

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

The Humble Book

The Word of God can be Examined.

Historical Evidence from other sources.

Other sources are not “more historical” or “the real history” because all history is written for a purpose and within one’s view of the world. (Example: ancient Egyptians wrote of the gods and viewed Pharaoh as the incarnation of the sun god.)

It follows the rules of normal language and interpretation.

Deeper meanings, spiritualization or “special knowledge” is not necessary in order to understand the plain meaning of the text. Even children can get an idea of what is happening.

Most of Scripture is written in historical narrative and is consistent with what we know about people today.

Jealousy, envy, hate, murder, lying, deception, adultery, sensuality, promiscuity, fighting, war, favoritism. **Trust, faith, love, perseverance, honesty, loyalty, worship.**



Those living at the time or just after the events happened recorded the details more accurately than those who lived thousands of years later who are trying to reconstruct the events.

The Word of God sits Quietly among Historical Sources

Many sources also speak of places and events mentioned in Scripture.

- Ur and Haran: Home of the Patriarchs.
- Canaanite gods and goddesses.
- King David’s Jerusalem and House of David
- King Hezekiah’s Tunnel
- The Fall of Lachish (Assyrian) and Lachish Letters (Babylonian)
- Sennacherib Prism
- The Cyrus Cylinder
- Herod, King Herod’s Palace, the Herodium
- The Galilee Boat
- The Pontius Pilate Inscription
- Greco-Roman references to Jesus
- Politarch and Gallio Inscriptions

Critics of Scripture come with their own worldview or cultural authority, yet the Scriptures remain the same.

Historical criticism, also known as the historical-critical method or “higher criticism”, investigates the origins of ancient texts in order to understand “the world behind the text.”

It can be applied to ANY literary work of antiquity—

but in particular to the Hebrew and Christian Bible, ancient Greek-Roman literature, and the Koran.

These scholars built on the tradition of Enlightenment and Rationalist thinkers; their ideas were imported to England and then incorporated into Christian doctrine.

Why aren't some key biblical characters mentioned in secular sources?

- **God starts His work in seed form and allows it to grow.**
(Example: The nation of Israel starts from one man, Abraham. Jesus came as a baby and was crucified as one of thousands at the hands of the Romans. The church began with a handful of believers.) Key biblical characters are seen to be great in retrospect and would not have been identifiable in their day by anyone except for those to whom God revealed it.
- **What humans value as “great” and “newsworthy” often passes with time because they can’t see the future.**
- **Human records often omit details that makes them or their country look bad or weak.** *(Ex: The ancient Assyrians did not make a record of military defeats.)*
- **Things in antiquity have been covered over layer by layer throughout the centuries.** *(Ex: Ephesus. The interest, time, and money needed to unearth things from the past is not always available.)*
- **Some places are not accessible.** *(Ex: Mt. Ararat, Thyatira)* and there continues to be open hostility towards the Jews in lands of biblical antiquity.

As of November 2015
the full Bible has been translated into
554 languages,
and **2,378 languages**
have at least some portion of the Bible.
There is current active translation and/or
linguistic development happening in
2,267 languages
across more than 130 countries.

Questions to Think About:

*What is God doing in the world today that would not make headline news?
Is what God is doing in my life and in my church making headline news? How important is it? What will God grow out of it?
Do I get swept away by headline news and consider it as more “real” or “authoritative” than God’s Word?
Is there anyone that I view as small and unimportant who is doing God’s work in faithfulness? How important might they be in later history?
Have I examined the Word of God or does it sit humbly next to other books or magazines that I deem as more worthy of my time?*

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