

THE BIBLE

- Take it seriously?
- Can we trust it?
- Is it true?
- Is it important?
- Is it relevant?

THE BIBLE

- It exists! – it is there!
 - an obstacle to atheism?
- How many copies are there?
- How old is it?
- How has it survived?

HOW MANY BIBLES?

1816 -1975	2,458,000,000
To 1992	nearly 6 billion
As of 2007	about 7.5 billion

(not counting digital versions on computers, iPhones etc)

Annual worldwide sales - more than 100 million

World's population 7 billion –
one Bible for every person on Earth!

Without a doubt, the best selling book of all time

TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE

complete Bible	over 450 languages
New Testament	nearly 1,400 languages
Gospel of Mark	over 2,370 languages

(less than half of the languages presently in use in the world,
but include the primary means of communication
of over 90% of the world's population)

**There are more translations of the Bible
than of any other book in the world**

SOME PEOPLE WHO TRIED TO DESTROY THE BIBLE

BC 608: King Jehoiakim of Judah – cut up & burned a scroll of God’s Word
- another one written, its prophecy fulfilled

AD 303: Diocletian (Roman Empire) - “Destroy Christians & their sacred books!” - 25 yrs later Constantine ordered 50 copies to be made

13th –16th C: R C church in Europe – thousands burned & many of their owners
- more than ever printed & imported → 1611 AV

1778: Voltaire - “In 100 yrs Christianity will be swept away”
50 yrs later Geneva Bible Socy used his press to produce Bibles!

20th C: communist Russia, China – banned the Book & persecuted its people
- Bibles smuggled in – now prolific and wanted

2008: R Dawkins : “Read my book and you’ll become an atheist!”

STRUCTURE OF THE BIBLE

- “BIBLE” = *biblia* = Books – 66 of them
- 2 groups separated by coming of Christ
- BC – Old Testament – 39 books
- AD – New Testament – 27 books
(“testament” = covenant *or* promise)
- OT – promises of Christ coming
- NT – promises because He came

THE BIBLE	OT	NT	WHOLE BOOK
BOOKS	39	27	66
AUTHORS	29+	8+	37+
DATES OF WRITING	1600-400 BC	40-90 AD	1700 yrs

The Bible

- Worldwide circulation
- Amazing survival
- But how accurate and reliable?
 - Has it changed over the centuries?
 - How many copies?
 - How carefully copied?

DATES AND COPIES OF ANCIENT MSS

AUTHOR	BOOK	WHEN WRITTEN	EARLIEST COPIES	NO OF COPIES
HOMER	ILIAD	800 BC	400 BC	643
HERODOTUS	HISTORY	430 BC	900 AD	8
CAESAR	GALLIC WARS	100-44 BC	900 AD	10
<i>VARIOUS</i>	<i>New Testament</i>	<i>50-100 AD</i>	<i>114 AD (parts) 200 AD (books) 325 AD (whole)</i>	<i>5366</i>

Accuracy?

- Copied with extraordinary care and attention to detail
- 10 to 100 x more copies than others
- ~10 x closer to original date
- Dead Sea scrolls (1947)

Accuracy more certain than
for any other ancient manuscript

Contents & Unity

- 40 authors – 1600 yrs – controversial topics
→ a mixture? an anthology?
- One unfolding story line with continuity & harmony
- How?
 - Inspiration from God supernaturally
 - Written down permanently
 - Restrained human imagination
 - Ensured permanence

How did we get the Bible?

- “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God”
(2 Timothy 3.16)
- “Holy men of God spoke as they were moved
by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1.21)
- “What you have seen, write in a book ...”
(Revelation 1.11)

THE BIBLE

- How many copies are out there?
- How old is it?
- How has it survived?
- How accurate & reliable is it?
- How did we get it?
- How important is its message?
- Why did we get it?

Message of the Bible

- Past history – confirmed by archaeology
- Present instructions –
 - basis of morality, justice, harmony
- Future prophecy –
 - (1) already happened on earth, e.g.
 - Israel as nation
 - Jesus Christ as a person
 - (2) still to happen – on earth and in heaven, e.g., Jesus will come again!

Why did we get it?

- “The holy scriptures are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3.15)
- “so that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that believing you might have life through His name” (John 20.31)
- “that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5.13)