

# *Apologetic Milk*

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Primary sources of evidence from: *New Evidence That Demands A Verdict*  
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# Apologetic Milk?

## (What in the world is that?)

Hopefully, the title made you laugh or go “Huh?!?” Most know the word “apologetic” to mean the describing of being sorry for something. Here, however, “Apologetics” is meant to mean **the defense of a belief** (usually, Christianity) – and if done properly, it will be supported by **verifiable facts** rather than intra-Biblical theology only without extra-Biblical fortification-or, based solely on faith alone in scripture without “proof”. “Milk” is simply a Biblical term/practice wherein it is written that it is better to give someone new to the Bible or a certain doctrine the softer things first; things easy to digest, that do not seem overwhelming to the hearer.

Thus, Apologetic Milk is intended to present a concise and easy study, making one aware that that **THERE IS PROOF** validating the history of Christianity and the Bible as a reliable historical document. Here, it is intended to “spark” the interest with compelling facts. It should be noted also that nothing in this study “proves” the Bible is the “inspired” word of God, or even that God exists-that is not the goal; what is shown here is that, historically, and as a matter of verifiable record, the Bible story (alone) is validated with hard evidence via historical and archaeological records. Belief in the word of God or the Bible will always remain a matter of faith. The information here, and further study on your own, can shrink the Grand Canyon Leap of Faith you may have down to a small crack that you can step over-as it did for me and as it has done for numerous others. Personally, I can tell you that I was like Thomas, the Bible Disciple who would not believe that Jesus rose from the dead without seeing proof; literally, Thomas wanted to see the nail prints in Jesus’ hands or he would not believe. The end of my first prayer to God, in similar fashion, boldly stated, “...oh, and by the way God,-I need proof!”

For many today, the reluctance to explore or investigate and learn about things of religion and/or the Bible comes down to a few things (or a combination of these): 1. Having preconceived notions that the Bible is just another religious saga-full of mythology and/or has been altered and changed such that it is not a reliable source as to be inspired by God; 2. Having a belief that there is no proof available validating any religion, and/or that there are so many religions/denominations that the thought of finding the right one, if there is a right one, is a turn off-too frustrating to consider; 3. That one is comfortable where they are and are reluctant to search out for truth; because, if any truth supporting the Bible is found it means likely changing a person’s life to something perceived by them as mundane, a boring life without any joy or thrill.

But, what if you knew there was hard evidence—nail prints in His hands, so to speak—validating the history of Christianity and the Bible; that historical and archaeological evidence consistently shows that the Bible story plays out **exactly** as told, that everything it teaches and foretells (in prophecy) is

true, **that nothing found in history or archaeology has ever disproven a single Bible text?** With knowing this kind of information, the fleeting amount of time we have here in this life and the fact that all we do in life essentially amounts to nothing in the end (without some purpose to life) should put a greater importance on what our ultimate destiny may be. Thomas Aquinas wrote that there is within every soul a thirst for happiness and meaning (Source: New Evidence/McDonald). **Apologetic Milk** aspires to put you on a quest leading you to find the inner fullness you seek, filling the empty spot in all of us that ponders the personal "meaning of life".

For anyone out there that is like I was—and this seems to be the majority—the science of archaeology is **extremely** relevant to Biblical study; for me (and others) it has provided better understanding of **context** in Biblical text, has provided physical evidence validating Biblical events, civilizations, cultures, places, names. Archaeology (and history, hand in hand) is an important source that will broaden the foundation for faith...**even for the seasoned Christian who has, to date, taken all in on faith alone.** Most who have seriously endeavored to invalidate the history of Christianity, like Josh McDowell, author of *New Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, have started out as atheists and wound up firm believers.

To better give you a chance at discovering the benefits of this kind of study, you should, in fairness, first put away any pre-conceived notions that you may have concerning the Bible, or religion in general, and keep an open mind...because, what you are about to read is real, is factually supported by evidence that can be seen, historically documented evidences that I hope will get your wheels spinning-to the extent you follow suggested readings at your leisure that are included at the end of this study. (Apologetics-Noun: The branch of theology that is concerned with the defense of Christian doctrines; also generally: the defense of a belief.)

## **RULES GOVERNING THE INTERPRETATION OF ARCHAEOLOGY**

1. Meaning can ONLY be derived from "CONTEXT"-dates, places, styles, materials; anything other than such direct fortifying elements only opens up the door to theoretical interpretations—which can be and are subject to error.

\*\*\* This rule is also in line with Scripture in the Bible, wherein it is written that the proper way to be informed as to the teaching one should not take a single scripture in isolation but to take all relevant scriptures on the subject-this method, when staying in context of what is being spoken about or on, is the most effective process in defining what the facts of the matters at hand are. In the matter of Scriptures, often, in error, one verse is isolated and interpreted-sometimes creating entire new doctrines, even new denominations.

2, The best interpretation is the one that best explains ALL of the evidence combined, comparing scripture against scripture and including the bigger picture derived from historical proof found in and through archaeology.

3. Because archaeology is fragmentary, it is subject to revision-this is due to new discoveries that may

provide more detailed information; these revisions have NEVER contradicted the Bible but usually sheds more light on the accuracy of the Bible as a valid historical document.

(NOTE: These rules are provided here to give the reader confidence in the science of archaeology; the big picture in the meaning of archaeological discoveries is drawn from physical evidence and compared to all other relevant evidence.)

**Who Am I?**

**Why Am I Here?**

**Where Am I Going?**

**What is My Purpose?**

These seem to be the tough questions in life, that, seemingly, the majority of people cannot currently or fully answer, and that possibly never get answered for many.

For this reason, we owe it to ourselves to devote a little time to discover if there may be valid answers to such questions. You have nothing to lose in taking some time to explore for answers to these matters, especially when you are being given, here, information that will provide you with factual evidences that you can measure for yourself. My hope is that you put away things taken for granted, preconceived notions you may have that you likely have backed with no researching and with nothing other than ideas or theologies built upon things other people have told you or mere opinion/theory.

## **Evidence that Demands Your Attention**

### **Proof That Shrinks the Leap of Faith**

What kind of proof? Looking at the historical past, we find an ever-changing landscape; where, collectively, and consistently the higher critics (of the Bible) of days gone by are constantly disproven. The Bible tells a narrative about characters in events, often leaving environmental details out, often being scant on such details.

How does archaeology help? It (and history) provide such details in excavations-such as documents from noted historians of the times, temples and palaces, altars, homes, tombs, city walls, gates, pools and baths, statues, coins, scrolls, amulets, letters, tablets, pottery, weapons, religious artifacts, information about cultures, laws, governments, morals and ethics, language, conflicts, trade relations-and more-including period scientifically dated; all of which are often mentioned in the Bible and which can give us a better understanding in a bigger, more detailed picture. Much of the examples presented herein are taken or paraphrased (with permission) from : **New Evidence That Demands A Verdict/Josh McDowell**; (hereafter referred to as: New Evidence/McDowell).

While many have doubted the accuracy of the Bible, time and continued research have consistently demonstrated that the Word of God is better informed than its critics (McDowell-New Evidence that Demands a Verdict, citing Henry Morris; pg-98). Not one incontrovertible (archaeological) find has ever contradicted the Bible (New Evidence/McDowell citing Geisler; pg.98).

## **THE UNIQUENESS OF THE BIBLE**

Many consider the Bible to be just another literary great; the majority of these are unaware of the evidence rapidly mounting proving the Bible to be an authentic historical document.

Professor M. Montiero-Williams, former Boden professor of Sanskrit, held this perspective. After spending 42-years studying Eastern books, he compared them with the Bible and said: "Pile them, if you will, on the left side of your study table; but place your own Holy Bible on the right side—all by itself, all alone—with a wide gap between it and the so-called sacred books of the East which severs the one from the other utterly, hopelessly, and forever...a veritable gulf which cannot be bridged over by any science of religious thought." (Source: New Evidence/McDowell/pp. 3-16 –and citing above named professor)

**The Bible stands alone among all other books.** It is unique, different from all others," in the following ways (of which are not all-inclusive by any means):

### **UNIQUE IN ITS CONTINUITY**

#### **The Bible is the only book that was**

1. Written over about a 1500-year span
2. Written by more than 40-authors from every walk of life.
3. Written in different places

\* By Moses in the Wilderness, Jeremiah in a dungeon, Daniel on a hillside and in a palace, Paul inside prison walls, Luke while traveling, John while in exile on the isle of Patmos.

4. Written at different times

\* David in times of war and sacrifice; Solomon in times of peace and prosperity.

5. Written during different moods

\* Some writing from the heights of joy; others from the depths of sorrow and despair; some during times of certainty and conviction; still others during days of confusion and doubt.

6. Written on 3-continents—Asia, Africa and Europe
7. Written in 3-languages—Hebrew-the language of the Israelites, Aramaic-the common language of the Near East, and Greek-the language comprising almost all of the New Testament; also the international language spoken at the time of Christ.
8. Written in a wide variety of literary styles—including poetry, historical narrative, song, romance, didactic treatise, personal correspondence, memoirs, satire, biography, autobiography, law, prophecy, parable, and allegory.
9. The biblical writers treated hundreds of serious topics—e.g. marriage, divorce, remarriage, homosexuality, adultery, obedience to authority, truth-telling and lying, character development, parenting, the nature and revelation of God—all addressed with an amazing degree of harmony.
10. **In spite of its diversity**, the Bible presents a single unfolding story; and, when all topics of any given subject are seriously studied out there are no conflicts as some think but a consistent harmony.
11. Verifiable fulfillment of prophecies; the Bible is the only volume ever produced by man or a group of men containing a large body of **verifiably** fulfilled prophecies relating to nations, to Israel, to people of the earth, to cities and to the coming of One who was to be the Messiah...Mohammedanism, in comparison, cannot point to ANY prophecies of the coming of Mohammed uttered hundreds of years before his birth.
12. Finally, and most important, among all the people described in the Bible, the leading character throughout is the one, true, living God made known through Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament the Law provides the foundation for Christ; the historical books show the preparation for Christ, the poetical works aspire to Christ, and the prophecies display an expectation of Christ. In the New Testament, the Gospels record the historical manifestation of Christ, the Acts relate the propagation of Christ, the Epistles give the interpretation of Him, and in Revelation is found the consummation of all things in Christ.

Therefore, although the Bible contains many books by many authors, it shows in its continuity that it is also one book. Contrast the books of the Bible with the compilation of Western classics called the Great Books of the Western World. These Great Books contain selections from more than 450 works by close to 100 authors spanning a period of about 25-centuries: Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Augustine, Aquinas, Dante, Hobbes, Spinoza, Calvin, Rousseau, Shakespeare, Hume, Kant, Darwin, Tolstoy, Whitehead, and Joyce, to name but a handful. While these are all part of the Western tradition of ideas, they often display an incredible diversity of views on just about every subject often displaying numerous conflicting and contradictory positions and perspectives...in fact, they frequently go out of their way to critique and refute key ideas proposed by their predecessors. (Source: New Evidence; #11 citing Geisler/Nix) This shows that, **AGAINST ALL ODDS**, where the Bible was written by many people in many places and at different times, the odds would seemingly be against continuity throughout...**but, and yet, the continuity is there in an amazing degree.**

## UNIQUE IN ITS CIRCULATION

It is rare to come across books that have sold more than a million copies, rarer still to find books that have passed the ten-million mark; it staggers the mind, then, to discover that the number of Bibles sold reaches into the **BILLIONS!** Add to this the many unsuccessful attempts to destroy and eradicate the Bible.

## UNIQUE IN ITS SURVIVAL

Despite being first written on perishable materials, the Scriptures have never diminished in style or correctness, nor have they ever faced extinction. Compared with other ancient writings the Bible has more manuscript evidence to support it than any ten pieces of classical literature combined. Bernard Ramm speaks of the accuracy and number of biblical manuscripts: "Jews preserved it as no other manuscript has ever been preserved...they kept tabs , a count, on every letter, syllable, word and paragraph—and when error was found it was redone. They had special classes of men within their culture whose sole duty was to preserve and transmit these documents with practically perfect fidelity—scribes, lawyers, Massorettes...a practice held in the preservation of no other so-called sacred writings. (Source: New Evidence/McDowell/pg. 9)

The Bible also withstood vicious attacks by its enemies...who tried to burn it, ban it, and "outlaw" it from the days of Roman emperors to present-day Communist-dominated countries; e.g. in A.D. 303, the Roman emperor Diocletian issued an edict to stop Christians from worshiping and to destroy their scriptures. The historic irony of this event is recorded by the fourth-century church historian Eusebius, who wrote that 25 years after Diocletian's edict the Roman emperor Constantine issued an edict ordering that 50 copies of the Scriptures should be prepared at the government's expense.

Many centuries later, Voltaire, the noted French infidel who died in 1778, said that in 100-years from his time Christianity would be swept from existence and passed into history. But what happened instead was Voltaire passed into history while the circulation of the Bible continues; concerning Voltaire's 100 year prediction—the record points out that "only 50-years after Voltaire's death the Geneva Bible Society used his press and house to produce stacks of Bibles". A thousand times over, the death knell of the Bible has been sounded, the funeral procession formed, the inscription cut on the tombstone...but somehow the corpse never stays put! (Source: New Evidence/McDowell pg.10)

## UNIQUE IN ITS TRANSLATION

While most books rarely are translated into more than the teens of languages, the United Bible Societies states that the Bible (or portions of it) have been translated into more than 2,200 languages; these languages (despite being only about 1/3 of the world's 6500 languages) are the primary vehicle of

communication for well over 90% of the world's population ([www.biblesociety.org](http://www.biblesociety.org)). These facts support what the Bible, itself, predicts as prophecy...that the Word of God should be given to the entire world, all nations; it is a well known fact that this objective, in effort, is fulfilling that prophecy as we watch the Bible being distributed more and more as time increases. (Source: New Evidence; PG. 8)

## **UNIQUE IN ITS TEACHINGS**

We have already stated herein the many issues that the Bible addresses relevant to marriage, divorce, adultery, etc., but, the Bible also deals very frankly with the sins of its characters, even when those sins reflect badly on God's chosen people, leaders and the biblical writer's themselves. The Bible is a focus on reality, not fantasy (as some myth-filled religions do). It presents the good, the bad, the right, the wrong, the best, the worst, the hope, the despair and the joy and pain of life. The Hebrew national tradition excels all others in its clear picture of tribal and family origins; in Egypt and Babylonia, in Assyria and Phoenicia, in Greece and Rome, we look in vain for anything comparable! (Source: New Evidence/McDowell pg. 8)

## **UNIQUE IN ITS INFLUENCES**

For anyone who knows basic history and the Western culture, it is clear just how much of the Western culture, style and law are founded on Christian/Biblical principals. The Bible presents the highest ideals known to men, ideals that have molded civilizations. (Source: New Evidence/McDowell pg. 15) No other so-called sacred book goes into such complete detail as to how the character of peoples and nations should develop and be governed.

## **RELIABILITY OF THE OLD AND**

### **NEW TESTAMENTS**

We should first address the meaning of the word "Canon" - as defined by the dictionary: "A collection of books accepted as holy scripture especially the books of the Bible recognized by any Christian church as genuine and inspired." Parts of the following are from: New Evidence pp. 21-22: (some edited for this booklet)

The word Canon comes from the root word "*reed*" (*English word: cane*). The reed was used as a measuring rod and came to mean "standard". There are tests (or, standards) employed to determine which books went into the Bible—guided by 5-principals:

1. Was the book written by a valid prophet of God? If written by a spokesman of God, then it was the Word of God.



2. Was the writer confirmed by acts of God? Frequently miracles separated the true prophets from the false ones; e.g. "Moses was given miraculous powers to prove his call of God ." (Ex. 4:1-9). Elijah triumphed over the false prophets of Baal by a supernatural act (1 Kings 18). Jesus was "attested to...by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him' (Acts 2:22)
3. Did the message tell the truth about God? According to the Bible, God cannot contradict Himself (2 Cor. 1:17-18). Hence, no book with false, unfulfilled claims can be the word of God.
4. Does it come with the power of God? Was it a transforming force, did it effect its stated goal, did it change lives?
5. Was it accepted by the people of God? Handed down, the writer's knew the prophets, the fulfillments were seen.

### **RELIABILITY OF NEW TESTAMENT**

**The New Testament Witness to the Old Testament as Sacred Scripture:** Matthew 21:42; 22:29; 26:54, 56; Luke 24; John 5:39; 10:35; Acts 17:2, 11; 18:28; Romans 1:2; 4:3; 9:17, 10:11; 11:2; 15:4; 16:26; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; Galatians 3:8; 3:22; 4:30; 1 Timothy 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; 3:16.

Relevant to historical data, there are three basic principals of historiography: the bibliographical test (examination of the textual transmission by which documents reach us-including how reliable the copies are), the internal evidence test and the external evidence test.

The fidelity of the New Testament (N.T.) text rests on a multitude of manuscript evidence; counting the Greek copies alone, the N. T. is preserved in some 5,686 partial and complete manuscripts-add over 10,000 Latin Vulgate and at least 9,300 other early versions...close to, if not more than, 25,000; no other document of antiquity approaches such numbers and attestation; and recall the check sum earlier stated, where copies being made were meticulously guarded...counts of every letter, word, paragraph, etc. Of all the classical authors and classical literary works, the N.T. has the most recent manuscript copies, allowing us to appreciate how wealthy the N.T. in manuscript attestation. In the chart on the next page we can compare the poverty of other literary works compared to the wealth and good textual attestation of the N.T.—the figures speak for themselves! (Source: New Evidence/McDowell pp. 34-44)

The internal evidence test must include the benefit of the doubt for the reason literary critics still follow Aristotle's dictum the "the benefit of the doubt is to be given to the document itself, not arrogated by the critic to himself." (New Evidence citing Warwick Montgomery); in other words, one must listen to the claims under analysis and not "assume" fraud or error unless the author disqualified himself by contradictions or know factual inaccuracies.

Difficulties in texts do not constitute contradictions. Again, new light is gained all the time by new discoveries, of which, to date, not one has contradicted the Bible; difficult texts, then, cannot be assumed as error until the necessary evidence is found to show the status of accuracy. (Source in part: New Evidence pg.45). It is good to remember that we are humans, subject to make mistakes; so, where there

have been mistakes made in interpretations, that does not make the source of the interpretation in error. There are principles for understanding apparent discrepancies in the Bible as follows: The unexplained is not necessarily unexplainable; Fallible interpretations do not mean fallible revelation; Understand the “context” of the passage; Interpret difficult passages in the light of clear ones-comparing scripture against scripture; Don’t base teachings on obscure passages; The Bible is a human book with human characteristics; Just because a report is incomplete does not mean it is false; New Testament citations of the Old Testament need not always be exact; The Bible may use round numbers as well as exact numbers; Note when the Bible uses different literary devices; An error in a copy does not equate to an error in the original...it is always found to be isolated to that copy; Later revelation supercedes previous revelation when further evidence found shed more light on the matter, etc.

Author	Book	Date Written	Earliest Copies	Time Gap	No. of Copies
Homer	Iliad	800 B.C.	C. 400 B.C.	C. 400 yrs	643
Herodotus	History	480—425 B.C.	C. A.D. 900	C. 1,350 yrs.	8
Thucydides	History	460—400 B.C.	C. A.D. 900	C. 1,300 yrs.	8
Plato		400 B.C.	C. A.D. 900	C. 1,300 yrs.	7
Demosthenes		300 B.C.	C. A.D. 1100	C. 1,400 yrs.	200
Caesar	Gallic Wars	100—44 B.C.	C. A.D. 900	C. 1000 yrs.	10
Livy	History of Rome	59-B.C.—A.D. 17	4th Cent. Partial Mostly 10th century	C. 400 yrs. C. 1000 yrs.	1 partial 19 copies
Tacitus	Annals	A.D 100	C. A.D. 1100	C. 1,000 yrs.	20
Pliny Secundus	Natural History	A.D. 61—113	C. A.D. 850	C. 750 yrs.	7
<b>New Testament</b>		<b>A.D. 50—100</b>	<b>C. 114 (fragment)</b> <b>C. 200 (boks)</b> <b>C. 250 (most of N.T.)</b> <b>C. 325 (complete N.T.)</b>	<b>• 50 yrs.</b> <b>• 100 yrs.</b> <b>• 150 yrs.</b> <b>• 225 yrs.</b>	<b>5366</b>

## CONTEXT, CONTEXT, CONTEXT!!!

The value of context, and staying in context cannot be understated. Where this applies to scriptural doctrines themselves, it also applies to history and its validation. It is when things are taken out of context—in theological interpretations—where the errors evolve. Historians and archaeologists apply rules to validation, and yet sometimes they make an error—which does not invalidate the artifact or document. Generally such occurs when there is not enough light or evidence and “theory” takes over. In the case of scriptures, this kind of misinterpretation happens when a person isolates a verse, shaping it into a meaning they “desire” it to mean; however, when context of the subject at hand is adhered to, the error clears up and the meaning is clear. With history and archaeological discoveries, when a subject is lacking we must not develop prejudices against it...but we must be patient for more detail to surface. And we must not make doctrines of obscure passages such as in 1 Cor. 15:29—where the words are clear but often the meaning is challenged by different interpreters; in the case of this verse the Apostle Paul speaks of those who were “baptized for the dead”...taken by some to mean the baptizing of live representatives to ensure salvation for dead believers who were not baptized. Staying in context of and comparing to other scripture this matter reveals itself...a believer should be baptized, but nothing is said in a negative manner about one who is not baptized; rather, the walk of the Christian and the development of that walk is referred to as “growing up”. When taken with the truth that no man knows the inner thoughts of another—to say we do not know for sure another person’s heart in a matter—then the passage cannot mean to have live representatives be baptized for the dead. The related passages to baptism make it all the more clear, that baptism represents the dying and rising with Christ as an attestation to one’s faith. This rule of context applies, as well, to the section: Reliability of the Old Testament, and, it should be applied in every form of study concerning the Bible and the historicity of Christianity. (The source of the Bible verse above is taken from: New Evidence pg. 49)

## EXTERNAL EVIDENCE TEST FOR THE RELIABILITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

This section deals with the question “Is there any evidence outside of the Bible to support its accuracy and reliability?”. The answer to this is **YES!** Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History III. 39, preserves writings of Papias, bishop of Heirapolis (A.D. 130) referring to an “elder” (the apostle John in context) who wrote about Mark, who in his recordings and writings of events states his methods “...for he paid attention to this one thing, not to omit anything that he had heard, not to include any false statement among them...”.

Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons (A.D. 180), who was a student of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, a Christian for 86-years, and a disciple of John the Apostle wrote: “So firm is the ground upon which these Gospels rest, that the very heretics themselves bear witness to them, and, starting from these [documents], each one of them endeavors to establish his own particular doctrine...”; this latter refers to and shows how interpreters challenge passages and develop their own belief systems that are, when compared with relevant scriptures in the matter, a clear error in doing so. This, friends, is where the real problem lies and where many have come to believe the Bible has been so changed and twisted around that it is no longer a reliable historical document. But, here you are seeing that process and are seeing

the real evidences exposing such errors. The previous heading, then, cannot be said enough: Context, Context, Context! (Source: New Evidence pg.53)

Negative Bible critics charge or imply that the New Testament documents are unreliable since they were written by disciples of Jesus or later Christians. They note that there is no confirmation of Jesus or New Testament events in non-Christian sources; not only is this claim false, but, as Geisler notes, "The objection that the writings are partisan involves a significant but false implication close to the one about whom they gave testimony. This is clearly false. Survivors of the Jewish holocaust were close to the events they have described to the world. That very fact puts them in the best position to know what happened. They were there, and it happened to them. The same applies to the court testimony of someone who survived a vicious attack. It applies to the survivors of the Normandy invasion during World War II or the Tet Offensive during the Vietnam War. The New Testament witnesses should not be disqualified because they were close to the events they relate." (Source: New Evidence pg. 54)

Tacitus is considered to be 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, to which Nero fastened the guilt to Christians during the reign of Tiberius, and at the hands of one of the prosecutors, Pontius Pilate, and regarding what the Jewish leaders thought to be a most mischievous superstition which was spreading about rapidly...a referral to the resurrection of Jesus, which many of the Jews rejected.

Josephus, a Pharisee of the priestly line (c. A.D. 100), and also a historian working under the Romans—in which he applied caution so as not to offend them—supports the Protestant view of the canon of the Old Testament against the Roman Catholic view, which venerates the Old Testament Apocrypha. He even lists the

names of the thirty-nine books of the Protestant Old Testament...of which he states are believed to justly be divine in nature. Both Josephus and Tacitus are men who were opposed to the Christian doctrines that support Jesus as Christ...**yet, what they record validates the very scripture which presents that as truth.** (Source: New Evidence pg.55)

In support of the matter whether Jesus was a real person, to which many critics state there is no evidence, Josephus refers to Jesus as the brother of James who was martyred, "...he assembled the Sanhedrin of the judges, and brought before them the brother of **Jesus, who was called Christ**, whose name was James..." referring to a hearing in which the Jewish leaders opposed to Christ were calling such believers spreading such doctrine as law-breakers. In yet another attestation to the real person of Jesus, Josephus also confirmed the existence and martyrdom of John the Baptist, the herald of Jesus (Antiquities XVIII 5.2). Here, one needs not worry that the matter is presented by Christians who are stating what they want others to believe; rather this is a non-Christian outside of the Bible, as a historian. The context is what is important here; as the differences between Josephus's account of John the Baptist's baptism and that of the Gospel is that Josephus wrote that John's baptism was NOT for the remission of sin, (because it was doctrine having to do with Jesus), while the Bible (Mark 1:4) says it was, and, that John was killed for political reasons and not for his denunciation of Herod's (who had him killed) marriage to Herodias. The real point in the discrepancy above, is that the general outline of Josephus' account confirms that of the Gospels. Here we have to keep in mind that while Josephus validates the Gospels and the characters, he opposes the doctrine involving Christ and his resurrection—of which the Bible itself, if not misinterpreted, supports that baptism is for the remission of sins. The Bible

is the more reliable source on this matter, but, here we are after evidence validating the history of the Christian belief system per the Bible...and this **IS** evidence to that effect. (Source: New Evidence pg. 56)

Josephus also gives a brief description of Jesus, making Him a real person—even if Josephus opposed His deity, "...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 [the] 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 the thousand other wonderful things concerning Him..." (Source: New Evidence pg. 57) It is obvious that Josephus is not likely admitting, himself, that Jesus was the Christ—even if he had believed it to be true, he would not have likely written it as an admission of faith, because to do so would have offended the Roman leaders, of which he was employed. But, what he does do is to present a reliable source from a witness of the time outside of the Bible (himself) and outside of the belief in Jesus as Christ, while attesting to the gospel story and making it valid in history as an actual event.

I will pause here to state that the above is NOT to prove that Jesus was the Christ, nor that He was the Son of God—per the Bible story; what is intended here, is to prove that He was a REAL person, according to validated history—wherein even those in opposition of Jesus as Christ in history admit Him to be a real person. This is a fact that should help to reduce the leap of faith to a hop or a small step in accepting Jesus as the Son of God as stated by God's word in the Bible.

## **MORE HISTORICAL FACTS**

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\*\*\* Please keep in mind that much of the following are documented facts of history for which we have artifacts and come from those who would oppose the Christians and their beliefs, yet what they testify to substantiates the bible story as it is presented.

Cambridge lecturer, Markus Bockmeuhl, notes that Tacitus's comments provide us with testimony by the leading Roman historian of his day, "independent confirmation that Jesus lived and was formally executed in Judaea in the reign of Tiberius and during Pontius Pilate's office as procurator" (technically still a prefect, A.S. 26-36). That may not seem like much, but it is actually surprisingly useful in discounting two different theories which are still sometimes advanced: first, that Jesus of Nazareth never existed; and secondly, that he did not die by the duly administered Roman death penalty.

Suetonius, another Roman historian, court official under Hadrian, and annalist of the Imperial House, stated in his Life of Claudius 25.4, "As the Jews were making constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus [another misspelling, as with Christus, for Christ], he [Claudius] expelled them from Rome." Luke refers to this event in Acts 18:12, which took place in A.S. 49.

In another work Suetonius wrote about the fire that swept through Rome in A.D. 64 under the reign of Nero. Suetonius recounts that "Punishment by Nero was inflicted on the Christians, a class of

men given to a new and mischievous superstition." (Lives of the Caesars, 26.2) (New Evidence, page 122)...Assuming Jesus was crucified in the early thirties, Suetonius—**no friend of Christianity**—places Christians in the imperial city less than twenty years later, and he reports that they were suffering and dying for their convictions that Jesus Christ had really lived, died, and risen from the dead.

### **Here is an interesting historical fact...**

You may recall, according to the Bible, that when Jesus was in the tomb that those in opposition to Him and His teachings recalled that He had stated He would rise on the third day to live again; and so, they had the tomb guarded. But, as that story goes there was a quake and the stone rolled back from the tomb. The guards had fallen, as if dead. When they awoke and discovered and reported that Jesus was gone they were instructed **to lie** and say that Jesus' disciples came and stole Him away in the night. As a matter of historic record, and a matter that causes one to be suspicious of the actors, there is another event that, hand in hand with the above event makes you go "Hmmmmm?!?!?" Because, when Jesus was on the cross and there was a time then when all went dark, the historians make an explanation/excuse for the event; without knowing the technology we would have today, or that we would have access to a record of their excuse, they stated (instead of saying it was something like an overcast due to a incoming storm) that it was a SOLAR ECLIPSE! However, scientists and astronomers can look back now and see **that there was no solar eclipse that occurred anywhere near this time!!!** Now, you have to ask..."Why would they lie?" And, isn't it likely that if they lied about this that they also lied about the disciples taking Jesus' body from the tomb by night-as told in the Bible?!?! There is a court rule often employed that says: FALSE IN ONE, FALSE IN ALL!

This latter, we have historical documented evidence for: New Evidence That Demands a Verdict, page 122...Julius Africanus, a Christian writer who penned his work around A.D. 221, on a record of one of the first secular writers, Thallus. who mentions Christ in the fragments of his writings...Africanus points out that an eclipse could not take place at the time of the full moon, and it was at the season of the Paschal full moon that Christ died—according to Biblical record and historical documents recording the time he died. This is a reference showing that the Gospel account of the darkness that fell upon the land during Christ's crucifixion was well known and required a naturalistic explanation from non-Christians. Thallus did not doubt that Jesus had been crucified and that an unusual event had occurred in nature that required an explanation. The basic facts were not called into question, rather what occupied his mind was the task of coming up with a different interpretation of the event that did not support the Christian belief. This is also recorded, in explanation of the unexplainable, by Phlegon, another secular authority who wrote: Chronicles...also preserved by Afrincanus...Ne Evidence pages 122-123

## **MORE HISTORICAL FACTS...continued**

The crucifixion...In the Babylonian Talmud we read: "it has been taught: On the eve of Passover they hanged Yeshu. And an announcer went out in front of him, for forty days (saying): 'He practiced sorcery and enticed and led Israel astray. Anyone who knows anything in his favor, let him come and plead in his behalf.' But, not having found anything in his favor, they hanged him on the eve of Passover" (Sanhedrin 43a; cf. t. Sanh. 10:11; y. Sanh 7:12; Tg. Ester 7:9). Another version of this text says, "Yeshu the Nazarene."

"Yeshu" translates through Greek to English as "Jesus" and the reference to him being a Nazarene makes the link to Jesus Christ even stronger, relevant to the Bible account.

Moreover, the word "hanged" is another way of referring to crucifixion (See Luke 23:39; Gal. 3:13). The Talmud," writes the Jewish scholar Joseph Klausner, "speaks of hanging in place of crucifixion, since this horrible Roman form of death was only known to Jewish scholars from the Roman tribals, and not from the Jewish legal system. Even Paul the Apostle (Gal. iii. 13) expounds the passage 'for a curse of God is that which is hanged' (Deut. Xxi. 23) as applicable to Jesus. Also, the reference that this crucifixion occurred "on the eve of Passover" agrees with John 19:14 (phrase also found in b. Sanh. 67a; y. Sanh 7:16)...Therefore, this text clearly affirms the historicity of Jesus and his death. It also affirms that the Jewish authorities were involved in the sentencing, but it tries to justify their actions. In a backhanded way it even attests to Jesus' miracles (see also Sanh. 107b; t. Sabb. 11:15; Sabb 104b; b. Sota 47a), but it attempts to explain them away as the work of a sorcerer or magician, a response mentioned by the Gospel writers (Mark 3:22; Matt. 9:34; 12:24).

## **WHO IS JESUS OF NAZARETH?**

Throughout history, people have given a variety of answers to this question. Whatever their answer, no one can escape the fact that Jesus really lived and that His life radically altered human history forever. The world-renowned historian Jaroslav Pelikan makes this clear: "regardless of what anyone may personally think or believe about him, Jesus of Nazareth has been the dominant figure in the history of Western culture for almost twenty centuries. If it were possible, with some sort of super-magnet, to pull up out of that history every scrap of metal bearing at least a trace of his name, how much would be left? It is from his birth that most of the human race dates its calendars, it is by his name that millions curse and in his name that millions pray."

**A note from the author of this study...Samuel Joe Barker**

**Thanks for reading...and pass this on...**

If I chose to, I could easily inundate you or overwhelm you with much evidence supporting the validity of the history of Christianity...but then, that would go against the idea of this study and its very title.

Here, I mean to merely let you know that if you doubt the Bible as the inspired word of God, or if you think that the Bible is not reliable as an historical document...there is proof out there for you that will likely make you change your perspectives and from there, as you learn the truthful words of God, you will realize the life of the Christian—while it can often be difficult—is not a profession of wearing a sad countenance or boring life without joy...God is the creator of joy and happiness and he wants all of his children to be happy, to laugh, to experience all of the good things in life and in the life to come.

**<http://www.apologeticmilk.webs.com>**

## **SUGGESTED READING**

### **Archaeological and Historical Proofs:**

New Evidence That Demands a Verdict—Josh McDowell

### **A History of the Church:**

The Great Controversy—Ellen White

### **Facts that Dispel the Fallacies of Evolution:**

The Evolution Handbook—Vance Ferrell

(<http://www.amazon.com/The-Evolution-Handbook-Vance-Ferrell/dp/B000SSV7RO>)



**On the Life of Jesus:**

Steps to Christ—Ellen White

(The 2nd most published after the Bible!)

Desire of Ages—Ellen White

Beautiful Outlaw—John Eldredge

**For Consistency in Prophecy:** [http://www.hopevideo.com/david\\_asscherick.htm](http://www.hopevideo.com/david_asscherick.htm)