 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.

3.5.A 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

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

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

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

3.5.B Does God Exist? 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.

3.5.C Does God Exist? 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 for the existence of the universe.

3.5.D Does God Exist? Teleological Argument

If there is a design, there must be a designer. What is the 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.

3.5.E Does God Exist? Moral Argument

Transcendent existence of right and wrong. Is there a universal moral code?

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

If objective morality exists, God exists.

Example: There are near universal laws against murder and kidnapping. It is often more about discouraging bad behavior than encouraging good behavior.

Bernard Gert (1934 – 2011): American philosopher on morality and ethics stated: "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 (death, pain, disability, loss of freedom, loss of pleasure) is the central moral concept. Harm is what all rational creatures seek to avoid.

3.6 Faith

What is faith? Read Hebrews 11:1.

There is a clear difference between knowing about Jesus and actually being in a personal relationship with Him. Faith is a firm belief in the truth of God's word and its declarations. Faith is a deep and developed trust in God and His promises.

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

3.7 Cultural Differences: Binding and Loosing

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.

3.7 Intolerance

Is the Christian belief based on intolerance?

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.

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

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.

3.8 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.

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).

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

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

SECTION 4

Can We Trust the Text of the Bible?

Alexis de Tocqueville

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

Scripture Referenced: Isaiah 40:8, Matthew 8:28, Luke 1:1-4, 2 Timothy 3:14-17, 2 Peter 1:20-21, Revelation 13:18

Learning objectives

- Define textual criticism, manuscript, and variant.
- Explain why manuscripts create variants and explain their significance.
- Discuss the most significant manuscripts in existence.
- Describe scribal corruption and canonicity.

4.1 The True Gettysburg Address

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.

4.2 What Is Textual Criticism?

It is an 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.

The original handwritten copies of New Testament books are not known to survive. Textual critics compare Greek manuscripts, early translations, and quotations. They weigh external evidence (age, geographical spread, and relationships among witnesses) and internal evidence (scribal habits).

4.3 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. According to renown textual critic Daniel B. Wallace, there are over 1.5 million documented textual variants for the New Testament from all material available. With all these variants, can we trust the Bible?

Why is there such a large variant count?

A variant is counted each time manuscripts differ. More copies produce more opportunities to count differences. No two handwritten copies are identical. 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? What would affect our confidence in knowing the original text?

4.4 1611 King James Version v Modern Translations

The 1611 KJV was based on 7 Greek manuscripts, with the earliest from the 11th Century AD. Modern translations are based on over 5800 Greek New Testament manuscripts, with the earliest from the 2nd Century AD. There are also over 10,000 Latin manuscripts, and over a million quotations by early church fathers. Over 43% of all verses in the NT are identified in manuscripts dating to within 125 years of its original authorship.

4.5 Meaningful and Viable Variants

A. Meaningful variants = change the meaning of the text

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

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

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

What is considered enough evidence?

C. Four Outcomes

Category	Meaning	Takeaway
Not Meaningful / Not Viable	No change in meaning; poorly supported	Variants are of low consequence.
Viable / Not Meaningful	Could be early; same essential meaning	Wording uncertain, message stable.
Meaningful / Not Viable	Would change meaning; evidence is weak	Interesting but not supported
Meaningful / Viable	Affects interpretation	Check Bible footnotes

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” without substantially changing its meaning?
Thousands

Scribal Corruptions: Intentional: Scribe was fixing an error thought to exist. Unintentional: Scribe may have added an error without knowing, such as spelling error

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.

4.6 Famous Test Cases

- Mark 16:9-20: the longer ending is absent from important early witnesses and is bracketed or footnoted in many modern editions.
- John 7:53-8:11: the woman caught in adultery is missing from early witnesses and appears in different locations in later manuscripts.
- Revelation 13:18: 666 or 616 – which is correct?
- Do these test cases change the core message of the Bible as a whole?

4.7 Old Testament Witnesses and Canon

Text in the Old Testament is much further removed from the original sources. This makes it more complicated, but the basic processes are the same.

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

B. Oldest manuscripts

Codex Sinaiticus (4th C AD): contains majority of Greek OT and NT, origin St Catherine's Monastery.

Codex Vaticanus (4th C AD): near complete Greek OT and NT, in Vatican Library.

Codex Alexandrinus (5th C AD): contains majority of Greek OT and NT, was in Constantinople in 1300's.

C. Dead Sea Scrolls

The Dead Sea Scrolls were initially discovered in 1946 AD, and were written between the 2nd Century BC and 1st Century AD. They provide Hebrew and Aramaic Biblical text almost a thousand years older than what was previously available through the Masoretic Text (St Petersburg / Leningrad Codex 1009 AD). The following is the number of scrolls of each book of the Old Testament found near the Dead Sea.

Book	#	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		

4.7 Canonicity

The main criteria for why certain books were in the Bible, and others were not, include: authoritative, historic / prophetic accuracy, consistent with other books, and near universal acceptance. The Septuagint (LXX) is an Old Testament Greek translation produced during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285 BC – 247 BC) by 72 Jewish scholars. The Septuagint contains the same books as the Old Testament, but the order of the books are different.

The text of the Bible was accepted in sections over time: Law (Torah), Prophets (Nevi'im), Writings (Ketuvim), and New Testament between the 9th Century BC and 4th Century AD.

The Textus Receptus (Received Text) is the accepted Greek New Testament that began with Erasmus in 1516 AD. It was the source material for many Bible translations and scholars, including KJV, RVA, Luther, and Tyndale.

SECTION 5

Bible Archaeology and Historical Evidence

Louis Pasteur

"The more I study nature, the more I stand amazed at the work of the Creator. Science brings men nearer to God."

Scripture Referenced: Genesis 8:4, Exodus 28:1, 1 Kings 14:25-26, 1 Kings 20:13-15, 2 Kings 3:1-5, 2 Kings 9:21-24, 2 Kings 12:17-18, Ezra 1:1-4, Luke 3:1, Acts 17:11, Romans 1:20

Learning objectives

- Define and describe true science.
- Discuss significant artifacts related to the Bible.
- Discuss contemporary literature that describes Jesus.
- Describe genetics that corroborates the Bible.

5.1 What Is Science?

Science is the systematic study of the natural world through observation, experimentation, and the testing of theories against evidence obtained. Science and the Bible are complementary, not antagonistic. They each offer different approaches toward understanding the world around us. An example of this is the Teleological Argument (page 11). The Bible states that God's power and divinity can be observed through the natural world (Romans 1:20). Modern science has clearly demonstrated that the many physical laws and constants, such as the gravitational constant, must be within very narrow ranges to support life.

5.2 Archaeological Corroboration

1. Cyrus Decree / Cyrus Cylinder

Ezra 1:1-4: Not exact wording but cylinder is consistent with Bible verses' purpose and message.

1st Year of Cyrus II = 539 BC. Cyrus Cylinder was found in 1879 in Esaglia Temple Complex, Babylon.



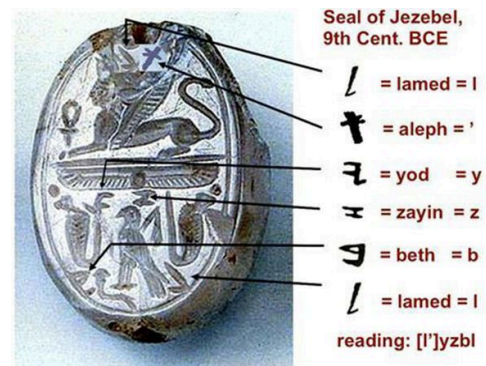
2. Bubastite Portal / Shishaq Relief

1 Kings 14:25-26: Shoshenq I (Shishak), 1st Pharaoh 22nd Dynasty (943 BC – 922 BC), attacked Israel c 926 BC. It is found at the Temple of Amun-Re, Karnak. It was translated with the help of the Rosetta Stone.



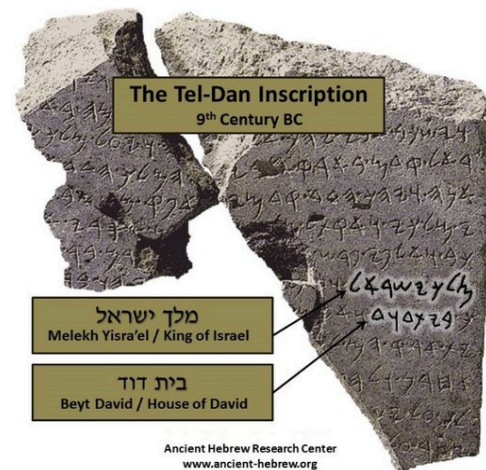
3. Jezebel Seal

Jezebel was the wife of King Ahab of Israel (c 874 BC - 853 BC) and daughter of Phoenician King Ithobaal I (879 BC – 846 BC). She was the great-aunt of Queen Dido, founder of Carthage, and killed by Jehu in 842 BC. This seal was found in the antiquities market in the 1960's.



4. Tel Dan Stele

2 Kings 9:21-24, 2 Kings 12:17–18: The Tel Dan Stele states that a person killed King Jehoram of Israel (852 BC - 841 BC) and King Ahaziah of Judah (842 BC - 841 BC). It was discovered in 1993 at Tel Dan in northern Israel.



5. Mesha Stele

2 Kings 3:1-5: The Mesha Stele relates the narrative of King Mesha of Moab. It was written in Canaanite, and is the Moabite version of the narrative. It is dated to c 840 BC, and was found in Jordan in 1868.



6. Kurkh Monoliths of Ashurnasirpal II and Shalmaneser III

1 Kings 20:13-15: King Ahab battled Aram-Damascus, and others, at the Battle of Qarqar in 853 BC. The monolith of Shalmaneser III states, “Karkar... I destroyed... 1,200 chariots, 200 cavalry, 20,000 soldiers, of Hadad-ezer, of Aram... 2,000 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of Ahab, the Israelite.” The monoliths were discovered in 1861 in Turkey.



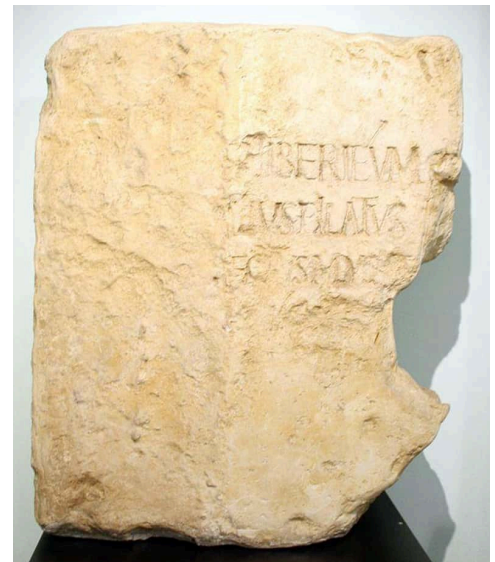
7. Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III

In Year 18 of King Shalmaneser III of Assyria (841 BC), King Jehu gave tribute to the king of Assyria. The obelisk was discovered in 1846 at Nimrud.



8. Pilate Stone

Luke 3:1: Pontius Pilate served under Emperor Tiberius Caesar of Rome from 26 AD to 36 AD as governor of Judaea. He was directly involved in the crucifixion of Jesus, and mentioned by several First Century AD authors, including Josephus, Luke the Apostle, and Philo of Alexandria. It was discovered in 1961 in Caesarea Maritima.



9. Avaris / Goshen / Tell el Dab'a: Joseph's Pyramid Tomb?

Tell el Dab'a is an archaeological site located on the eastern side of the Nile Delta in Egypt. Manfred Bietak of Austria has been leading excavations in the region since the 1960's. It was in use from the 12th through 19th Dynasties of Egypt (c 1900s BC - c 1200s BC) and contains a wealth of artifacts from a number of cultures. The image below represents a digital reconstruction of aspects of the site.



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

The pyramid style mausoleum is located in a prominent location within the community, and the statue was found in association with it. The person the statue depicts is Semitic / Canaanite in origin and features a colorful robe. Although inconclusive, it is consistent with the burial site of Joseph ben Israel.

5.3 Life of Christ in Early Literature

1. Cornelius Tacitus (56 AD – 120 AD) was a Roman historian and public official. He wrote *Annals*, and describes Roman history between 14 AD and 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”

2. Flavius Josephus / Yosef ben Mattityahu (c 37 AD – c 100 AD) was a Hellenistic Jewish historian and military leader. His father was a Jewish priest from the order of Jehoiarib, and his mother was of royal Hasmonean ancestry. He was a general of Jewish forces in Galilee at the beginning of the First Jewish–Roman War. He was captured and then began to collaborate with Vespasian and Titus. His works provide 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.

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.”

5.4 Genetics

1. Cohen Gene

Kohen = Priest

Geneticists tested men with surnames of Coen, Cohen, Cowen, or Kohen who had a familial history of priesthood. These 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 as compared to 5% of general Jewish male population. This points to a common origin of at least half the modern Kohanim (Exodus 28:1).

2. 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, lightning, 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).

5.5 Macroevolution and Living Fossils

Arguments against macroevolution. Macroevolution = change over time from one species into another.

1. Law of Entropy: According to the Law of Entropy, something cannot randomly come from nothing. Order cannot come from disorder. Randomness cannot create order.

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



According to some scientists, the coelacanth has been around essentially unchanged for about 410 million years, and the horseshoe crab has been around essentially unchanged for about 250 million years. There is little to no evidence of transformational intermediates between documented fossil species, and the fossil evidence does not support certain conclusions.

3. Biblical Eve

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

SECTION 6

Jesus and Fulfilled Prophecy

Patrick Ness

"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?"

Scripture Referenced: Psalm 25:10, Book of Isaiah, Ezekiel 26:1-14, Book of Daniel, Luke 4:16-21, 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 2 Peter 1:16-21

Learning objectives

- Describe the difference between prophetic and apocalyptic literature.
- Discuss the importance of the Book of Isaiah and the Great Isaiah Scroll.
- Discuss some prophecies in Ezekiel and Daniel.

6.1 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 reality from God's perspective.

6.2 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 his table talk, his comments sitting at the 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 were found as part of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Great Isaiah Scroll was found in 1946 in Cave 1. It was written between 100 BC and 125 BC, and is nearly complete. Although there are variants, it points to remarkable content preservation of the Book of Isaiah and the Bible as a whole.

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 the New Testament 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, 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, 12:2	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 13:10	Matthew 24:29, Mark 13:24
Isaiah 22:13	1 Corinthians 15:32
Isaiah 25:8, 49:10	1 Corinthians 15:54, Revelation 7:16-17, 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, 59:20	Romans 11:26-27
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, 35:5, 42:18	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 37:16	Acts 4:24
Isaiah 40:3-5	Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:3, Luke 3:4-6, John 1:23
Isaiah 40:6-8	1 Peter 1:24-25
Isaiah 40:13	Romans 11:34, 1 Corinthians 2:16
Isaiah 42:1-4	Matthew 12:18-21
Isaiah 45:21	Mark 12:32, Acts 15:18
Isaiah 45:23, 49:18	Romans 14:11
Isaiah 49:6	Acts 13:47
Isaiah 49:8	2 Corinthians 6:2
Isaiah 52:4, 52:11	2 Corinthians 6:17
Isaiah 52:5	Romans 2:24
Isaiah 52:7, 53:1	John 12:38, Romans 10:15-16
Isaiah 52:15	Romans 15:21
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 61:1-2	Luke 4:18-19
Isaiah 62:11	Matthew 21:5
Isaiah 65:1-2	Romans 10:20-21
Isaiah 65:17, 66:22	2 Peter 3:13
Isaiah 66:1-2	Acts 7:49-50
Isaiah 66:14	John 16:22
Isaiah 66:24	Mark 9:48

Jesus quoted 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. What are your thoughts? The Book of Isaiah states much about the Messiah hundreds of years before Jesus was born.

6.3 Daniel

When was the Book of Daniel written, and why is this significant? Daniel contains many very specific prophetic messages related to Greece and Rome. The Bible claims it was written during the Babylonian exile. Some claim it was written c. 160 BC after the fact because foretelling the future in such detail is not possible. The problem with the late date and reasoning is that some prophecies are fulfilled during the life of Jesus. 8 scrolls of Daniel were found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Is Daniel looking forward or looking back? Why is this significant?

6.4 Ezekiel 26:1-14

These verses are related to the 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.

SECTION 7

Final Thoughts

Hubert H. Humphrey

"Freedom is hammered out on the anvil of discussion, dissent, and debate."

Scripture Referenced: Genesis 12:1-3, Job 12:7-10, Psalm 19:1-4, Isaiah 61:1, Matthew 3:8, John 1, Acts 1:6-11, Romans 1:20, Romans 5:10, Romans 8:21, 1 Corinthians 10:29, 1 Corinthians 15:3-5, 2 Corinthians 3:17, Galatians 3:24, Galatians 5:1, Ephesians 2:8-9, Colossians 4:5-6, 2 Timothy 2:23-26, 2 Timothy 3:16, Titus 2:14, Hebrews 1:1-2, James 2:20, 1 Peter 3:15-16, 2 Peter 1:20-21

Learning objectives

- Leverage group discussions to improve understanding of the importance of apologetics.
- Identify the core Christian beliefs, and verify if they still hold true after this class.
- Clearly define your personal Faith Statement.

7.1 General and Specific Revelation

General revelation: God exists as seen through His creation. Job 12:7-10, Psalm 19:1-4, Romans 1:20.

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

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

General revelation provides a basic understanding of the character of God, but it is through special revelation, especially including the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, that we have a pathway to salvation and a permanent relationship with God.

7.2 Faith and Works

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

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

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

7.3 Factions and Denominations

As long as there is freedom of thought there will be factions / denominations. The most simple and broad definition of a faction or denomination is that it is a smaller organized group within a larger organization that follows a specific set of principles and beliefs. Federalist Paper #10 was written by James Madison in 1787 and describes a faction. Essentially, it states that as long as there is liberty there will be factions.

"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."

Read Isaiah 61:1, Romans 8:21, 1 Corinthians 10:29, 2 Corinthians 3:17, Galatians 5:1.

7.4 Core Principles of Biblical Faith

God is the source of all Scripture. 2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21.

Jesus is fully God and fully human. He was there at the beginning, became human, and lived among us.
John 1

Christ, who was sinless, died for our sins, was buried, and was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He appeared to many before He finally ascended to His Father in Heaven. Acts 1:6-11, 1 Corinthians 15:3-5.

7.5 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 to each other, not contradictory.