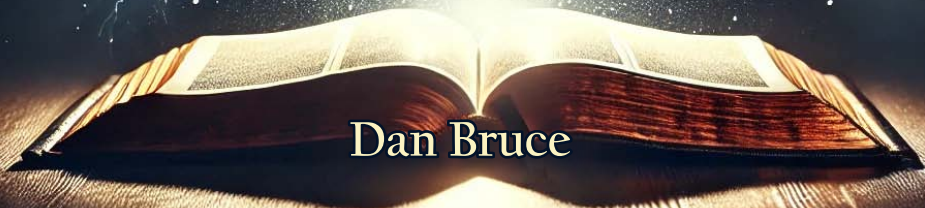


Accepting the Challenge

*Answers to 12 Honest Questions Asked by
Skeptics Who Don't Believe the Bible*



Dan Bruce

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THE PROPHECY SOCIETY
ATLANTA

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Honest Questions, Honest Answers

The twelve questions most often asked by skeptics who don't believe in the Bible and God, as revealed in recent conversations and dialogue about the meaning of faith, are listed below, followed by a page number that directs you to each question and its answer:

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The Bible is arguably the most influential religious guide in history. Yet many people remain skeptical of its teachings, especially those who have never taken the time to read it for themselves. Some dismiss it altogether, convinced it's merely a collection of man-made myths. This booklet doesn't offer a sermon, nor does it aim to persuade. It is simply an honest and respectful response from a believing Christian to some of the questions posed by those who, for various reasons, struggle to trust the Bible or believe in the God it presents.

Be assured, this booklet was written with the conviction that sincere questions about the Bible and God deserve thoughtful consideration, not defensiveness. Your author believes that the search for truth, especially biblical truth, requires intense scrutiny. He believes that honest questions, especially from skeptics, deserve honest answers. All too often, discussions about God and the Bible spiral into debate, with people talking past each other. That's not the aim here. Whether you're a seeker, a skeptic, a student, or simply someone exploring Scripture for the first time, you are invited to read with open-minded skepticism. Total agreement isn't expected, but reflection is. Consider the evidence. Engage the ideas.

The Bible claims to offer more than human insight. It claims to speak with divine wisdom about the human condition, about the longings and fears that shape all of us. By its own testimony, the Bible welcomes questioning dialogue (*"Come now, let us reason together"*—Isaiah 1:18), not as signs of resistance and opposition to God, but as steps toward gaining a genuine understanding of one's place in the grand scheme of things. So, if you've ever wondered whether there's anything meaningful in the Bible, whether the God of the Bible is real and knowable, or whether faith still matters in an age of science and reason, this booklet is meant for you. You don't need religious credentials or a theological background. All you need is curiosity and a willingness to consider that eternal truth can be found.

If nothing else, may these pages leave you with a clearer view of what the Bible actually says—and why millions still find in its pages, not just answers, but hope.

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."—1 Peter 3:15

Isn't the Bible a book written by man, not God?

Skeptics often claim that the Bible is nothing more than human invention—a collection of myths, moral teachings, and historical data written by fallible people trying to make sense of the complex world around them. At first glance, it may seem reasonable to assume that the Bible is no different from any other religious text or ancient literature. After all, it was written by human hands. But a deeper investigation into the Bible's content, coherence, historical reliability, fulfilled prophecies, and internal claims reveals a far more compelling picture: a fair-minded evaluation shows that the Bible is not merely human; it is a divine revelation communicated through human authors.

First and foremost, let's examine what the Bible says about itself. It repeatedly declares itself to be the revealed mind and will of God, not merely the words of men. The apostle Paul makes that claim clear in his second letter to Timothy: *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”* (2 Timothy 3:16). The phrase “given by inspiration of God” (Greek: *theopneustos*) means literally “God-breathed.” The Bible claims that the thoughts, teachings, and even specific words came from God, not simply imagined or invented by man.

The apostle Peter reinforces this point: *“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit”* (2 Peter 1:20–21). In other words, while human authors penned the text, the underlying source of its content was divine. The Spirit of God guided their writing so that what was written for us was exactly what God intended to communicate to us.

The Bible was written over a span of approximately 1,500 years by more than 40 human authors from differing backgrounds—shepherds, kings, prophets, fishermen, scholars, and tax collectors. It was written in three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek) on three continents (Asia, Africa, and Europe), yet it presents a unified message, the story of God’s redemptive plan for humanity. How could such unity exist unless there was a single, divine author behind it? From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible unfolds a consistent narrative that says God created the world, mankind fell into sin, but God promised redemption, and that promise is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. The coherence of its redemptive theme across centuries of diverse human authors defies natural explanation.

One of the most compelling evidences for the divine origin of the Bible is fulfilled prophecy. Unlike vague or general predictions found in other religious or mystical texts, biblical prophecies are always specific and often tied to actual historical events. Consider the prophecy of Isaiah, written *circa* 700 BCE: “*Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held. To subdue nations before him and loose the armor of kings, to open before him the double doors, so that the gates will not be shut*” (Isaiah 45:1). The prophet foretold by name a Persian king, Cyrus the Great, who would not be born for another 150 years. That prophecy accurately predicted that Cyrus would allow the Jews to return from captivity in Babylon (see Ezra 1:1–4). No human could have guessed that event centuries in advance.

More importantly, messianic prophecies, like those found in Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22, accurately described the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus centuries before his birth. For instance: “*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities*” (Isaiah 53:5) and “*They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots*” (Psalm 22:16, 18). Those and many more prophecies find fulfillment in the life and death of Jesus (*see examples on page 87*). The

statistical probability of one person fulfilling so many predictive prophecies by chance is astronomically low, lending strong support to divine orchestration.

Critics have long charged the Bible with historical errors. Yet over time, many supposed contradictions or inaccuracies have been proven unfounded by archaeological discoveries. For example, the existence of the Hittite Empire, once thought to be mythical, was confirmed through archaeological excavations in the early 20th century. Similarly, the Gospel of Luke, once criticized for its references to obscure political figures and census records, has been repeatedly affirmed by historical findings. Luke's precision as a historian was noted by archaeologist Sir William Ramsay, who initially approached the Bible as a skeptic but later declared: "Luke is a historian of the first rank... this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians." In summary, the Bible's accuracy in describing geography, political figures, cultural customs, and historical events bolsters its credibility and supports its divine origin.

Of special importance, the Bible, unlike mere human writings, has transformed numerous lives across every culture and time period. It has turned murderers into saints, broken addicts into restored individuals, and prideful kings into humble servants. Jesus said: "*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life*" (John 6:63). This transformative power is hard to explain if the Bible were merely human. No other book has had such an impact on civilization, shaping art, law, morality, education, and justice. From William Wilberforce's abolition of the slave trade in Britain to the founding of hospitals and orphanages around the world, the Bible's message has inspired unmatched good in society.

For those who consider Jesus a moral teacher or spiritual leader, it's worth noting how he regarded Scripture. He affirmed the Old Testament as the Word of God. When tempted by Satan, Jesus

responded: “*It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God”* (Matthew 4:4). Jesus referred to Moses, David, Isaiah, and others as real people speaking God’s truth. He even declared: “*For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled*” (Matthew 5:18). To Jesus, Scripture was not a collection of helpful human ideas—it was the very mind of God.

Yes, the Bible was written by human authors, but the writings of those authors were inspired and guided by the Spirit of God. Its unity, historical accuracy, fulfilled prophecies, moral influence, and self-attesting claims all support the conclusion that it is not merely a human creation. To dismiss it as such is to ignore overwhelming evidence to the contrary. The God of the Bible has chosen to speak, not through mystical experiences or abstract philosophies, but through the power of words preserved, translated, studied, and proclaimed for millennia. As Hebrews declares: “*For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*” (Hebrews 4:12).

In a world filled with a deluge of human opinions and constantly shifting ideologies, the Bible continues to stand as a timeless, divine message—inviting each of us to listen, believe, and live accordingly. However, its many benefits will never manifest in a person’s life if they don’t open the pages of the Bible and read its words with an open mind and heart, in good faith seeking transcendent truth.

Hasn't the Bible been corrupted through the ages?

One of the most common objections to the trustworthiness of the Bible raised by skeptics is the claim that the text has been corrupted over time—that copying errors, intentional changes by scribes, translation issues, and political interference have distorted the original message beyond recognition. This charge, often repeated but rarely investigated, creates doubt in the minds of many who might otherwise consider the Bible's message seriously. But is it true? Has the Bible been corrupted through the ages?

The short answer is no. While the Bible has indeed been copied, translated, and transmitted over thousands of years, overwhelming historical, textual, and archaeological evidence shows that the Bible we read today is essentially the same as the original documents penned by its God-inspired authors. This section will explore the integrity of the biblical text, the evidence from manuscript preservation, and the divine promise of preservation found in Scripture itself.

Logically, if the Bible is truly the Word of God to instruct man, then it follows that God would preserve it. The Bible makes this claim repeatedly. In Isaiah, the Bible declares the enduring nature of his Word: *"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever"* (Isaiah 40:8). Jesus likewise affirmed the permanence of God's Word: *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will by no means pass away"* (Matthew 24:35). And, so far they haven't. The promise of divine preservation is not merely poetic language—it reflects God's intention to protect the integrity of his revelation. If God went to the trouble to speak through prophets and apostles, then surely he would ensure that their words would be preserved for future generations.

The Hebrew Scriptures (*aka* Old Testament) were transmitted with extraordinary care. Jewish scribes, known as the Masoretes, developed rigorous techniques to ensure accuracy when copying the sacred texts. These included counting the number of letters, words, and even middle letters of books to ensure precision. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in the mid-20th century, they provided a stunning confirmation of accurate transmission. Among the scrolls were portions of every Old Testament book (except Esther), carbon¹⁴ dated to as far back as the 3rd century BCE, over a thousand years older than the Masoretic manuscripts used for translation.

The most notable discovery was a complete scroll of Isaiah. When compared to the Masoretic Text from around 1000 CE, the differences were minor—mostly spelling variations or stylistic changes, none of which altered doctrinal meaning. That confirmation shattered the myth that the Old Testament had been significantly altered over time. As scholar Gleason Archer noted: “The Dead Sea Scrolls have demonstrated that the Jewish scribes were faithful in transmitting the text of the Scriptures for over a thousand years.”

As for the New Testament, it is by far the most well-attested document from antiquity. There are over 5,800 Greek manuscripts, 10,000 Latin manuscripts, and more than 20,000 manuscripts in other languages. Some of these manuscripts date to within 50 to 100 years of the events being described. By comparison, other ancient works—like those of Plato or Caesar—survive in only a handful of copies, written centuries after the originals. Yet no one questions the authenticity of those writings. If the same standards were applied to the New Testament, its authenticity would be unquestioned.

Additionally, early church fathers (from the 1st through 4th centuries CE) quoted the New Testament so extensively in their own writings that nearly the entire New Testament could be reconstructed from their quotations alone—even if all direct manuscripts were lost.

While minor differences exist among New Testament manuscripts (as they do in all ancient texts), the variants are well-documented and studied. The vast majority are spelling errors or stylistic differences. Less than 1% of variants affect meaning, and none impact essential doctrine. As New Testament scholar Daniel Wallace once opined: “We have an embarrassment of riches. No essential Christian doctrine is affected by any textual variant.”

Another common misunderstanding is the idea that because the Bible has been translated many times, its teachings must have been changed along the way. But newer translations are always based on the original language manuscripts—not on previous translations. For example, modern English Bibles like the New King James Version (NKJV), English Standard Version (ESV), New American Standard Bible (NASB), and the Jewish Publication Society’s 1917 version and the 1985 *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures* are translated directly from the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts.

Translation differences usually reflect updated language or style preferences, not corruption. Consider how Psalm 23:1 appears in two Christian and one Jewish translations:

- NKJV and JPS 1917: “*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*”
- NASB: “*The Lord is my shepherd; I will not be in need.*”

Note that there is no change in meaning. The preservation of content across translations reflects fidelity to the original text rather than distortion. Moreover, the translators of most modern translations have specifically tried to preserve the accuracy and beauty of the originals, such as the King James Version, while updating archaic language. Their work is still based on the Masoretic Text, Textus Receptus, as well as the Majority Text and Alexandrian manuscripts, among others, allowing for careful comparison and integrity.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus affirmed the reliability and authority of the Scriptures available in his day—Scriptures that had

already been copied and transmitted for centuries. He read from the scroll of Isaiah in the synagogue (Luke 4:17–21), quoted the Psalms and the Law of Moses, and rebuked his critics by saying: “*You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me*” (John 5:39). If the Scriptures had been corrupted, Jesus would not have pointed people to them as the source of truth about his messianic claims. Likewise, the apostle Paul wrote: “*For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope*” (Romans 15:4). He treated the Old Testament Scriptures as trustworthy and authoritative, fully confident in their integrity as revealing the mind of God.

The Bible does not call people to blind belief based on a flawed or suspicious document. Instead, it presents a rational and historically grounded invitation to faith. As Luke explained in the introduction to his Gospel: “*Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us... it seemed good to me also... to write to you an orderly account... that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed*” (Luke 1:1–4). Luke wasn’t writing fiction. He was compiling a careful, evidence-based history. And that same spirit of integrity permeates the entire biblical record.

The objection that the Bible has been corrupted through the ages is not supported by evidence. While no ancient document has survived completely unchanged in manuscript form, the Bible is, by far, the best preserved, most scrutinized, and most faithfully transmitted book in history. Thanks to meticulous scribes and the providence of God, we can confidently affirm that the Bible we hold today faithfully represents the original writings. As Jesus himself prayed: “*Sanctify them by your truth. your word is truth*” (John 17:17). If God’s Word is truth and he has promised to preserve it, then we can trust it fully, not only as historically reliable, but as the foundation for life, salvation, and eternal hope.

Isn't the Bible full of contradictions?

One of the most common objections raised by critics of the Bible's reliability is that it is "full of contradictions." At first glance, certain passages within Scripture might seem to conflict with others, suggesting discrepancies or error. However, the Bible itself anticipates this challenge by emphasizing the importance of diligent, careful study in order to discern its meaning accurately. Indeed, the apostle Paul instructs believers to engage in earnest study of the Scriptures: *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"* (2 Timothy 2:15). This exhortation underscores the need for careful and precise interpretation, recognizing that superficial readings almost always lead to misunderstandings and error.

Furthermore, the apostle Peter explicitly acknowledges that certain scriptural passages, particularly those written by Paul, can be complex and easily misinterpreted: *"... as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you ... in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures"* (2 Peter 3:15–16). Peter's candid acknowledgment alerts readers to the fact that complexity is inherent in Scripture, but complexity does not equate to contradiction. Instead, it challenges believers to a deeper engagement and more thoughtful approach to interpretation.

One key principle for resolving perceived contradictions involves examining the context of the passages in question. Context includes literary, historical, cultural, and theological considerations. When verses are taken out of context, apparent contradictions can appear. Proverbs 26:4–5 provides an excellent illustration of the

necessity of context in interpretation when it says: “*Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.*” On the surface, those two adjacent verses might seem contradictory—one advising not to answer a fool and the other advising to answer him. However, rather than reflecting a contradiction, those verses highlight situational wisdom, teaching readers to discern the appropriate response depending on the circumstances. Careful contextual reading shows that the apparent contradiction resolves into complementary instructions intended to cultivate discernment and wisdom in practical situations.

Moreover, understanding literary genre and style is crucial when approaching the Bible, since genre awareness always strengthens sound biblical interpretation. The Bible comprises various literary forms including historical narratives, poetry, prophetic writings, wisdom literature, letters, and symbolic or apocalyptic literature. Each genre has its own set of interpretive guidelines. For example, poetic passages such as the Psalms or Song of Solomon employ metaphorical language, figures of speech, and expressive imagery. On the other hand, historical accounts, such as found in Kings, Chronicles, or the Gospels, demand attention to historical and cultural context.

Cultural and historical perspective can never be ignored. The Bible was written over a period of approximately 1,500 years by more than forty authors with primarily Hebrew but also with exposure to other Ancient Middle East backgrounds, languages, and cultures. Each author wrote under the inspiration of God yet utilized their own cultural expressions and linguistic styles. Understanding the cultural setting often clarifies seemingly contradictory texts. For example, apparent discrepancies in numerical data (such as census numbers or battle casualties) frequently stem from ancient Near Eastern methods of rounding, using symbolic numbers, or employing different counting methods, rather than genuine contradictions.

Additionally, examining difficult or seemingly contradictory texts through a coherent theological lens helps to harmonize contradictory passages. Scripture itself affirms a consistent and unified divine authorship. The apostle Paul declares, “*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness*” (2 Timothy 3:16). The term “God-breathed” emphasizes that the Bible will be non-contradictory, because its ultimate author is God himself, whose character is consistent, faithful, and without contradiction (Numbers 23:19; Hebrews 13:8).

Recognizing this divine consistency encourages interpreters to seek deeper coherence rather than dote on superficial conflict as an indication of error. A classic example of theological coherence involves the relationship between faith and works in the writings of Paul and James. Paul clearly teaches justification by faith alone apart from works: “*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast*” (Ephesians 2:8–9), while James asserts that faith without works is dead: “*Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead*” (James 2:17). Superficially, these positions might seem contradictory.

Yet, deeper examination reveals complementary perspectives rather than conflicting teachings. Paul teaches that salvation cannot be earned through human effort, while James emphasizes that genuine faith that leads to salvation inevitably produces good works as evidence of its authenticity. Both teachings harmonize around the single truth that genuine saving faith is both active and transformative, achieved through grace but made manifest by good works. Moreover, Jesus affirmed the integrity and reliability of Scripture, emphatically declaring, “*Scripture cannot be broken*” (John 10:35). By asserting this as fact, Jesus underscores the intrinsic trustworthiness of God’s Word, reinforcing the importance of reading difficult passages in the broader light of Scripture’s unified testimony.

In summary, the biblical response to the skeptic's objection that the biblical text is filled with contradictions is fundamentally a call to careful, thoughtful study that honors the nature of Scripture as divinely inspired, internally consistent, and thoroughly trustworthy. The Bible, being a compilation of texts written over approximately fifteen hundred years by multiple authors from diverse backgrounds, inevitably contains complexities that require context-sensitive interpretation. What may initially appear contradictory often resolves clearly upon deeper investigation, considering historical, cultural, linguistic, and literary contexts.

In practical application, a person reading the Bible for the first time might understandably struggle with apparent contradictions. Fortunately, numerous reliable resources are available today to aid readers in navigating these challenges. There are dedicated websites, comprehensive Bible commentaries, scholarly articles, and accessible study guides specifically focused on addressing and resolving apparent biblical contradictions. Such resources systematically explain how these perceived discrepancies harmonize when the texts are examined in their proper historical and cultural settings.

Furthermore, for the honest seeker of eternal truth, it is important to embrace an approach of humility and openness when studying Scripture, as opposed to coming to the text with an attitude of "gotcha" with that one. A willingness to explore deeper meanings, to understand genres such as poetry, prophecy, historical narrative, and wisdom literature, and to appreciate figurative language and symbolism will significantly aid the reader's comprehension. Ultimately, sincere and thoughtful study not only resolves alleged contradictions but also deepens one's appreciation for the profound unity and coherence of the biblical message.

Isn't Bible faith opposed to science and reason?

A frequent objection to the credibility of the Bible is the assertion that science contradicts or has disproven biblical teachings. Critics claim that scientific discoveries, from the age of the universe to evolutionary biology, invalidate the accounts and teachings found in Scripture. However, a careful examination reveals that the Bible does not oppose scientific inquiry but rather encourages and affirms it. Apparent conflicts typically result from misinterpretations or misunderstandings of either scientific findings or biblical texts, or, as is most often the case, misapplication of both to one another.

The Bible underscores the order, logic, and intelligibility of creation, inviting humans to observe, study, and comprehend the natural world. Psalm 19:1 declares, *"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."* This poetic acknowledgment emphasizes that creation itself bears witness to God's character and existence. The universe is depicted as purposeful, orderly, and reflective of divine wisdom and creativity. Rather than opposing scientific exploration, Scripture presents the natural world as a rich field for human discovery and understanding of the Creator.

The apostle Paul highlights the concept of the natural world as a reflection of God, asserting, *"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse"* (Romans 1:20). He explicitly indicates that nature itself is evidence of God's existence, power, and divine attributes. Thus, far from fearing scientific inquiry, the Bible presents the natural world as inherently comprehensible, rational, and reflective of divine order.

Historically, Christianity has significantly contributed to the growth of science. Many foundational figures of modern science, such as Galileo, Isaac Newton, Johannes Kepler, and Michael Faraday, were motivated by their belief in an orderly and rational Creator, driving their quest to uncover the laws governing nature. They saw no conflict between science and Scripture; rather, they viewed scientific discovery as a means of better understanding and glorifying God.

One common source of perceived conflict arises from interpretive assumptions regarding the Bible's literary intent. The Bible contains diverse genres—poetry, historical narrative, wisdom literature, prophecy, and apocalyptic writings—each with its own interpretive framework. For example, the poetic language of Genesis, chapter 1, conveys spiritual truths about God as Creator and sovereign, rather than offering a detailed scientific textbook on cosmological processes. Misreading poetic or symbolic texts as strictly literal scientific descriptions often generates unnecessary conflict.

Furthermore, many apparent discrepancies are resolved by recognizing the intended audience and cultural context of the biblical texts. Scripture was written primarily for spiritual instruction, revealing truths about God, humanity, sin, redemption, and moral responsibility. Its authors used the contemporary language and concepts familiar to their audiences. For instance, biblical references to “sunrise” and “sunset” reflect observational language still used today, not scientific assertions about astronomical motions.

Additionally, scientific conclusions themselves are subject to revision, refinement, and reinterpretation over time. What was once believed settled science can later be revised significantly, illustrating that scientific understanding is provisional and continually evolving. For example, discoveries by the James Webb Space Telescope have challenged aspects of the Big Bang theory by revealing unexpectedly mature galaxies that appear too early in the universe's timeline. Those

findings have prompted some scientists to reconsider or revise the traditional models of cosmic evolution. Thus, declaring Scripture inaccurate based on current scientific paradigms risks premature judgment, especially since scientific consensus can change as new data emerges. Scripture, by contrast, claims enduring truth rooted in divine revelation, yet invites continual and careful reexamination.

Where Scripture addresses matters observable in nature, it frequently aligns with scientific findings. For instance, biblical hygiene laws in Leviticus anticipated modern public health principles, promoting sanitation, dietary caution, and quarantine practices to prevent disease (Leviticus 13–15). Additionally, Job 26:7 poetically references Earth’s position in space: “*He spreads out the northern skies over empty space; he suspends the earth over nothing,*” a remarkably accurate observation long before modern cosmological knowledge explained the position of our planet in the cosmos.

Many critics fail to realize that the Bible actually encourages intellectual curiosity, affirming the human desire to comprehend the created order. Proverbs 25:2 states, “*It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings.*” In that verse, the Bible portrays exploration and discovery as noble pursuits that glorify God by seeking truth in the natural world he created. This encouragement endorses harmony rather than conflict between faith and reason.

At its core, the supposed opposition between science and Scripture arises from fundamental misunderstandings of both domains. Science seeks explanations for how natural processes occur, employing empirical observation, experimentation, and theory. Scripture, while historically accurate, addresses the deeper purpose, meaning, and spiritual significance of existence. Both pursue truth in complementary ways: science examines the mechanisms of nature, while Scripture reveals the purposes behind creation and humanity’s relationship with the Creator.

When correctly understood, the scientific study of creation naturally complements and enriches biblical faith. Discovering the complexity, beauty, and intricacy of creation deepens awe and reverence for the Creator. Psalm III:2 declares, “*Great are the works of the Lord; they are pondered by all who delight in them.*” Thus, far from undermining faith, scientific exploration magnifies our appreciation for the wisdom, creativity, and power of God.

Ultimately, the apparent conflict between science and the Bible stems primarily from misinterpretations rather than genuine contradictions. Scripture itself calls for diligent, humble, and honest inquiry into both divine revelation and natural revelation. Rather than disproving the Bible, scientific discoveries, rightly interpreted, affirm and enrich biblical truth, showcasing a harmonious relationship between science and faith. The Bible’s affirmation of an orderly, comprehensible universe reflects the nature of a wise, rational, and purposeful Creator who created man in his image, inviting humanity to study creation deeply and reverently.

In conclusion, Scripture consistently encourages observation, understanding, and exploration of the natural world, recognizing creation as evidence of God’s existence and character. Properly understood, the Bible and science are not adversaries but allies, each providing complementary insights into reality. Scientific discoveries, rather than disproving the Bible, underscore the profound coherence and depth of the Creator’s handiwork, affirming the harmony between God’s revelation in Scripture and his revelation through creation. In the future, when the teachings of the Bible and the findings of Science are both perfectly understood, there will be no contradictions.

How can a rational person believe in miracles?

In an age dominated by scientific reasoning, technological advancement, and empirical evidence, the idea of miracles often seems outdated or irrational. Skeptics ask, “How can any reasonable person in the 21st century believe that seas can part, the dead can rise, or the sun can stand still?” For many, belief in miracles is seen as the abandonment of logic and reason. But is that conclusion justified? Or is it possible that belief in miracles is not only rational but also necessary if we are to take seriously the possibility of a God who is both personal and powerful and transcendent?

This section asserts that believing in miracles is intellectually reasonable and fully consistent with the worldview that sees God as Creator and Sustainer of the universe. To begin the discussion, we must define what a miracle is and is not:

—Miracles, in biblical terms, are not merely unusual or rare events. They are an extraordinary act of God that interrupts the normal course of nature for a specific purpose, usually to reveal his power, confirm his message, or demonstrate his compassion.

—Miracles are not man-made magic tricks. They are acts of divine intervention. As well-known theologian C.S. Lewis put it, a miracle is “an interference with nature by a supernatural power.”

—Miracles serve as signs in the Bible, visible evidence that God is present and active in the world.

Jesus’ miracles, for example, were not random wonders. They were purposeful demonstrations of his divine authority: “*Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples... but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.*” (John 20:30–31)

The claim by skeptics that miracles are irrational assumes a worldview called naturalism—the belief that the universe is a closed system governed only by natural laws, with no possibility of outside interference. But that is not a scientific conclusion; it is a philosophical assumption (one that is set aside for the sake of argument in this book). Science can only observe how nature normally behaves. It cannot disprove the possibility of supernatural intervention. If God exists—and there is strong philosophical, moral, and historical evidence to suggest that he does—then miracles are not only possible but to be expected. After all, if God created the universe and the laws that govern it, he is certainly capable of intervening in it.

Consider the resurrection of Jesus, the central miracle of the Christian faith. If there is no God, then dead people do not rise, and if there is no resurrection, there is no Christianity. But if God exists, raising someone from the dead is no more difficult than creating life in the first place. The apostle Paul understood this logic when he stood before King Agrippa and asked: *“Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead?”* (Acts 26:8) Paul’s point is clear: if God is real, then miracles are not absurd. They are entirely reasonable.

Throughout Scripture, miracles accompany specific moments of divine revelation. They are not random; they occur at pivotal times when God is revealing something new about himself or his plan for humanity. In the Exodus, God sent miraculous plagues on Egypt and parted the Red Sea to show his power and to free his people from bondage (Exodus 14:21–22). In the ministry of Elijah and Elisha, miracles confirmed that these prophets were speaking the true word of God (1 Kings 18:36–39; 2 Kings 4:1–37). In the life of Jesus, miracles authenticated his identity as the Messiah and Son of God: *“Then Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of himself... but what he sees the Father do... For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom he will.’”* (John 5:19–21)

The miracles recorded in the Bible served as divine credentials for those who observed them. They were not myths or exaggerations but carefully recorded acts witnessed by many. The Gospels report that people saw, touched, and interacted with the risen Jesus. Thomas, one of Jesus' disciples, doubted until he saw Jesus with his own eyes: *"Then he said to Thomas, 'Reach your finger here, and look at my hands... Do not be unbelieving, but believing.'"* (John 20:27).

It is important to understand that science is not equipped to rule out miracles. Science is based on repeatable observations of natural phenomena. Miracles, by contrast, are unique events that do not follow natural patterns. They cannot be predicted or replicated in a laboratory, not because they are irrational, but because they originate from outside the natural system. Denying miracles simply because they are rare is like denying history because historical events cannot be repeated. We do not reject the Battle of Gettysburg because it only happened once. Instead, we examine the evidence, the eyewitness accounts, documents, and artifacts. In the same way, belief in miracles rests on the credibility of the witnesses and the consistency of their testimony with the broader truth of God's Word.

While the Bible contains the written record of God-authored miracles in times past, many people today continue to testify to miraculous healings from God and divine intervention into their lives in ways that cannot be explained otherwise, both instances coming as the direct result of fervent prayer. These experiences, though not usually verifiable in scientific terms, carry powerful weight for those who live them. Jesus warned that not everyone would believe even if they witnessed miracles. Some would still demand more signs or explain them away: *"If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead."* (Luke 16:31) And, it must be admitted that many miracles claimed in this age are all-too-often the result of fakery or the manifestation of over-heated emotionalism.

As interesting as is the topic of miracles, true biblical faith does not require miracles. It responds to spiritual truth already revealed in Scripture. The accounts of divine miracles mentioned in the biblical text are given to encourage belief, but the faith stimulated by miracles is not intended to be blind belief. Instead, it requires a reasoned trust in a God who has proven himself faithful in all matters. Biblical faith does not ask people to suspend reason. It asks them to use reason to recognize the limitations of human understanding and the reliability of God's Word. As the Book of Hebrews reminds us: "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*" (Hebrews 11:1) Believing in miracles is not irrational, it is the logical outcome of believing in a God who is both powerful and loving.

A rational person can believe with absolute certainty in the miracles that are described in the Bible, not because those miracles were spectacular and contrary to everyday occurrences, but because they are consistent with the reality of a supernatural God who made the world and is still actively involved in its affairs. Denying the possibility of miracles requires a rigid commitment to naturalism—a worldview that itself cannot explain the origin of life, the depths of consciousness, the origin of morality, the purpose of the universe, or the very essence of love. The Bible invites us to a better, fuller view of reality—one that acknowledges both the seen and the unseen, the natural and the supernatural.

Isn't the God of the Bible cruel and unjust?

One of the most emotionally charged questions that skeptics asks is this one: "Isn't the God of the Bible cruel and unjust?" Even if they haven't reached that conclusion from reading Scripture, many have absorbed that impression from popular portrayals of divine judgment, warfare, and severe penalties found in the Old Testament. Understandably, such depictions can give rise to doubts, especially when set against the claim that God is loving and righteous. And, at first glance, those concerns may seem reasonable. But to assess God's character accurately, the full sweep of Scripture must be considered, not just isolated passages taken out of context. By doing so, a fuller picture emerges. The God of the Bible is not cruel or unjust, but holy, just, loving, merciful, and patient beyond human understanding.

This section explores why passages about God's seemingly "negative" interactions with man exist, how they fit into God's redemptive plan, and how his justice and mercy are not only compatible but essential to his goodness. The Bible teaches that God is perfectly just, nor is he arbitrary or impulsive in his actions. His judgments are based on truth, righteousness, and his holy nature. *"He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is he."* (Deuteronomy 32:4) God's justice is not like often-flawed human justice. He sees the heart, knows the full context, and always judges righteously. His justice is necessary because evil, rebellion, and sin destroy the good in us that he desires.

Skeptics often cite stories like the global flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or the conquest of Canaan. But in each case, the Bible shows that judgment came after long periods of warning

and corruption. For example, regarding the land of Canaan, God waited generations to act: *“But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”* (Genesis 15:16) God was not rushing to punish. He was patiently giving time for repentance.

A close reading of Scripture reveals that God’s mercy is woven through even his harshest judgments. He often gives ample opportunity for repentance and provides a way of escape. In the story of the flood,* God gave Noah 120 years to preach and prepare the ark (Genesis 6:3), during which the people could have repented. In Nineveh, when the prophet Jonah reluctantly warned the city of impending judgment, the people repented—and God relented from destroying them: *“Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.”* (Jonah 3:10) In Canaan, the harlot Rahab and her family were spared destruction in Jericho because she believed and acted on what she had heard about the God of Israel. (Joshua 2)

As recorded over and over in the Bible, God delights in mercy, not destruction. As the prophet Ezekiel records: *“Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? says the Lord God, and not that he should turn from his ways and live?”* (Ezekiel 18:23) The Bible is clear that God’s heart is not bent toward cruelty but toward reconciliation. It’s easy to project human emotions onto God or to expect him to conform to our preferences. But as finite beings, we are not in a position to judge the actions of an infinite, all-knowing Creator. *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.”* (Isaiah 55:8)

Sometimes what we perceive as cruelty by God is actually justice (his passing judgement on evil) that we don’t fully understand. For example, the destruction of the Canaanite nation may seem

*If you have trouble believing the Old Testament stories that describe a global flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or the conquest of Canaan, then read them as parables only and focus on understanding the spiritual ideas being presented.

harsh until we understand the depth of their depravity, which included such abominations as child sacrifice, cult prostitution, systemic violence against the weak, and murder. God's commands to Israel to destroy them were aimed at eradicating evil, not promoting it. It is also important to note that when God brings judgment, he applies it equally, even to his chosen people. Israel was exiled from their land for their disobedience (2 Kings 17; 2 Chronicles 36), just like the Canaanites had been judged. God does not show partiality.

The clearest expression of God's justice and mercy is found in the person and mission of Jesus Christ. At the cross, God did not ignore sin; he judged it fully. But instead of pouring out his wrath on the guilty, he poured it out on his Son (as foreshadowed by the story of Abraham and Isaac), who bore the penalty for our sins. *"For he made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him."* (2 Corinthians 5:21) That is not an example of cruelty by God—it is sacrificial love. Jesus voluntarily laid down his life: *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep."* (John 10:11) If God were truly cruel, he would not have sent his beloved son to dwell among us, suffer with us, and die to atone for our sins. The cross is proof that God's justice and love coexist perfectly. He did not compromise his holiness, and he did not abandon his creation. He satisfied his justice so that mercy could be extended to all.

One of the most remarkable traits of God is his enduring patience. He delays judgment so that more people can be saved. *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."* (2 Peter 3:9) If God were quick to judge, none of us would survive. The fact that the world continues, despite its evil, is a sign of God's justice and mercy, not his cruelty.

The Bible assures us that God will one day make right every wrong and banish evil forever. In the meantime, his judgement against

evil may appear to us as delayed and overdue, but it will come as promised in his perfect time. No evil deed will go unpunished, and no good deed will go unrewarded. *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body... whether good or bad.”* (2 Corinthians 5:10) God’s justice is not impulsive or vengeful; it is the ultimate expression of righteousness. And, his desire is never to destroy, but to save: *“For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them.”* (Luke 9:56) and *“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”* (John 3:16)

The objection that God is cruel and unjust arises when we view isolated passages without considering the whole picture, and when we think as man without understanding. But when we read the Bible in its full context—from Genesis to Revelation—we discover a God who is infinitely holy, just, merciful, and loving. He hates evil and sin because it destroys what is good. He judges evil because he loves justice. He delays punishment because he desires repentance. And he gave his Son to suffer in our place, proving once and for all that his justice and mercy merge perfectly at the cross. God is not cruel, he is compassionate. He is not unjust, he is righteous. And he invites every person, no matter their past alliance with evil, to find forgiveness and new life in him. *“Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! For his mercy endures forever.”* (Psalm 136:1)

Why does God allow evil people to prosper?

It's a question as old as time, asked by skeptics and believers alike: "Why does God allow evil people to prosper?" Why do some people who lie, cheat, and exploit others seem to climb higher and live better than those who strive to do what's right? Why does the ruthless dictator enjoy wealth and power while the honest man struggles to feed his family? That apparent contradiction between divine justice and the prosperity of the wicked has troubled thoughtful people for millennia. Even the writers of Scripture wrestled with it. But the Bible does not shy away from the question. Instead, it gives a profound and ultimately hopeful answer—one that affirms God's justice, reminds us of his eternal perspective, and points us to a deeper trust in his eternal purposes.

The Bible records that some of God's most faithful servants struggled to understand why wicked and evil people seemed to flourish. The psalmist Asaph, for example, poured out his confusion in Psalm 73: *"But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the boastful, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked."* (Psalm 73:2–3) Asaph describes how the wicked seemed carefree and strong, untouched by suffering or trouble: *"They are not in trouble as other men... Their eyes bulge with abundance; they have more than heart could wish."* (Psalm 73:5, 7) This sense of injustice almost caused him to lose his faith. But something changed when he turned to God.

What changed Asaph's perspective was not a change in the world around him, but a change in where he placed his focus: *"Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I understood their end."* (Psalm 73:17) He realized that the apparent success of the wicked is temporary. Their

prosperity is fleeting, their foundation unstable, and their future full of ruin. Though they may appear secure for a time, they are far from it: *“Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction.”* (Psalm 73:18) God allows the wicked to prosper—for now—not because he is indifferent or unjust, but because he sees the end from the beginning. Justice delayed is not justice denied. As the apostle Paul writes: *“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”* (Galatians 6:7) The judgment of God may not come on our schedule, but it will come.

Another reason God may allow the wicked to prosper is that he is giving them time to repent. God is incredibly patient, even with those who reject him, because he desires that all people turn from their sins and find salvation: *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise... but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”* (2 Peter 3:9) In Egypt, God allowed Pharaoh to exercise power over Moses and the Children of Israel, even though Pharaoh’s heart was hard, so that God’s glory and justice could be revealed through him (Exodus 9:16). He allowed Nineveh, a wicked and violent city, to flourish until Jonah finally preached to them, and the people repented, sparing the city for a time (Jonah 3:5–10).

If we’re honest, we all benefit from God’s patience. If he had executed immediate justice on every sin as soon as it’s done, none of us would be here. His mercy toward the wicked is the same mercy that gives us a chance to repent and be saved.

Another key truth from Scripture is that earthly success is not the ultimate indicator of blessing or judgment. Many who prosper in this life are spiritually bankrupt, and many who suffer now will be richly rewarded in the life to come. Jesus taught: *“For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”* (Mark 8:36) Prosperity without righteousness is a poor trade. The wicked may enjoy their ill-gained wealth, fame, or power for a time, but all of it will vanish.

The psalmist David, reflecting on this truth, wrote: “*Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.*” (Psalm 37:1–2) Instead, David exhorts the faithful to trust in God: “*Trust in the Lord, and do good... Delight yourself also in the Lord, and he shall give you the desires of your heart.*” (Psalm 37:3–4)

Of course, while the wicked prosper, the righteous often suffer. But in God’s hands, that suffering is never wasted. It refines, strengthens, and prepares the faithful for eternal reward: “*Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you... but rejoice... that when his glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.*” (1 Peter 4:12–13) Jesus himself, though sinless, suffered greatly in this life. He was mocked, rejected, beaten, and crucified. Yet through his suffering came redemption for the world. The suffering of the righteous has eternal value that worldly prosperity can never match.

Perhaps the primary reason God may allow the wicked to enjoy his blessings for the moment is that he is giving them time to realize their unworthiness and repent. God is incredibly patient, even with those who reject him, because he desires that all people turn from their sins and find salvation: “*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise... but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*” (2 Peter 3:9) As pointed out before, God allowed Pharaoh to rise in power, even though Pharaoh’s heart was hard toward Israel, so that God’s glory and justice could be revealed through him (Exodus 9:16). He allowed Nineveh, a wicked and violent city, to flourish until Jonah finally preached to them, and the people repented, sparing the city for a time (Jonah 3:5–10).

If we’re honest, we all benefit equally from God’s patient mercy. If he executed immediate justice on every sin, none of us would be here. His mercy toward the wicked is the same mercy that gives us a chance to repent and be saved.

The Bible makes it clear that this life is not the end of the story. There is a final judgment coming when God will right every wrong, reward every act of faithfulness, and punish every unrepentant evil. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” (2 Corinthians 5:10) “For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.” (Ecclesiastes 12:14) On that day, the scales will be balanced perfectly. Every injustice, every lie, every oppression will be answered. And those who humbled themselves before God, even in obscurity or suffering, will be exalted.

In light of all this, the Bible calls us not to covet the prosperity of others and not to envy the wicked or despair at their success, but to lift our eyes to the eternal and be thankful for and content with what we have been given, even including poverty and suffering if that is God’s present will for us. As Paul wrote: “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory... For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4:17–18) God invites us to live by faith, not by sight, to trust his timing, his justice, and his goodness, even when evil appears to triumph temporarily.

Witnessing the relative triumph of the ungodly can be a test of faith for the faithful. Yet Scripture reminds us that the success of the wicked is fleeting, their judgment assured, and God’s justice unwavering. More significantly, we are assured that God sovereignly uses both abundance and scarcity to strengthen the faith of his people and prepare us for a glory far surpassing any earthly reward. As Asaph declared: “Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You... But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God.” (Psalm 73:25, 28)

So, rather than focusing on the seeming injustice of prosperity enjoyed by the wicked, let us set our minds and hearts firmly on the goodness of God and the eternal hope to which we are called.

Isn't religion just another psychological crutch?

Critics often dismiss Bible-based religion as nothing more than a psychological crutch, something people invent to help them cope with the fear of death, the pain of suffering, or the uncertainties of life. According to this view, faith is a sign of weakness, not strength; a retreat from reality rather than a reasoned response to it. The faithful are often caricatured as emotionally needy or intellectually naïve, clinging to ancient myths because they cannot face life without them. But is this accusation fair or accurate?

While it is true that faith offers comfort in times of difficulty, that does not mean it is false or imaginary. Comfort does not invalidate truth. People seek comfort in food, friendship, music, and medicine, yet none of those things are dismissed as “crutches” simply because they meet real human needs. More importantly, the Christian faith, as revealed in the Bible, is far more than emotional support. It is a coherent, historically grounded, intellectually robust response to the deepest questions of life.

Before condemning faith as a crutch, we must acknowledge that everyone relies on something for meaning, identity, and security. For some, it's wealth. For others, it's relationships, power, success, or self-reliance. The desire to find purpose and cope with life's struggles is universal. The real question is not whether we lean on something, but whether what we lean on is true and trustworthy. Jesus addressed this when he taught: *“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock... But everyone who hears these sayings of mine, and does not do them... will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.”* (Matthew 7:24, 26) Everyone builds their

life on something. The difference is in the foundation. If Jesus is who he claimed to be—God in the flesh, the Savior of the world—then trusting in him is not escapism, but wisdom.

Biblical faith is not blind belief or emotional fantasy. It is rooted in evidence and invites reasoned trust. The apostle Paul encouraged believers to examine their faith rationally: “*Test all things; hold fast what is good.*” (1 Thessalonians 5:21) Jesus himself did not ask people to follow him without evidence. He healed the sick, raised the dead, and fulfilled detailed prophecies so that people would believe with understanding: “*Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or else believe me for the sake of the works themselves.*” (John 14:11)

Christianity is grounded in real events, in particular it is based on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The resurrection is not presented as a metaphor or mystical experience, but as a historical fact attested by eyewitnesses: “*He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that he was seen by over five hundred brethren at once.*” (1 Corinthians 15:5–6) Faith in the God of the Bible is not a leap into the dark; it is a step into the light of truth.

Critics sometimes argue that because religion provides emotional comfort, it must be a man-made illusion. But this logic is flawed. Just because something is comforting does not mean it is false. If a mother tells her child, “You are loved,” the comfort it brings does not make it any less true. In fact, the very existence of deep human longing points to something real. As C.S. Lewis observed: “If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world.” The Bible affirms this idea. Ecclesiastes declares: “*He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also he has put eternity in their hearts.*” (Ecclesiastes 3:11) Our yearning for meaning, justice, and immortality is not evidence of delusion, but of design. We were created to know God, and faith fulfills that God-shaped void, not with fantasy, but with truth.

If Christianity were merely a psychological crutch, we would expect it to promote ease, comfort, and self-indulgence, and unfortunately some false teachers are teaching just that today. But Jesus offered no such illusion to believers. Following him often involves self-denial, hardship, and persecution: “*If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*” (Luke 9:23) The apostle Paul didn’t preach faith as an escape from suffering but as a strength through it: “*We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed... persecuted, but not forsaken... always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.*” (2 Corinthians 4:8–10) Far from being a crutch for the weak-minded, faith empowered the early Christians to face danger, rejection, and martyrdom with courage and conviction. Their lives bore witness to a power greater than psychology—a relationship with the living God.

Christianity does offer comfort, but not through denial of reality. It confronts the harsh realities of sin, suffering, and death head-on, then provides hope through the redemptive work of Christ. Jesus did not come simply to soothe our emotions. He came to rescue us from real guilt, real evil, and real separation from God: “*Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*” (Matthew 11:28, 30) The gospel brings peace not by numbing us to reality that surrounds us but by anchoring us in it. It reconciles the brokenhearted, lifts the downtrodden, and strengthens the weary, not by illusion, but by grace and truth and hope.

History is filled with scientists, artists, and leaders who believed in God not because they needed a crutch, but because they saw the evidence of his hand in creation, in history, and in their own lives. Brilliant thinkers such as Isaac Newton, Blaise Pascal, Alvin Plantinga, and C.S. Lewis were not weak minds looking for psychological relief, they were thoughtful, reasoned individuals who found in Christ a truth too compelling to ignore. The apostle Paul, a highly educated

man and once a fierce opponent of Christianity, came to faith not because he was looking for comfort, but because he encountered the risen Christ: “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.*” (Romans 1:16)

Christianity does not deny that people seek comfort and that they should not desire it. It simply proclaims that ultimate comfort and truth are found in a person—Jesus Christ—who offers not escape from reality, but restoration through it. The gospel is not a crutch for the weak, but a foundation for the strong. It challenges the intellect, satisfies the heart, and transforms the soul. Far from being a human invention, biblical faith meets the deepest needs of the human condition because it is true. And when life’s storms come, it is not the one who walks alone who is strongest—it is the one who stands on the rock: “*The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer... in whom I will trust.*” (Psalm 18:2)

So the answer is no, faith in God is not just a crutch. It is a lifeline, and the most rational, reasonable response to a world full of brokenness and the need for eternal redemption.

Aren't the moral teachings of the Bible outdated?

In our ever changing world, where cultural norms and values rapidly evolve with each generation, and do so at lightning speed in today's world of instant communications, many people ask, "Aren't the moral teachings of the Bible outdated?" That question is especially common in discussions about sexuality, gender roles, justice, and personal freedom. The underlying assumption is that ancient texts cannot speak meaningfully to modern life. But is that true? While it is true that the Bible was written in a very different historical and cultural setting, its moral teachings are rooted not in shifting human customs but in the unchanging character of God. Far from being obsolete, the Bible's moral vision continues to offer timeless wisdom, enduring truth, and a trustworthy foundation for human flourishing, especially in an age of moral confusion.

The foundational reason why biblical morality is still relevant is because it flows from the nature and character of God, who does not change: "*For I am the Lord, I do not change; therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.*" (Malachi 3:6) The moral laws in Scripture are not arbitrary or culturally constructed. They reflect the holiness, justice, and love of the God who created us. Because God is eternal, the moral principles he gives us are not subject to the winds of cultural fashion. What was right 3,000 years ago is still right today if it aligns with God's nature. What was wrong then is still wrong now. As the psalmist declares: "*The entirety of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous judgments endures forever.*" (Psalm 119:160) This permanence is increasingly crucial in a world where morality is increasingly seen as relative or subjective.

Though the Bible was written in ancient times, its teachings speak with remarkable clarity and relevance to modern issues. Jesus summarized the entire moral law in two principles that transcend time and culture: “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind’... and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.*” (Matthew 22:37, 39) These two commands form the backbone of biblical ethics. Love for God grounds us in humility, worship, and obedience. Love for neighbor demands justice, kindness, honesty, and compassion. These values are not outdated, but are guidelines that are desperately needed in our fractured and self-centered world.

Modern culture often treats morality like fashion—whatever is popular or widely accepted is deemed right. But history shows that majority opinion is not always moral. Slavery, genocide, and oppression have all been culturally accepted at various times. That doesn’t make them right. The Bible confronts human sin, even (or more to the point especially) when it’s culturally accepted. The prophet Isaiah warned: “*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness.*” (Isaiah 5:20) In every age, God’s Word serves as a corrective lens through which we see our moral blind spots. It calls us back to the moral truth, not forward into moral chaos.

Some critics falsely assume that biblical morality is just a long list of outdated man-made rules, an endless series of dos and don’ts designed by a humorless taskmaster meant, for some unexplainable reason, to take the joy out of life. But Jesus taught that obedience to God’s commands is not burdensome—it’s the true path to a full life: “*I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*” (John 10:10) The commandments were never meant to restrict human joy but to protect it. God’s laws about honesty, sexual purity, humility, forgiveness, and justice are designed to guard relationships, promote peace, and cultivate healthy communities. The apostle John affirms

that idea by pointing out that *“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.”* (1 John 5:3) Far from being obsolete, biblical morals offer a time-tested framework for living wisely and well.

Some argue that, since the Bible includes regulations that no longer make sense or commands that can no longer be observed, we should dismiss all biblical laws. But this misunderstands the distinction between ceremonial, civil, and moral laws.

Ceremonial laws (like animal sacrifices) pointed forward to Christ and were fulfilled in him. They are no longer necessary for atonement.

Civil laws in the Hebrew Scriptures governed ancient Israel as a nation and were nation-specific (the New Testament says simply to obey all civil authority as a good witness to God’s sovereignty).

Moral laws (such as those in the Ten Commandments) reflect God’s unchanging standards for all people at all times.

Jesus made this distinction between old and new clear: *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”* (Matthew 5:17) He then deepened the meaning of some moral commands, for example his clarification that anger is the root of murder and lust the root of adultery (Matthew 5:21–28). Jesus didn’t lessen the moral standard, he ratified and even raised it.

Perhaps the most common, if unstated, reason people reject biblical morals is because they seem to them too difficult to live out. And in a sense that’s true if one is trying to live a righteous life apart from God’s help. But Christianity is not about behavior modification; it’s about spiritual transformation. When a person trusts in Christ, the Holy Spirit begins to renew their heart and mind: *“I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.”* (Ezekiel 36:27) God does not merely give us rules for living, he gives us the power to live in righteousness. Biblical morality is not a list to achieve, but a gift of life to receive.

So, back to the original question: Are the moral teachings of the Bible outdated? Only if we assume that truth changes with culture. If God is eternal, which the Bible says he is, and if he created humanity with a purpose, which it says he did, then his moral instructions are as relevant for living the good life today as ever. Far from being oppressive, God's moral law is a gift. It anchors us in a world adrift. It protects us in a world of temptation. It leads us to a Savior who not only forgives our failures but empowers us to walk in freedom. As David wrote: *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."* (Psalm 119:105) In every generation, including ours, the Bible offers not outdated rules but enduring wisdom and the path to true life.

The correct question to ask isn't whether the Bible's teachings have become outdated. They haven't. The real issue is whether we have the courage and wisdom to receive its instruction, walk faithfully in its truth, and claim the life-changing earthly rewards that God has promised to those who live in obedience to his will.

Don't all religious faiths lead to the same God?

In a world that prizes tolerance and inclusion, it's increasingly common to hear statements like, "All religions basically teach the same thing," or "All faiths are just different paths to the same God." This idea sounds appealing—offering a way to avoid conflict, promote unity, and affirm everyone's sincerity. But is it true?

While it's true that many religions promote ethical living and seek spiritual truth, the claim that all faiths lead to the same God overlooks the profound differences between them, especially in how they define God, salvation, humanity, and truth itself. The Bible is clear: there is only one true and living God, and that ultimately he eventually revealed himself uniquely through Jesus Christ. To suggest that all religions are equal paths to him is not a message of unity, but a denial of the very heart of the gospel. At a surface level, many religions encourage love, compassion, and moral behavior. But beneath that superficial similarity lie deeply different worldviews.

For example: Hinduism teaches that God is an impersonal force and that all souls are divine by nature, aiming for reincarnation and eventual absorption into Brahman. Buddhism denies the existence of a personal God altogether and seeks enlightenment through detachment and the cessation of desire. Islam sees God (called by the Arabic Allah) as a singular, unknowable ruler, and salvation depends on obedience to Islamic law and the weighing of deeds. On the other hand, biblical Christianity teaches that God is personal, triune, holy, and just, and that salvation comes by only grace through faith in Jesus Christ, not by works. Those views are not slight variations, they are fundamentally incompatible. Jesus said this about the nature of God:

“God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” (John 4:24) Truth matters. A sincere belief in a false god, however well-meaning, is still misplaced.

The heart of Christianity rests not in a system of moral improvement, but in the person of Jesus Christ. And Jesus made exclusive claims about himself that leave no room for religious relativism: *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”* (John 14:6) Notice what Jesus did not say. He didn’t say he was a way, a truth, or a life among others. He claimed to be the only way to God. Such a statement is either incredibly arrogant, dangerously misleading, or absolutely true. The apostle Peter echoed this same truth: *“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”* (Acts 4:12) Either Jesus is the exclusive path to salvation and reconciliation with God, or he was deceived and a deceiver. What he can’t be is one path among many. His claims rule that out.

Many people who follow other religions are sincere, devout, and morally upright. As Christians, we should respect their humanity, dignity, and pursuit of meaning. But sincerity does not make something true. A person can sincerely believe the wrong medicine will cure their disease, but belief doesn’t change the facts. The apostle Paul mourned for his fellow Jews who zealously pursued God through the law but rejected Christ: *“For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.”* (Romans 10:2) Their passion was real, but their path was wrong. Truth is exclusive by nature. Two contradictory claims cannot both be right. If Jesus is the Son of God who died and rose again for our sins, then any system that denies his Sonship, crucifixion, and resurrection cannot lead to the same God. The apostle John succinctly summed it up when he wrote: *“Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son.”* (1 John 1:22)

All other religions ultimately teach a system of earning favor with the divine through rituals, good works, or moral striving in this life. Christianity stands alone in declaring that we cannot save ourselves, no matter how sincere or disciplined we are. Instead, God provided his way to save us through the finished work of his Son: *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”* (Ephesians 2:8–9) The gospel is not about climbing up to God, but about God coming down to rescue us. This makes Christianity fundamentally different from every other religion on earth.

Scripture consistently testifies that there is only one God and only one way to know him. *“I am the Lord, and there is no other; there is no God besides Me.”* (Isaiah 45:5) From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible rejects idolatry and warns against false gods, not because God is intolerant but because he alone is real, and his truth alone leads to life: *“You shall have no other gods before me.”* (Exodus 20:3) When the people of Israel turned to other religions, God did not commend their openness, he called them to repentance. *“Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.”* (Isaiah 45:22)

In our desire for peace and harmony among religions, it’s tempting to water down differences and affirm that all paths lead to God. But true unity is not found in blending religions. It’s found in submitting to the truth. Jesus prayed: *“Sanctify them by your truth. Your word is truth.”* (John 17:17) Compromising the gospel to make it more palatable is not loving, it’s misleading. Love tells the truth. If we believe that Jesus is the only way to God, then the most loving thing we can do is to share that truth with others. While the gospel is exclusive in its claim that Jesus is the only way, it is also inclusive in its invitation: *“For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* (Romans 10:13) God is not willing that any should perish: *““The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering*

toward us, not willing that any [person] should perish but that all should come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9). His great desire is for all people to come to him through Christ, and he has made that pathway open to all: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

The idea that all religions lead to the same God is trendy in the modern world, but it collapses under honest examination. The core teachings of the world’s religions differ too greatly from one another to be harmonized. More importantly, the Bible declares that there is only one true God, and that he has revealed himself uniquely in the person of Jesus Christ. To say that all roads lead to God is to ignore what Jesus himself taught. It is to reject the gospel that cost him his life. But the good news is that God has made a way. And though the path is narrow, it is certain and it leads to everlasting life in fellowship with the one true God: “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction... Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” (Matthew 7:13–14) Let us walk that path boldly and, if we are to be true to our calling as believers, invite others to do the same.

If God created everything, who created God?

One of the most common questions philosophical-minded skeptics ask is, “If God created everything, then who created God?” At first glance, this question seems like a clever rebuttal to belief in a Creator. After all, if everything has a cause, doesn’t God also need one? But upon closer examination, the question contains a flawed assumption, namely, that God must be part of the created order, subject to the same rules of cause and effect that govern the universe. On the contrary, the God of the Bible is not a created being. He is eternal, self-existent, and uncaused. Far from being a logical trap, this question opens the door to a deeper understanding of who God is and why his existence makes sense philosophically.

The Bible is unambiguous about the eternal nature of God. Unlike everything in the created world, God has no beginning and no end: *“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.”* (Psalm 90:2) God is not like anything or anyone else in the universe. He exists outside of time and space, which he himself created. He was not made, he simply is. When God revealed himself to Moses at the burning bush, he said: “I AM WHO I AM. And he said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you.” (Exodus 3:14) That name, “I AM,” expresses God’s eternal self-existence. He depends on nothing outside himself to exist. Unlike the universe, which began to exist at a point in time, God has always been.

The question “Who created God?” assumes that everything that exists must have a cause. But this principle—the law of cause and effect—applies only to things that begin to exist. It does not apply to

something (or someone) that has always existed. The classical cosmological argument for the existence of God goes like this:

- Everything that begins to exist has a cause.
- The universe began to exist.
- Therefore, the universe has a cause.

This argument doesn't say that everything needs a cause, only that everything that begins to exist needs one. Since God never began to exist, he does not require a cause. As the apostle Paul writes: "*Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever.*" (1 Timothy 1:17) God is eternal and uncaused. He is the necessary being who grounds the existence of all other things.

Another flaw in the question "Who created God?" is that it treats God as if he were bound by time, like everything else in the universe. But time itself is part of the created order. In the beginning, God created not just matter and space, but time itself: "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" (Genesis 1:1) That opening phrase—"In the beginning"—marks the start of time. Before that moment, time as we know it did not exist. God is not limited by the linear sequence of past, present, and future. As Scripture says: "*With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*" (2 Peter 3:8) This statement means that God exists in an eternal "now." Asking who created God is like asking, "What's north of the North Pole?" It's a category error. God exists outside the category of created things.

Philosophers and theologians have long argued that an infinite regress of causes is logically impossible. There must be a first cause, an uncaused cause, that began the chain of existence. Aristotle called this the "Unmoved Mover." The Bible identifies this being as the one true God. The apostle Paul affirms that creation points back to an eternal, powerful, and divine origin: "*For since the creation of the world*

his invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.” (Romans 1:20) The universe shows signs of design, fine-tuning, and order. These traits demand an intelligent, purposeful source. God is not just the first cause, he is the eternal sustainer of all things: *“For of him and through him and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever.”* (Romans 11:36)

The clearest picture of the eternal nature of God is found in Jesus Christ. Before he was born in Bethlehem, Jesus existed eternally with the Father. He confirmed this in his own words: *“Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”* (John 8:58) With this statement, Jesus identified himself with the eternal “I AM” of Exodus 3:14. He claimed to be uncreated, self-existent, and divine. The Gospel of John opens with this affirmation: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”* (John 1:1), then adds this confirmation, *“All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made that was made.”* (John 1:3) The eternal Son of God entered time and space to reveal the character of the invisible, eternal Creator.

Believing in a self-existent, eternal God is not only logical, it’s also deeply comforting. If God had a beginning, he could have an end. But because he is eternal, his promises never fail, and his kingdom will never end. The psalmist testified: *“Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting.”* (Psalm 93:2) This eternal nature means that God’s love, power, and truth endure forever. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). This unchanging nature assures us that what was true of God in the past remains true today and will remain true tomorrow. Our hope is not grounded in a temporary or created being, but in the eternal God residing beyond space-time who holds the universe together and upholds all things by his word.

The question “Who created God?” sounds reasonable and clever in a debate, but it misunderstands the nature of God as revealed in Scripture. God is not a created being within time and space. He is

the eternal, uncaused First Cause, the source of all life, matter, and time itself. Unlike the universe, he had no beginning and will have no end. Far from being a logical flaw in Christian belief, the eternal existence of God is the only explanation that makes sense of the universe's origin, order, and moral structure. To believe in such a God is not to take a leap into irrationality, it is to stand on the solid ground of reason, revelation, and reality. "*Trust in the Lord forever, for in Yah, the Lord, is everlasting strength.*" (Isaiah 26:4)

Why doesn't God reveal himself to us today?

It's a fair question, perhaps *THE* question for many truth seekers. If the God of the Bible is real, then why doesn't he make himself unmistakably known in our modern world? Why doesn't he repeat the dramatic miracles we read about in Scripture—fire from heaven, the parting of seas, or the thunderous voices of living prophets speaking truth to the nations? Would that not make the world sit up and take notice? I think you'll agree, it most certainly would.

But consider this: What if God has revealed himself in recent history, and we simply didn't recognize it? This section invites you to explore that very possibility. It does so by examining a unique prophecy found in the Hebrew Scriptures. Tucked away in the eighth chapter of the Book of Daniel is a vision that speaks not only to ancient times, but, astonishingly, to a very specific event that occurred in the twentieth century—the return of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem to Jewish sovereignty in 1967, during the Six-Day War.

To see how such a prophetic fulfillment might have been missed, we need to approach it with both historical awareness, especially Jewish history, and close attention to the biblical text. That's where I come in. Although I refer to myself as a researcher specializing in Bible prophecy and sacred chronology, in practical terms I'm mostly a reporter. My job is to study what the Scriptures say about events and to identify when those predictions clearly align with documented history.

So when I say a prophecy has been fulfilled, I mean it matches the historical record precisely—no guesswork or vague speculation allowed. I can make such a claim because the Bible contains unique

time-specific prophecies that have proven accurate down to the exact detail, and that come true 100% of the time. No other ancient religious text can make that claim. The Book of Daniel is a prime example, and all of its remarkable prophecies have already come to pass.

What follows is a fresh interpretation of Daniel 8:13–14, an interpretation made possible by the unsealing of that prophecy in 1967, exactly when God said it would occur “at the time of the end” (Daniel 12:4). This extraordinary fulfillment, broadcast live on television for the world to see, stands as one of the clearest evidences for the Bible’s reliability and the reality of God’s presence in our time.

A 2,500-Year-Old Prophecy Fulfilled on Television

It’s the early morning of June 7, 1967. The Six-Day War is in its third day. The sound of Israeli paratroopers running echoes through the narrow streets of Jerusalem’s Old City. Moments later, they stand atop the Temple Mount, hearts pounding, eyes wide, as they take control of one of the most sacred places on earth. The world watched that event unfold live on television. What few realized at the time is that the moment was more than a military triumph by Israel that became the main focus of the news media. Instead, it was the precise fulfillment of the 2,500-year-old prophecy recorded in Daniel 8:13–14, quoted below in two widely respected English translations:

New King James Version (Christian)—“*Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, ‘How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?’ And he said to me, ‘For two thousand three hundred days*; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.’”*

* in the Masoretic text, two words *`erev boqer* meaning “evening mornings”

JPS 1917 Version (Jewish)—“Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said unto that certain one who spoke: ‘How long shall be the vision concerning the continual burnt-offering, and the transgression that causeth appalment, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?’ And he said unto me: ‘Unto two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then shall the sanctuary be victorious.’”

Despite slight differences in wording, the translations above clearly convey an identical message. That’s because both are based on the same source—the Hebrew Masoretic Text—which has been preserved with extraordinary care and accuracy through the centuries. Modern archaeological discoveries, including the Dead Sea Scrolls (*circa* 200 BCE to 70 CE), confirm the accuracy of the modern text we have, making it a trustworthy source for our exposition.

Now let’s examine the keys to interpretation of the prophecy itself. Daniel 8:13–14 is a chrono-specific prophecy, meaning that it features an exact sequence of events in history that can be located in real time. The Bible’s chrono-specific prophecies contain three essential elements:

- A historically identifiable *starting event*.
- A precise *time interval* between start and finish.
- A historically verifiable *ending event*.

Daniel 8:14 specifies the time interval as “2,300 evenings and mornings” (or “days,” depending on the translation), and it identifies the endpoint as the time when the “sanctuary” would be “cleansed” or “victorious.” But what about the starting point? In that regard, the prophecy interprets itself. Previously in chapter 8, verses 5-7, a confrontation between a male goat and a ram is mysteriously described in cryptic language until verses 20–21 decode the symbols for us:

“The ram which you saw, having the two horns, they are the kings of Media and Persia. And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king [of Greece]” (Daniel 8:20–21; also JPS 1917). History confirms that the first king of unified Greece was Alexander the Great, and that the Persian king he encountered in battle was Darius III, ruler of the Achaemenid (First Persian) Empire. The symbolic clash was specified to occur at a river in Daniel 8:6 and it refers to a real battle in history: the Battle of Granicus, which took place on the banks of the Granicus River in what today is the nation of Turkey. That event in May/June of 334 BCE marks the prophecy’s starting point.

What about the time interval “evenings and mornings” specified in Daniel 8:14. That cryptic phrase has been the subject of much debate. However, it is best understood as referring to a Passover night. That interpretation is supported by the fact that the exact Hebrew wording (עֶרֶב בֹּקֶר *’erev boqer*) used in verse 14 appears in only one other place in the Bible, in Exodus 27:21 where it describes an overnight time period. In Exodus 12 the Passover had already been defined as an annual overnight event observed from evening to morning. So, when Daniel 8:14 speaks about 2,300 overnights, it is specifying 2,300 annual Passover observances (one per year)—and that defines the span of time between the prophecy’s starting point and end point.

Aligning the time elements in Daniel’s vision in chronological order reveals that the prophecy was foretelling a modern event:

—The Battle of Granicus was the event that started the countdown, occurring in May/June 334 BCE, after the Passover that year.

—Therefore, the first Passover in the count of 2,300 Passovers was the one that was observed the following year, in 333 BCE.

—Counting forward in time brings the count to the 2,300th Passover, which fell on April 25, 1967 (*see chart on page 81*).

—Six weeks later, on June 7, Israeli forces gained sovereignty over the Temple Mount, which marks the prophecy’s ending event.

Final interpretation hinges on how we understand the phrase “then shall the sanctuary be cleansed (or victorious)” in Daniel 8:14. The Hebrew word in the Masoretic Text is **קִדָּשׁ** *tsadaq*, which has been translated in multiple ways over the years:

- “Cleansed” (KJV, NKJV)
- “Restored to its rightful state” (ESV, RSV)
- “Victorious” (JPS 1917)
- “Properly restored” (NASB)
- “Reconciled” or “justified” (UBS O.T. Handbook)

Despite the variation in translation, all expositors agree that something important was specified to happen to the “sanctuary” at the end of the 2,300-Passover interval. While the term “sanctuary” has traditionally been limited to the Temple building itself, in biblical usage it can refer more broadly to Mount Moriah—the physical location set apart by God where he established his name and presence. Looking at recent events, on June 7, 1967, a Jewish nation did gain control over Mount Moriah for the first time in 2,000 years.

It is true that no Jewish temple has since been rebuilt (note that the prophecy says nothing about rebuilding the Temple), but the site returned to Jewish sovereignty, which is the fulfillment described in Daniel 8. Colonel Mordechai “Motta” Gur, commander of the forces that took physical possession of the Mount on that historic day, had this to say. As his troops stood assembled on the Temple Mount five days after its liberation, he told them, “You have been privileged to restore to the people of Israel their capital and their sanctuary.” *

Critics have rightly pointed out that the Temple Mount today remains under daily administrative control of the Islamic Waqf, not Israel, and that non-Muslim worship by Christians and Jews is still prohibited there. Those are fair observations. But the Daniel 8

*Amos Alon, *Jerusalem: City of Mirrors* (London, England: Flamingo, 1996, p. 91)

prophecy doesn't mention construction, prayer rights, or having access. It speaks only of the restoration of rightful ownership, and that's exactly what occurred. From June 7, 1967, forward, the sovereignty of the Temple Mount passed into Jewish hands, and its future will be determined by the people to whom God foretold that it would be entrusted—the people of Israel. Make no mistake: the prophetic clock tolled on schedule. The starting event, the time span, and the final outcome all aligned perfectly with the biblical prediction.

The event foretold in Daniel 8:13–14 and fulfilled in 1967 stands as compelling evidence of the Bible's reliability today. Trusting its testimony doesn't rely on vague symbolism or loose interpretation. On the contrary, its authority is grounded in a time-stamped event: the modern fulfillment of a prophecy spoken centuries beforehand. The actualization of Daniel 8:13–14 on June 7, 1967, exact and on time, offers powerful confirmation that the God of the Bible is neither silent nor hidden, but is actively engaged in the affairs of mankind. A 2,500-year-old prophecy, sealed until “the time of the end” (as specified in Daniel 12:4), was unsealed not in secret but in full view of the watching world. That is not coincidence. That is providence.

And, lest we forget ...

When people ask, “If God is real, why doesn't he show himself plainly,” they often overlook the fact that he has already done so many times throughout human history.

The most dramatic documented instance occurred almost two thousand years ago, when Jesus, the promised Messiah came to Israel with his message of redemption and salvation. He healed the sick, calmed storms, raised the dead, and fulfilled prophecies. Yet many missed what was happening right before their eyes: “*He came to his own, and his own did not receive him.*” (John 1:11)

The tragedy of Jesus' first earthly advent was not only his rejection by the Jewish religious leaders at that time, but that he was rejected by the majority of the people who heard him preach redemption and salvation under the terms of the New Covenant promised in Jeremiah 31:31-34. They did not understand the purpose of his mission. They were expecting a conquering king who would free them from Rome, not a suffering servant who would free them from the power of sin. Yet the prophet Isaiah had prophesied a Messiah who would redeem Israel: *"Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? ... By his knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities."* (Isaiah 53:1, 11; JPS 1917)

As foreshadowed by Abraham offering his son Isaac, Jesus, the Son of God, was offered to pay the penalty of sin—spiritual death. His crucifixion, the required blood for atonement, seemed like defeat until his resurrection revealed that God had indeed visited his people, offering them redemption and eternal salvation. Nevertheless, many were unable to recognize what didn't match their expectations. As was written, *"And he said: 'Go, and tell this people: Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; Lest they, seeing with their eyes, and hearing with their ears, and understanding with their heart, return, and be healed.'" (Isaiah 6:9-10, JPS 1917).*

In 1967, another dramatic instance of God showing himself to Israel and the world occurred in history. As discussed earlier, Daniel's prophecy of 2,300 "evenings and mornings" in Daniel 8 precisely foretold the year that the Temple Mount would be returned to Jewish sovereignty. In that event, the God of Israel once again revealed his providential presence in history. And once again, many failed to understand. They did not realize that God's presence usually doesn't come with thunder. More often than not, it is made manifest through the quiet whispers of fulfilled prophecy.

The pattern of God making an appearance to man and, when he does, his presence being perceived by only the few is consistent with how God has worked throughout history—through burning bushes, still small voices, dreams and visions, and yes, through the slow unfolding of prophecy over centuries. He rarely forces belief through spectacle; rather, he invites belief through revelation, discernment, faith, and knowledge of Scripture. And while dramatic miracles still occur, such as the fulfillment of the Daniel 8 prophecy, they are not always recognized as such by a skeptical generation.

So, the real question isn't whether God reveals himself to us in this day and age, but instead the more important question is whether we have eyes to see and ears to hear him when he does.

ARGUMENTS

*Concise summaries of some of the most widely discussed
philosophical arguments for the existence of God.*

COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

The cosmological argument is a philosophical argument that posits the existence of God as the cause of the universe. It is based on the principle of causality, which suggests that every effect must have a cause. The argument primarily aims to explain why anything exists at all and is often formulated as follows, *Premise 1*: Everything that begins to exist has a cause. In our experience, things do not simply come into being without a reason. A house, for example, requires builders, materials, and planning; *Premise 2*: The universe began to exist. Cosmology and physics indicate that the universe had a beginning, often associated with the Big Bang. If the universe began to exist, it must have a cause; *Conclusion*: Therefore, since the universe is not eternal and began to exist, something beyond the universe must have caused it to come into being. This cause, the argument concludes, must be God—a necessary, uncaused, and eternal being who exists outside of space and time.

There are several versions of the cosmological argument, such as the Kalam cosmological argument, which emphasizes the universe's beginning in time, and Aquinas's Five Ways, which includes a version of the cosmological argument that considers God as the unmoved mover or the first cause. Despite its influence, the cosmological argument has faced various criticisms, both philosophical and scientific. Here are some common objections:

Infinite Regress - Some critics argue that if everything must have a cause, why does God not require a cause? If God can exist without a cause, why can't the universe or some part of it be self-existent and eternal? This objection suggests that the chain of causes does not necessarily have to end with God.

The Universe Could Be Eternal - Some propose that the universe could be eternal, without a beginning. If the universe has

always existed, it would not require an external cause. Although the Big Bang suggests a starting point, certain interpretations of quantum physics allow for the possibility that the universe exists in a timeless loop or eternal state.

Quantum Mechanics and Causality - Quantum physics has introduced the idea that some events, like the appearance of virtual particles, seem to occur without a cause. This challenges the first premise of the cosmological argument that everything must have a cause, as it may not apply at the quantum level.

Why God? - Even if the universe has a cause, some critics argue that the cosmological argument does not necessarily prove that this cause is the God of theism. The cause could be something impersonal, like a law of nature or some other non-conscious entity.

Multiverse Theory - Some scientists suggest the possibility of a multiverse, where our universe is just one of many universes. The cause of our universe might lie within the broader context of a multiverse, which weakens the argument for a singular first cause outside of all physical reality.

The cosmological argument offers a compelling case for the existence of God by appealing to the necessity of a first cause for the universe's existence. However, it remains subject to debate due to challenges from modern physics, alternative theories about the universe's origins, and questions about the nature of the cause itself. While the argument continues to be an important part of theistic philosophy, its conclusions are not universally accepted, making it an ongoing subject of philosophical and scientific inquiry.

TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

The teleological argument for the existence of God, also known as the argument from design, posits that the order, complexity, and purpose observed in the universe imply the existence of a designer. The term “teleological” comes from the Greek word “telos,” meaning “end” or “purpose.” The core of this argument is that the natural world appears to be intricately structured in a way that suggests intentional design rather than random chance. Key components include:

Design in Nature - Proponents of the argument point out that many aspects of the universe exhibit patterns of order and complexity, such as the fine-tuning of physical constants, biological systems (like the human eye), and the laws governing the cosmos.

Improbability of Randomness - They argue that the likelihood of these features arising by chance is astronomically low. For instance, the precise conditions required for life to exist on Earth, including the exact values of physical constants (e.g., gravity, electromagnetic forces), suggest intentional calibration. Random processes, they claim, could not produce such fine-tuning without guidance.

Inference of a Designer - Given the obvious role of design in the universe, the teleological argument concludes that a purposeful designer (God) must be behind it. Just as complex human artifacts require intelligent creators, the argument suggests that the universe, which is far more complex, must also have a designer.

William Paley’s Watchmaker Analogy - One of the most famous versions of the teleological argument comes from William Paley in the 18th century. He likened the universe to a watch. If one stumbles upon a watch, its intricate design would lead them to conclude it had a maker, even if they had never seen the maker. Similarly, when we observe the complexity of the universe, we should conclude that it has a designer, which Paley identifies as God.

Fine-Tuning Argument - The teleological argument is often framed in terms of the “fine-tuning” of the universe. Advocates argue that the precise values of physical constants (e.g., the speed of light, the gravitational constant) are so finely balanced that, if they were slightly different, life could not exist. This fine-tuning suggests the work of an intelligent designer rather than mere chance.

Evolutionary Explanations - One of the most significant challenges to the teleological argument comes from Darwinian evolution. Natural selection provides a mechanism by which complex biological structures can arise over time without the need for a designer. Evolution explains the adaptation and apparent “design” of living organisms as the result of natural processes rather than purposeful creation.

Anthropic Principle - The anthropic principle states that we observe the universe as fine-tuned for life because we exist to observe it. In other words, if the universe were not suitable for life, we wouldn’t be here to notice it. Therefore, the fact that the universe is life-permitting may not imply intentional design.

Multiverse Hypothesis - Some argue that the fine-tuning of the universe can be explained by the multiverse theory. This theory suggests that there are infinite universes, each with different physical constants. In such a scenario, it’s not surprising that at least one universe, like ours, would have the conditions necessary for life.

The teleological argument presents the apparent design in the universe as evidence of a purposeful creator. While this argument has been a powerful and persuasive reason for belief in God throughout history, especially within the context of natural theology, it faces significant challenges from scientific explanations like evolution and multiverse theory. Nonetheless, it remains a central argument in theistic philosophy and continues to inspire debate about the relationship between science, reason, and faith.

ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

The ontological argument is a philosophical argument for the existence of God that relies on logic and reason rather than empirical evidence. It was first formulated by St. Anselm of Canterbury in the 11th century and has been revisited and revised by philosophers throughout history. The argument is unique because it attempts to demonstrate that God must exist by definition.

The core of the ontological argument can be summarized as follows: God is defined as a being of whom none greater can be conceived. A being that exists in both the mind and in reality is greater than a being that exists only in the mind. If God only exists in the mind, then a greater being could be conceived—one that exists both in the mind and in reality. Therefore, God must exist in reality, because a being that exists in both the mind and reality is greater than one that exists solely as a mental concept. In essence, the argument claims that, once we correctly understand the concept of God, we must conclude that God exists, because the very concept of God as the greatest possible being entails existence. Non-existence would be an imperfection, and since God is perfect, God must exist.

Modern Formulations - The ontological argument has been revised in various forms, most notably by René Descartes and Alvin Plantinga. Plantinga introduced a version called the modal ontological argument, which uses modal logic to argue that God's existence is possible in some possible worlds, and if God exists in one possible world, then God must exist in all possible worlds, including the actual world we live in.

Gaunilo's "Perfect Island" Objection - Shortly after Anselm proposed his argument, the monk Gaunilo objected by offering a parody. He argued that if the ontological argument were valid, one could use the same reasoning to prove the existence of any perfect

thing, such as a perfect island. Just because one can conceive of a perfect island does not mean such an island must exist. This parody challenges the assumption that existence is a necessary attribute of the greatest possible being.

Kant's Critique - The philosopher Immanuel Kant famously critiqued the ontological argument by claiming that existence is not a predicate or a property that can make a being greater. In Kant's view, existence does not add anything to the concept of a being. For example, whether or not a hundred dollars exists does not change the concept of "a hundred dollars." Thus, he argued, one cannot define something into existence by adding existence as a necessary quality.

Questionable Assumptions - Some critics argue that the ontological argument relies on questionable assumptions about what can exist in the mind versus in reality. For instance, just because one can conceive of the greatest possible being does not necessarily mean such a being must exist outside of the mind. Concepts of perfection do not guarantee that they manifest in reality.

The Problem of Defining God - Another common objection is that the ontological argument seems to "define God into existence" by starting with a definition of God that includes existence as a necessary quality. Critics argue that this is circular reasoning, as it assumes what it is trying to prove—namely, that God exists.

Modal Logic and Possibility - Alvin Plantinga's modal version of the ontological argument faces challenges. Critics argue that because God's existence is logically possible in some possible world does not necessarily entail that God exists in all possible worlds, including our own world. The argument hinges on whether the concept of God's necessary existence is truly coherent.

EXPERIENTIAL ARGUMENT

The experiential argument for the existence of God posits that personal experiences of the divine provide compelling evidence for God's existence. This argument emphasizes the subjective nature of human experience, suggesting that encounters with God or the divine can be just as valid as more traditional philosophical or theological arguments. Proponents argue that the richness and consistency of these experiences across cultures and time periods lend credibility to the claim that God exists.

Structure of the Argument - The experiential argument can be outlined as follows, *Premise 1*: Many people across various cultures and throughout history report profound personal experiences of God or the divine; *Premise 2*: These experiences often lead to transformative changes in individuals' lives, offering them purpose, moral guidance, and a sense of belonging; *Premise 3*: The consistency and prevalence of these experiences suggest that they are not merely psychological phenomena but point toward objective reality; *Conclusion*: Therefore, the existence of God is a reasonable conclusion based on the collective weight of these personal experiences.

Historical Context - Philosophers and theologians throughout history have engaged with the experiential argument. Figures such as William James in his work *The Varieties of Religious Experience* argued that personal experiences of the divine should be taken seriously and can offer insights into the nature of God. James emphasizes that the transformative effects of religious experiences can be a significant indicator of the divine's existence, even if they do not conform to empirical standards of proof. Despite its intuitive appeal, the experiential argument faces several objections:

Subjectivity of Experience - Critics argue that claimed personal experiences of God are inherently subjective and cannot serve as

reliable evidence for God's existence. These experiences can vary greatly among individuals and cultures, leading to conflicting interpretations of the divine. For example, someone may interpret a profound spiritual experience as an encounter with God, while another may explain it in terms of psychological phenomena or cultural influences.

Psychological Explanations - Skeptics point out that any personal experiences attributed to God can be explained through psychological mechanisms. They argue that altered states of consciousness, neurological factors, or social conditioning can account for these experiences without necessitating the existence of a divine being. Research in psychology and neuroscience has shown that religious experiences can be triggered by specific brain activity or environmental factors.

Diversity of Religious Experiences - The diversity of religious experiences across different cultures and belief systems raises questions about their validity as evidence for a singular God. If individuals report experiences of various deities or spiritual entities, how can one claim that these experiences point to the existence of a specific God? This plurality suggests that personal experiences may not correspond to an objective divine reality.

Illusions and Hallucinations - Critics point out that personal experiences can be illusory or hallucinatory. Just because someone feels they have encountered God does not necessarily mean that such an encounter has occurred.

Lack of Consensus: While many people report experiencing God, there is a lack of consensus about the nature of those encounters. Different religious traditions offer contrasting interpretations of what such experiences mean. If the experiences are genuinely indicative of God's existence, one would expect a more unified understanding across various faiths.

ARGUMENT FROM DESIRE

The argument from desire posits that human beings possess inherent desires that point to the existence of a transcendent being, commonly identified as God. This argument suggests that certain fundamental longings within us—such as the desire for meaning, purpose, fulfillment, and eternal happiness—cannot be satisfied by anything in this world. Therefore, these unmet desires imply the existence of something beyond the physical realm that can fulfill them, namely God.

Structure of the Argument - The argument from desire can be articulated as follows, *Premise 1*: Humans have innate desires that are universal and transcendent in nature (e.g., the desire for happiness, love, and ultimate fulfillment); *Premise 2*: Every natural desire corresponds to a real object that can satisfy it (e.g., hunger corresponds to food, thirst to water); *Premise 3*: The innate desires for meaning, eternal happiness, and fulfillment do not have any corresponding objects in the physical world. *Conclusion*: Therefore, these desires imply the existence of a transcendent being or reality—usually called God—who can fulfill them.

Historical Context - The argument from desire is associated with thinkers like C.S. Lewis, who famously stated in his book *Mere Christianity* that “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.” Lewis argues that our deep longings indicate that we are not only material beings but have a spiritual dimension, which points to the existence of God. This argument resonates with many religious and philosophical traditions, suggesting a fundamental connection between human experience and the divine.

Despite its intuitive appeal, the argument from desire faces several objections, as follows:

Naturalistic Explanations - Critics argue that human desires can be explained through evolutionary biology. From a naturalistic perspective, desires such as the pursuit of happiness or love can be seen as adaptive traits that have evolved to enhance survival and reproduction. These explanations challenge the necessity of a transcendent source for these desires, suggesting they are simply products of biological and social evolution.

Variety of Desires - The vast diversity of human desires across cultures raises questions about their origin and validity as indicators of God's existence. Different cultures express their desires and longings in various ways, which may not point to a single, universal fulfillment found in God. This plurality can be interpreted as evidence against the idea that desires inherently imply a divine source.

Satisfaction of Desires - Critics may argue that many human desires can be, and are, satisfied through earthly means. People find fulfillment in relationships, achievements, and experiences within this world. This observation undermines the claim that certain desires are inherently unsatisfiable and therefore must point to a divine source.

The Problem of Evil - The presence of unfulfilled desires and suffering in the world raises questions about the existence of a benevolent and fulfilling God. If God exists and is capable of providing ultimate fulfillment, why do so many people experience deep longings that remain unmet in this life? This objection challenges the argument's assumption that an inherent longing must indicate the existence of a fulfilling God.

Philosophical Ambiguity - The argument can also be critiqued for its reliance on subjective experience. The interpretation of desires as pointing toward God is inherently personal and may not be universally accepted. This subjectivity raises doubts about the argument's ability to serve as a basis for the existence of God.

AESTHETIC ARGUMENT

The aesthetic argument for the existence of God posits that the existence of beauty and our capacity to appreciate it provide compelling evidence for a divine creator. Proponents argue that the richness of aesthetic experiences, which include art, music, nature, and human creativity, points to a transcendent source. This argument suggests that beauty is not merely a subjective phenomenon but an objective reality that finds its ultimate explanation in God.

Structure of the Argument - The aesthetic argument can be articulated as follows, *Premise 1*: Human beings have a profound experience of beauty, which manifests in art, music, nature, and moral goodness; *Premise 2*: The existence of beauty is not merely a product of evolutionary processes or subjective interpretations; rather, it has an objective quality that suggests an ultimate source; *Premise 3*: The best explanation for the existence and appreciation of beauty is the existence of a transcendent being who embodies perfect and complete beauty; *Conclusion*: Therefore, the existence of beauty points to the existence of God.

Historical Context - The aesthetic argument has been explored by numerous philosophers and theologians throughout history. Figures such as Plato and Kant emphasized the significance of beauty in understanding reality and morality. In contemporary philosophy, the aesthetic argument has been championed by theologians like C. S. Lewis, who suggested that the human longing for beauty is indicative of a divine creator. Lewis argued that our capacity to appreciate beauty aligns with a deeper spiritual reality and serves as a reflection of God's nature. The aesthetic argument faces several objections:

Subjectivity of Beauty - Critics argue that beauty is subjective and varies across cultures and individuals. What one person finds beautiful, another may find appealing to a lesser degree or even

unappealing. This variable subjectivity challenges the notion that beauty points to an objective reality or a divine creator. It raises the question of whether aesthetic experiences can serve as genuine evidence for God.

Naturalistic Explanations - Opponents may assert that the appreciation of beauty can be understood through evolutionary processes. For example, human attraction to beauty may have served adaptive functions, such as mate selection or social cohesion. This perspective posits that aesthetic experiences are rooted in biological and psychological mechanisms rather than divine inspiration.

The Problem of Evil and Suffering - The existence of beauty in the world does not negate the presence of suffering, ugliness, and moral evil. Critics may argue that if God exists as the source of beauty, then how can one reconcile the existence of profound suffering and evil? The coexistence of beauty and suffering raises questions about the nature of God and His relationship to the world.

Cultural Relativism - The diversity of aesthetic values across different cultures presents a challenge to the aesthetic argument. Critics argue that if beauty were an objective reflection of God's nature, one would expect a more unified understanding of beauty across cultures. The variations in artistic expression and aesthetic appreciation suggest that beauty may be a social construct rather than a divine attribute.

Philosophical Ambiguity - The argument may be critiqued for its ambiguity regarding the definition of beauty. What constitutes beauty, and how can one measure it objectively? Critics argue that without clear definitions and criteria, the aesthetic argument may lack the rigor necessary to support the existence of God.

MORAL ARGUMENT

The moral argument asserts that the existence of objective moral values and duties is best explained by the existence of God. It is based on the idea that if moral truths are real and binding, they require a transcendent source—God.

The argument follows this line of reasoning, *Premise 1*: Objective moral values and duties exist: Many people believe that certain actions, like kindness or honesty, are objectively good, while others, like murder or theft, are objectively wrong. These moral values and duties are not merely subjective preferences but apply universally, regardless of personal opinion or cultural norms; *Premise 2*: Objective moral values require a transcendent source: If moral values and duties are objective, they must come from something beyond human beings or nature. Without such a transcendent source, morality would be relative, based on human society, biology, or individual feelings. The moral argument posits that God is the best explanation for the existence of these objective moral values and duties; *Conclusion*: Therefore, God exists: Since objective moral values and duties exist, and they require a transcendent source, the conclusion is that God—an eternal, moral lawgiver—exists as the foundation for morality.

The moral argument is often presented as evidence of a personal, moral God who not only created the universe but also imbued it with moral meaning and purpose. The existence of right and wrong, according to this argument, points to a being who defines these moral truths. While the moral argument is persuasive to many, several objections have been raised, especially by those who believe that morality can be explained without invoking God:

Morality Grounded in Secular Ethics - Critics argue that objective moral values can exist independently of belief in God. Secular ethical systems, like utilitarianism or Kantian ethics, provide

frameworks for understanding moral obligations without requiring a divine source and dictates. Human reason, empathy, and social cooperation are seen as sufficient to explain why people develop shared moral principles.

Euthyphro Dilemma - The Euthyphro dilemma, originating from Plato, challenges the idea of God as the source of morality. It asks, “Is something good because God commands it, or does God command it because it is good?” If something is good simply because God commands it, morality could be arbitrary. But if God commands things because they are inherently good, then morality exists independently of God, undermining the argument.

Moral Relativism and Cultural Differences - Some object to the premise that objective moral values exist at all, pointing out that moral beliefs vary widely between cultures and historical periods. For example, practices considered moral in one culture, like arranged marriages or capital punishment, may be seen as immoral in another. This diversity of moral beliefs suggests to some that morality is not objective but shaped by social and cultural contexts.

Evolutionary Explanations for Morality - Another objection comes from evolutionary biology, which suggests that moral behavior evolved as a means of promoting social cohesion and survival. Traits like cooperation, altruism, and empathy may have developed because they increased the chances of survival for individuals and groups. From this perspective, morality is a natural by-product of evolution, not a transcendent truth rooted in God.

Atheists Can Be Moral - Some argue that moral behavior does not require belief in God. Atheists and non-religious people can and do lead moral lives, basing their ethical decisions on such criteria as reason, empathy, and societal norms. This challenges the idea that belief in God is necessary for moral action or for the recognition of objective moral values.

ARGUMENT FROM REASON

The argument from reason is a philosophical argument that posits the existence of God as a necessary foundation for rational thought and human cognition. It asserts that if naturalism—the idea that everything arises from natural properties and causes—is true, then human reasoning is ultimately unreliable and cannot be trusted to yield truth. The argument suggests that the very existence of rational thought and the ability to reason point to the existence of a divine mind or intellect.

Structure of the Argument - The argument from reason can be outlined as follows, *Premise 1*: If naturalism is true, then human cognitive faculties are the result of unguided evolutionary processes. *Premise 2*: If human cognitive faculties are the result of unguided evolutionary processes, then there is no reason to trust our reasoning abilities as a means to acquire truth. *Conclusion*: Therefore, human cognitive faculties cannot be adequately explained by naturalism; hence, it is more reasonable to believe in the existence of God as the source of our rational capacities.

The argument suggests that if we cannot trust our reasoning to lead us to truth under a naturalistic world view, then a theistic perspective, which posits a rational and purposeful God, provides a better explanatory framework for the reliability of human thought.

Historical Context - C.S. Lewis has significantly contributed to the development of the argument from reason. Lewis argues that our ability to think rationally and engage in logical deduction is best explained by the existence of a rational God. Alvin Plantinga has provided a modern defense of the argument, suggesting that naturalism undermines the reliability of our cognitive faculties. Despite its intriguing premise, the argument from reason has faced several objections:

Evolutionary Explanation - Critics argue that evolutionary processes can lead to the development of advanced human reasoning. They suggest that our cognitive faculties have evolved because they are beneficial for survival and reproduction. Just because our reasoning abilities have a naturalistic explanation does not imply they are unreliable.

Circular Reasoning - Some critics argue that the argument from reason presupposes what it seeks to prove: that human reasoning is valid only if it is grounded in God. This circularity undermines the argument's logical rigor and effectiveness, as it does not provide independent justification for the existence of God.

Alternative Epistemologies - The argument from reason rests on the assumption that naturalism cannot provide a satisfactory account of rational thought. However, many philosophers propose alternative epistemologies that do not invoke the existence of God to explain rationality. For example, the theoretical reliability of reason can be understood through the lens of pragmatism or functionalism, which do not require theistic assumptions.

Fallibility of Human Reasoning - Critics may point out that human reasoning is prone to error, regardless of whether one holds a theistic or naturalistic world view. They argue that acknowledging the fallibility of human reasoning does not negate the possibility of rational thought. This perspective maintains that the existence of God is not necessary to account for human reasoning, which can be understood as a product of biological and social processes.

Divine Hiddenness - Some argue that the existence of a rational God does not guarantee the reliability of human reasoning. If God exists but remains hidden or does not reveal truth in a way that is accessible to humans, then it is possible for people to reason incorrectly about fundamental truths. This challenges the idea that belief in God necessarily leads to reliable reasoning.

FINE-TUNING ARGUMENT

The fine-tuning argument for the existence of God posits that certain conditions in the universe are so precisely calibrated that they appear to be “fine-tuned” to allow life to exist. Proponents argue that the specific values of physical constants—such as the gravitational constant, the strength of electromagnetism, and the ratio of protons to electrons—are set within a narrow range that makes life possible. Even slight changes in these values would render the universe inhospitable for any life forms.

The improbability of these constants aligning by chance leads to three main explanations for their alignment—physical necessity, chance, or design. *Premise 1:* The physical necessity option suggests that the universe’s conditions could not have been otherwise, but there is no clear scientific evidence supporting this inevitability. *Premise 2:* The chance explanation considers the possibility that the universe’s parameters happened to fall into this life-permitting range by coincidence, though many find this solution statistically implausible. *Premise 3:* The design hypothesis, which suggests that the universe’s fine-tuning is intentional—evidence of a designer or higher intelligence, often understood as God.

The fine-tuning argument is related to the teleological argument but is more specific. Both arguments are versions of the argument from design, suggesting that the order and structure in the universe imply a designer. However, they focus on different aspects of that design.

The teleological argument broadly argues that the complex order and purpose observed in nature (e.g., the complexity of living organisms or the structure of the cosmos) point to an intelligent designer. It traditionally considers biological features, planetary orbits, and other forms of the natural order as evidence for a designer creating a purposeful design.

The fine-tuning argument focuses on the precise narrow range of values of fundamental physical constants and conditions that are necessary for the universe to support life. It suggests that the universe's initial conditions and laws of physics are set within an extraordinarily narrow range necessary for life, implying that this precision is unlikely to be due to random chance. Thus, while the teleological argument appeals to purpose and complexity in a general sense, the fine-tuning argument zeroes in on the specific mathematical and physical parameters that govern the universe's structure.

In essence, the fine-tuning argument is a more modern, physics-based subset of the teleological argument, which has traditionally been more biological and broader in scope.

PRAGMATIC ARGUMENT

The pragmatic argument for the existence of God is rooted in the idea that belief in God can be rationally justified based on the practical benefits it brings, even if we lack conclusive evidence for God's existence. Unlike arguments based on evidence, such as the cosmological or teleological arguments, the pragmatic approach centers on the consequences of belief versus disbelief. It holds that belief in God can be reasonable when it improves one's life, provides comfort, and supports ethical behavior.

Pascal's Wager - One of the most famous expressions of the pragmatic argument is Pascal's Wager. The French philosopher Blaise Pascal argued that, since we cannot know with certainty whether God exists, it is wiser to "wager" on belief in God. His reasoning was based on the following cost-benefit analysis, *Option 1*: If God exists and one believes, the reward is potentially infinite (eternal happiness or salvation); *Option 2*: If God does not exist and one believes, the loss is relatively small (a lifetime of mistaken belief with some personal cost); *Option 3*: If God exists and one does not believe, the potential loss is infinite (separation from God and eternal punishment after the judgment); *Option 4*: If God does not exist and one does not believe, the gain or loss from disbelief is minimal. Pascal concluded that belief is the more rational "bet" in this uncertain situation, as the potential benefits far outweigh the potential downsides.

Psychological-Emotional Benefits - The argument highlights the personal and psychological benefits that belief in God often provides. Studies and observations have shown that belief in a higher power can lead to a greater sense of purpose, resilience in the face of suffering, and a deeper sense of meaning. Many people find that faith helps them cope with existential anxieties, such as the fear of death, and offers comfort during times of loss or hardship. The

sense of hope, security, and purpose that often accompanies belief in God may make life more fulfilling, reducing the impact of mental stressors and promoting emotional well-being.

Moral and Social Benefits - Belief in God encourages ethical behavior and social cohesion, providing a moral framework that individuals and societies can follow. For many, religious belief offers a strong foundation for values like compassion, honesty, and justice, shaping their interactions and relationships. This ethical guidance can foster stronger communities, as shared beliefs and moral expectations can lead to greater trust, cooperation, and support among people. Historically, religious teachings have often been a source of moral rules and social norms, influencing laws and ethical standards.

Practical Rationality and the Role of Faith - The pragmatic argument posits that choosing to believe in God is a form of practical rationality—making a choice that serves one’s interests or needs. For some, faith provides a valuable “anchor” in a chaotic or uncertain world, offering stability and guiding them through challenges. Even in the absence of empirical proof, belief can be a way of addressing life’s big questions and uncertainties, filling gaps that reason or science alone may not satisfy.

Limitations and Criticisms - While the pragmatic argument emphasizes the benefits of belief, it has limitations and faces criticism. One challenge is that belief purely for practical reasons may not be “genuine,” as it could be seen as a form of self-interest rather than true conviction. Critics argue that believing in God solely for potential benefits may lack the sincerity typically associated with faith.

Another critique is that the pragmatic argument does not address which God or religious belief is correct, nor does it necessarily lead to truth. Instead, it leaves room for multiple interpretations, suggesting that people could rationally choose any belief system that offers psychological, moral, or social advantages.

BIBLICAL ARGUMENT

The Bible often approaches the question of God's existence from a perspective grounded in evidence of action rather than abstract reasoning. This approach is somewhat unique compared to purely philosophical arguments and instead emphasizes historical acts and fulfilled prophecy as evidence that God is real and active.

Argument from Fulfilled Prophecy - The Bible frequently uses fulfilled prophecy as a testament to God's existence, presenting it as something only a real, omniscient deity could achieve. For instance, the Book of Isaiah mentions specific events and figures, like Cyrus the Great, by name long before his birth, claiming that such precision can only come from divine foreknowledge (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1). This argument suggests that God's existence is demonstrated through his ability to predict and influence history accurately.

Witness of Creation (Cosmological Argument) - While not identical to the philosophical cosmological argument, the Bible points to the existence and order of the universe as evidence of God's handiwork. Psalms and Romans argue that creation reflects God's nature and is itself a kind of revelation. Psalm 19:1 says, "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands." Romans 1:20 builds on this, claiming that God's "eternal power and divine nature" are visible in creation, leaving humanity "without excuse" for not recognizing him.

Moral Argument - The Bible proposes that humanity's internal moral compass—our awareness of right and wrong—is evidence of God's imprint on creation. In Romans 2:14-15, Paul argues that even those without the law instinctively know God's standards, suggesting a universal moral law that implies a divine lawgiver. This resonates with the philosophical moral argument, though the Bible frames it more experientially and relationally.

Consistency in God's Character - A unique aspect of biblical reasoning is the emphasis on God's faithfulness to keep his promises as evidence of his existence. The Bible narrates God's repeated interventions on behalf of ancient Israel, often for the purpose of fulfilling specific promises. For example, God's covenant with Abraham, which included the promise of a great nation and a land, unfolds in the historical record of Israel's growth, survival, and return from exile, and is again reflected in the Daniel 8 prophecy and its modern fulfillment, showing that God's faithfulness transcends time.

Experiential Testimony and Transformation - Admittedly not a philosophical argument, the testimony of transformed lives is offered as a powerful proof of God's reality. Throughout the Bible, the experiences of believers and their changed lives are presented as signs of divine activity in the hearts and minds of man.

These biblical arguments align with what might be called "evidence-based faith"—offering historical and experiential reasons for belief in God rather than purely abstract ones.

*A*PPENDIX

How to Count the 2,300 Passovers

P = PASSOVER (FOLLOWED BY ITS NUMBER IN THE COUNT AND GREGORIAN YEAR)

P-1 333 BCE	P-2 332 BCE	P-3 331 BCE	P-4 330 BCE	P-5 329 BCE	P-6 328 BCE	P-7 327 BCE	P-8 326 BCE	P-9 325 BCE	P-10 324 BCE
P-10 see above	P-20 314 BCE	P-30 304 BCE	P-40 294 BCE	P-50 284 BCE	P-60 274 BCE	P-70 264 BCE	P-80 254 BCE	P-90 244 BCE	P-100 234 BCE
P-110 224 BCE	P-120 214 BCE	P-130 204 BCE	P-140 194 BCE	P-150 184 BCE	P-160 174 BCE	P-170 164 BCE	P-180 154 BCE	P-190 144 BCE	P-200 134 BCE
P-210 124 BCE	P-220 114 BCE	P-230 104 BCE	P-240 94 BCE	P-250 84 BCE	P-260 74 BCE	P-270 64 BCE	P-280 54 BCE	P-290 44 BCE	P-300 34 BCE
P-310 24 BCE	P-320 14 BCE	P-330 4 BCE *	P-340 7 CE *	P-350 17 CE	P-360 27 CE	P-370 37 CE	P-380 47 CE	P-390 57 CE	P-400 67 CE
P-410 77 CE	P-420 87 CE	P-430 97 CE	P-440 107 CE	P-450 117 CE	P-460 127 CE	P-470 137 CE	P-480 147 CE	P-490 157 CE	P-500 167 CE
P-510 177 CE	P-520 187 CE	P-530 197 CE	P-540 207 CE	P-550 217 CE	P-560 227 CE	P-570 237 CE	P-580 247 CE	P-590 257 CE	P-600 267 CE
P-610 277 CE	P-620 287 CE	P-630 297 CE	P-640 307 CE	P-650 317 CE	P-660 327 CE	P-670 337 CE	P-680 347 CE	P-690 357 CE	P-700 367 CE
P-710 377 CE	P-720 387 CE	P-730 397 CE	P-740 407 CE	P-750 417 CE	P-760 427 CE	P-770 437 CE	P-780 447 CE	P-790 457 CE	P-800 467 CE
P-810 477 CE	P-820 487 CE	P-830 497 CE	P-840 507 CE	P-850 517 CE	P-860 527 CE	P-870 537 CE	P-880 547 CE	P-890 557 CE	P-900 567 CE
P-910 577 CE	P-920 587 CE	P-930 597 CE	P-940 607 CE	P-950 617 CE	P-960 627 CE	P-970 637 CE	P-980 647 CE	P-990 657 CE	P-1000 667 CE
P-1010 677 CE	P-1020 687 CE	P-1030 697 CE	P-1040 707 CE	P-1050 717 CE	P-1060 727 CE	P-1070 737 CE	P-1080 747 CE	P-1090 757 CE	P-1100 767 CE
P-1110 777 CE	P-1120 787 CE	P-1130 797 CE	P-1140 807 CE	P-1150 817 CE	P-1160 827 CE	P-1170 837 CE	P-1180 847 CE	P-1190 857 CE	P-1200 867 CE
P-1210 877 CE	P-1220 887 CE	P-1230 897 CE	P-1240 907 CE	P-1250 917 CE	P-1260 927 CE	P-1270 937 CE	P-1280 947 CE	P-1290 957 CE	P-1300 967 CE
P-1310 977 CE	P-1320 987 CE	P-1330 997 CE	P-1340 1007 CE	P-1350 1017 CE	P-1360 1027 CE	P-1370 1037 CE	P-1380 1047 CE	P-1390 1057 CE	P-1400 1067 CE
P-1410 1077 CE	P-1420 1087 CE	P-1430 1097 CE	P-1440 1107 CE	P-1450 1117 CE	P-1460 1127 CE	P-1470 1137 CE	P-1480 1147 CE	P-1490 1157 CE	P-1500 1167 CE
P-1510 1177 CE	P-1520 1187 CE	P-1530 1197 CE	P-1540 1207 CE	P-1550 1217 CE	P-1560 1227 CE	P-1570 1237 CE	P-1580 1247 CE	P-1590 1257 CE	P-1600 1267 CE
P-1610 1277 CE	P-1620 1287 CE	P-1630 1297 CE	P-1640 1307 CE	P-1650 1317 CE	P-1660 1327 CE	P-1670 1337 CE	P-1680 1347 CE	P-1690 1357 CE	P-1700 1367 CE
P-1710 1377 CE	P-1720 1387 CE	P-1730 1397 CE	P-1740 1407 CE	P-1750 1417 CE	P-1760 1427 CE	P-1770 1437 CE	P-1780 1447 CE	P-1790 1457 CE	P-1800 1467 CE
P-1810 1477 CE	P-1820 1487 CE	P-1830 1497 CE	P-1840 1507 CE	P-1850 1517 CE	P-1860 1527 CE	P-1870 1537 CE	P-1880 1547 CE	P-1890 1557 CE	P-1900 1567 CE
P-1910 1577 CE	P-1920 1587 CE	P-1930 1597 CE	P-1940 1607 CE	P-1950 1617 CE	P-1960 1627 CE	P-1970 1637 CE	P-1980 1647 CE	P-1990 1657 CE	P-2000 1667 CE
P-2010 1677 CE	P-2020 1687 CE	P-2030 1697 CE	P-2040 1707 CE	P-2050 1717 CE	P-2060 1727 CE	P-2070 1737 CE	P-2080 1747 CE	P-2090 1757 CE	P-2100 1767 CE
P-2110 1777 CE	P-2120 1787 CE	P-2130 1797 CE	P-2140 1807 CE	P-2150 1817 CE	P-2160 1827 CE	P-2170 1837 CE	P-2180 1847 CE	P-2190 1857 CE	P-2200 1867 CE
P-2210 1877 CE	P-2220 1887 CE	P-2230 1897 CE	P-2240 1907 CE	P-2250 1917 CE	P-2260 1927 CE	P-2270 1937 CE	P-2280 1947 CE	P-2290 1957 CE	P-2300 1967 CE

* Note that there was no year "0" (zero) when going from BCE to CE, so the count in the transition decade from 4 BCE to 7 CE is determined as follows: Passover number 330 in the count (P-330 above) occurred in the year 4 BCE, P-331 in 3 BCE, P-332 in 2 BCE, P-333 in 1 BCE, P-334 in 1 CE, P-335 in 2 CE, P-336 in 3 CE, P-337 in 4 CE, P-338 in 5 CE, P-339 in 6 CE, P-340 in 7 CE



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On the morning of June 7, 1967, an Israel Defense Forces half track carrying soldiers from the 55th Paratroopers Brigade (Reserve) sped toward the Dome of the Rock atop the Temple Mount in Jerusalem during the Six Day War, precisely fulfilling an ancient prophecy in the eighth chapter of the Book of Daniel.

June 7, 1967—Jewish sovereignty over the Temple Mount is restored

A Hebrew-to-English transcript of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) radio traffic on the morning of June 7, 1967, recorded live as the 55th Paratroopers Brigade liberated the Temple Mount and Western Wall during the Six Day War, is reproduced below. The following people are featured: Col. Motta Gur commanded the 55th (Reserve) Paratroopers Brigade, the primary military unit deployed for the capture of the Temple Mount and Western Wall; Gen. Uzi Narkiss commanded the IDF central Region, which included Jerusalem, charged with defending against Jordanian aggression; Commander 89 was unidentified by name; Yossi Ronen was an IDF radio reporter; Rabbi Gen. Shlomo Goren was the Orthodox Zionist (Ashkenazi) Chief Rabbi of the Israeli army ...

Colonel Motta Gur [on loudspeaker]: All company commanders, we're sitting right now on the ridge [Mount of Olives] and we're seeing the Old City. Shortly we're going to go in to the Old City of Jerusalem, that all generations have dreamed about. We will be the first to enter the Old City. Eitan's tanks will advance on the left and will enter the Lion's Gate. The final rendezvous will be on the open square [of the Temple Mount] above ...

Sound of applause by the soldiers ...

Yossi Ronen: We are now walking on one of the main streets of Jerusalem towards the Old City. The head of the force is about to enter the Old City ...

Gunfire ...

Yossi Ronen: There is still shooting from all directions; we're advancing towards the entrance of the Old City ...

Gunfire and sound of running soldiers' footsteps ...

Yelling of commands to soldiers ...

More running soldiers' footsteps ...

Yossi Ronen: The soldiers are keeping a distance of approximately five meters between them ... It's still dangerous to walk around here; there is still sniper shooting here and there ...

Gunfire ...

Yossi Ronen: We're all told to stop ... we're advancing towards the mountainside ... on our left is the Mount of Olives ... we're now in the Old City opposite the Russian church ... I'm right now lowering my head, we're running next to the mountainside ... We can see the stone walls ... They're still shooting at us ...

Gunfire ...

Yossi Ronen: Israeli tanks are at the entrance to the Old City, and we're going ahead, through the Lion's Gate. I'm with the first unit to break through into the Old City ... There is a Jordanian bus next to me, totally burnt; it is very hot here ... We're about to enter the Old City itself. We're standing below the Lion's Gate, the Gate is about to come crashing down, probably because of the previous shelling. Soldiers are taking cover next to the palm trees ...

Gunfire ...

Yossi Ronen: I'm also staying close to one of the trees ... We're getting further and further into the City ...

Gunfire ...

Colonel Motta Gur [*on the army wireless*]: The Temple Mount is in our hands! I repeat, the Temple Mount is in our hands! ... [*see photo on page 4*]

Gunfire ...

Colonel Motta Gur [*on the army wireless*]: All forces, stop firing! This is the David Operations Room. I repeat, all forces, stop firing! Over ...

Commander 89: Commander eight-nine here, is this Motta talking? Over ...

Inaudible response on the army wireless by Motta Gur ...

Gen. Uzi Narkiss: Motta, there isn't anybody like you. You're next to the Mosque of Omar ...

Yossi Ronen: I'm driving fast through the Lion's Gate all the way inside the Old City ...

Command [*on the army wireless*]: Comb the area, discover the source of the firing. Protect every building, in every way. Do not touch anything, especially in the holy places ...

Lt.-Col. Uzi Eilam blows the Shofar ...

Soldiers are singing 'Jerusalem of Gold' [a patriotic song written by Naomi Shemer in 1967 and introduced at the Israel Song Festival just before the war] ...

Gen. Narkiss: Tell me, where is the Western Wall? How do we get there? ...

Yossi Ronen: I'm walking right now down the steps towards the Western Wall. I'm not a religious man, I never have been, but this is the Western Wall and I'm touching the stones of the Western Wall ...

Soldiers [*overcome with emotion, reciting the 'Shehechianu' blessing*]: Baruch ata Hashem, elokeinu melech haolam, she-hechianu ve-kiemanu ve-hegianu

a-zman ha-zeh. [Translation: BLESSED ART THOU LORD GOD KING OF THE UNIVERSE WHO HAS SUSTAINED US AND KEPT US AND HAS BROUGHT US TO THIS DAY] ...

Rabbi Shlomo Goren: Baruch ata Hashem, menachem tsion u-voneh Yerushalayim. [Translation: BLESSED ARE THOU, WHO COMFORTS ZION AND BUILDS JERUSALEM] ...

Soldiers: Amen! ...

Soldiers sing "HaTiqvah" next to the Western Wall ...

Rabbi Goren: We're now going to recite the prayer for the fallen soldiers of this war against all of the enemies of Israel ...

Soldiers weeping ...

Rabbi Goren: El male rahamim, shohen ba-meromim. Hamtse menuha nahona al kanfei hashina, be-maalot kedoshim, giborim ve-tehorim, kezohar harakiya meirim u-mazhirim. Ve-nishmot halalei tsava hagana le-yisrael, she-naflu be-maaraha zot, neged oievei yisrael, ve-shnaflu al kedushat Hashem ha-am ve-ha'arets, ve-shichrur Beit Hamikdash, Har Habayit, Hakotel ha-ma'aravi veyerushalayim ir ha-elokim. Be-gan eden tehe menuhatam. Lahen ba'al ha-rahamim, yastirem beseter knafav le-olamim. Ve-yitsror be-tsror ha-hayim et nishmatam adoshem hu nahlatam, ve-yanuhu be-shalom al mishkavam ve-ya'amdu le-goralam le-kets ha-yamim ve-nomar amen! [Translation: MERCIFUL GOD IN HEAVEN, MAY THE HEROES AND THE PURE BE UNDER THY DIVINE WINGS, AMONG THE HOLY AND THE PURE WHO SHINE BRIGHT AS THE SKY, AND THE SOULS OF SOLDIERS OF THE ISRAELI ARMY WHO FELL IN THIS WAR AGAINST THE ENEMIES OF ISRAEL, WHO FELL FOR THEIR LOYALTY TO GOD AND THE LAND OF ISRAEL, WHO FELL FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE TEMPLE, THE TEMPLE MOUNT, THE WESTERN WALL AND JERUSALEM THE CITY OF THE LORD. MAY THEIR PLACE OF REST BE IN PARADISE. MERCIFUL ONE, O KEEP THEIR SOULS FOREVER ALIVE UNDER THY PROTECTIVE WINGS. THE LORD BEING THEIR HERITAGE, MAY THEY REST IN PEACE, FOR THEY SHALT REST AND STAND UP FOR THEIR ALLOTTED PORTION AT THE END OF THE DAYS, AND LET US SAY, AMEN!] ...

Soldiers weeping ...

Rabbi Goren sounds the shofar ...

Sound of gunfire in the background ...

Rabbi Goren [holding Torah scroll]: Le-shana HA-ZOT be-Yerushalayim ha-b'nuya, be-yerushalayim ha-atika! [Translation: THIS YEAR IN A REBUILT JERUSALEM! IN THE JERUSALEM OF OLD!]

SOURCES FOR BATTLE OF GRANICUS

The Battle of Granicus, fought in the month of Daesius in 334 BCE between Alexander the Great and the Achaemenid Persian Empire, was recorded by several ancient historians, though none were eyewitnesses.

Lucius Flavius Arrianus: Writing in the 2nd century CE, Arrian is considered one of the most reliable sources for Alexander's campaigns. His *Anabasis of Alexander* is based largely on the accounts of Alexander's generals, especially Ptolemy and Aristobulus, who were present at the battle.

Plutarch: In his *Life of Alexander*, part of *Parallel Lives*, Plutarch provides a biographical account of Alexander's life, including a description of the Battle of Granicus. Plutarch lived in the 1st century CE and relied on various earlier sources, blending historical detail with moralistic storytelling.

Diodorus Siculus: In *Bibliotheca historica*, Diodorus, writing in the 1st century BCE, covers Alexander's campaigns and describes the Battle of Granicus. Although Diodorus was not always as precise as Arrian, his work offers valuable insights and additional context from earlier sources.

Quintus Curtius Rufus: In his *Histories of Alexander the Great*, Curtius Rufus, a Roman historian from the 1st century CE, provides a detailed, narrative of Alexander's campaigns. His account includes events at Granicus, though some historians question the reliability of aspects of his work.

SOURCES FOR SIX DAY WAR

Mordechai Gur *The Battle for Jerusalem* (New York, New York: Popular Library, a unit of CBS Publications, 1974), p. 354.

Michael B. Oren *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New York, New York: A Presidio Press Book published by The Random House Publishing Group, 2003), p. 240.

Amos Alon Jerusalem: *City of Mirrors* (London, England: Flamingo, an imprint of Harper Collins Publishers, 1996), p. 91.

More Messianic Prophecies

Prophecy from the JPS 1917 Tanakh, fulfillment from the New King James Version

“Who would have believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the LORD been revealed? For he shot up right forth as a sapling, And as a root out of a dry ground; He had no form nor comeliness, that we should look upon him, Nor beauty that we should delight in him. He was despised, and forsaken of men, A man of pains, and acquainted with disease, And as one from whom men hide their face: He was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely our diseases he did bear, and our pains he carried; Whereas we did esteem him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded because of our transgressions, He was crushed because of our iniquities: The chastisement of our welfare was upon him, And with his stripes we were healed. All we like sheep did go astray, We turned every one to his own way; And the LORD hath made to light on him The iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, though he humbled himself And opened not his mouth; As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, And as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb; Yea, he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away, And with his generation who did reason? For he was cut off out of the land of the living, For the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due. And they made his grave with the wicked, And with the rich his tomb; Although he had done no violence, Neither was any deceit in his mouth.’ Yet it pleased the LORD to crush him by disease; To see if his soul would offer itself in restitution, That he might see his seed, prolong his days, And that the purpose of the LORD might prosper by his hand: Of the travail of his soul he shall see to the full, even My servant, Who by his knowledge did justify the Righteous One to the many, And their iniquities he did bear. Therefore will I divide him a portion among the great, And he shall divide the spoil with the mighty; Because he bared his soul unto death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet he bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.” (Isaiah 53)—“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” (John 1:10-12)

“Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, who did eat of my bread, Hath lifted up his heel against me.” (Psalm 41:10)—“And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.” (Matthew 26:23) “Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them.” (Mark 14:10)

“And I said unto them: ‘If ye think good, give me my hire’ ... So they weighed for my hire thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me: ‘Cast it into the treasury, the goodly price that I was prized at of them.’ And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them into the treasury, in the house of the Lord” (Zechariah 11:12-13)—“Then cast

them into the treasury, in the house of the Lord” (Zechariah 11:12-13)—“Then one of the Twelve, the one called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and asked, ‘What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?’ So they counted out for him thirty silver coins.” (Matthew 26:14-16) , “And he [Judas] cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. (Matthew 27:5)

“He was oppressed, though he humbled himself And opened not his mouth; As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, And as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb; Yea, he opened not his mouth.” (Isaiah 53:7)—“But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.” (Mark 15:5)

“My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me, And art far from my help at the words of my cry?” (Psalm 22:2)—“About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?’, which means, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’” (Matthew 27:46)

“All they that see me laugh me to scorn; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head: ‘Let him commit himself unto the Lord! let Him rescue him; Let Him deliver him, seeing He delighteth in him.’” (Psalm 22:8-9)—“In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. ‘He saved others,’ they said, ‘but he can’t save himself! He’s the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, I am the Son of God.’ In the same way the robbers who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.” (Matthew 27:41-44)

“My strength is dried up like a potsherd; And my tongue cleaveth to my throat [*in thirst*]; And Thou layest me in the dust of death.” (Psalm 22:16)—“Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink.” (Matthew 27:48)

“I may count all my bones; They look and gloat over me. They part my garments among them, And for my vesture do they cast lots.” (Psalm 22:18-19)—“When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom.” (John 19:23)

“And I will pour upon the house of David, And upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, The spirit of grace and of supplication; And they shall look unto Me because they have thrust him [*the Messiah*] through; And they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, And shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born” (Zechariah 12:10)—“Simon Peter replied, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:16)

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