Is the Bible accurate and reliable?

\*This article highlights some of the points from Josh McDowell’s “New Evidence that demands a verdict”

The Internal evidence:

The Bible stands alone as the only book every written over a fifteen-hundred-year span. Authored by more than forty individuals from every walk of life, including kings, military leaders, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, tax collectors, poets, musicians, statesmen, scholars, and shepherds.

It was written in different places. We find Moses in the wilderness, Jeremiah in a dungeon, Daniel on a hillside and in a palace, Paul inside prison walls, Luke while traveling, John on an island.

The Bible was written different times. David wrote in times of war and sacrifice, Jeremiah wrote in times of distress and isolation, Solomon in times of plenty, Paul in times of persecution and on different continents.

We find the text is written in three different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

The styles vary as well, including poetry, narrative, song, romance, didactic treatise, personal correspondence, memoirs, satire, biography, autobiography, law, prophecy, parable, and allegory[[1]](#footnote-1).

Yet the whole book have one message, God salvation to humanity is provided only through the redemptive work of His Son. From the sacrificial system in Exodus and leviticus to the prophecies found in the prophets to the death of Jesus and His resurrection in the gospels to the doctrine of Justification taught in depth by Paul, It is one message. Jesus’ blood is the only way for mankind to made right with God.

Just take a look at the prophecies fulfilled in Christ, let us say that each prophecy has a probability of 1:100 to be fulfilled randomly in Christ. That means that the probability of all of them randomly fulfilled in Christ 1:10 to the power of 730. Correct, that is 1:10 with 730 zeros next to it.

The evidence of Prophecy:

<http://www.reasons.org/articles/articles/fulfilled-prophecy-evidence-for-the-reliability-of-the-bible>

The manuscript evidence:

There are now more than 5,686 known Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. Add over 10,000 Latin Vulgate and at least 9,300 other early versions, and we have close to, if not more than, 25,000 manuscript copies of portions of the New Testament in existence today. No other document of antiquity even begins to compare. Homers Iliad is second, with only 643 manuscripts surviving[[2]](#footnote-2).

The citations of Scripture by the early church fathers are not primary support for the reliability of Scripture, but they do serve to show two things. First, they give overwhelming support to the existence of the twenty-seven authoritative books of the New Testament canon. Second, the quotations are so numerous and widespread that if no other manuscripts of the New Testament were available, the New Testament could be reproduced from the writings of the early Fathers alone[[3]](#footnote-3).

The historian witnesses:

Tacitus

The first-century Roman, Tacitus, is considered one of the more accurate historians of the ancient world. He gives the account of the great fire of Rome, for which some blamed the Emperor Nero. His writings touch on the fact that Nero tried to pass the blame for the fire by accusing the Christians, who got their name from Christus, the one who Pontius Pilate put to death. But after his death the followers gained new momentum due to the most mischievous superstition which broke out not only in Judea, the first place of the evil, but even in Rome. (Thomas Liplady, The Influence of the Bible (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1924), p. 209.)

The superstition mentioned by Tacitus refers to the resurrection of Jesus. Suetonius, who was the chief secretary to Emperor Hadrian, mentioned this same event. His writings confirmed other Biblical accounts as well[[4]](#footnote-4).

Josephus

Josephus (c. A.D. 37-100) was a Pharisee of the priestly line and a Jewish historian. He records many statements that verify, either generally or in specific terms, the historical nature of both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible.His writings also confirm the New Testament reports that Jesus was a real person in the first century, that others identified him as the Christ, and that he had a brother named James who died a martyr’s death at the hands of the high priest, Albinus, and his Sanhedrin. Josephus also confirmed the existence and martyrdom of John the Baptist, the presenter of Jesus. The writings spend some time on the ministry of John and his death and confirm the Gospel records. Josephus gave some attention to Jesus, but some dispute the text. The account given by Josephus is actually quoted by Eusebius (A.D. 325). While some would doubt the possibility that Josephus actually believed that Jesus was the Messiah, still he wrote in such a way that the implication was there[[5]](#footnote-5).

1. McDowell, 4-5 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. McDowell, 16 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. McDowell, 17 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. McDowell, 23-24 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. McDowell, 24 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)