

BASIC CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS: DEFENDING THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

Part II: Defending The Bible As God's Inspired Word

A. Defending The Bible's EXTERNAL Credibility

(Matthew 5:18-19)

I. Introduction

- A. Though one may believe God exists, he may think the Bible is full of "myths" so that it is not from God.
- B. We address the defense of the Bible's *external* credibility that reveals it is from God as follows:

II. Defending The Bible's EXTERNAL Credibility, Matthew 5:18-19:

- A. Liberal Theology has questioned by the following three major theories that the Bible is even God's Word:
 - 1. Documentary Hypothesis - This theory holds that the two different names for the O.T. God (Elohim and Jahweh) with other literary analyses of Genesis thru Deuteronomy (Pentateuch) literature argue for there being several authors of it and not a single author in Moses. Thus, the work is not inspired.
 - 2. Traditio-Critico Theory - This theory states that as men in Moses' era passed on sacred oracles by word-of-mouth, the O.T. came by way of mere campfire myths from antiquity.
 - 3. Form-Critico Theory - This theory asserts that as these campfire stories made their rounds, they were embellished much like one embellishes a joke so the final O.T. contains many corrupted versions.
- B. These three major theories are in error according to scientific studies and disciplines as follows:
 - 1. Regarding The Documentary Hypothesis - Archaeological discoveries reveal ancient Semitic peoples used several names for a single deity to reveal its various attributes or offices (Nat. Geogr., Dec. '78, p. 737f). Also, scholar Umberto Cassuto, late Prof. of Bible at the Hebr. Univ. of Jerusalem, in The Doc. Hyp., p. 100, wrote: "Since . . . the whole structure of the documentary hypothesis rests on the 5 pillars enumerated [(1) variations so-called in the divine names, (2) inequalities of language & style, (3) subject matter differences in various sections, (4) so-called duplications and repetitions of sections & (5) composite sections], and subsequently (we) . . . found that all these pillars were without substance, it follows that this . . . edifice (of the documentary hypothesis) . . . is founded on air."
 - 2. Regarding the Traditio-Critico Theory - Discoveries reveal a mentality of canonicity existed in Moses' day, making it very unlikely he compiled word-of-mouth accounts loosely into his **religious** Pentateuch:
 - a. Pritchard's Ancient Near Eastern Texts (Princeton U. Press, 1969, p. 32-36) has the Egyptian Mortuary Text (2,400 B.C.), "The Conquest of Death" found in the pyramids of Unis and Pepi II. These texts were never intended to be seen by others after the tombs were sealed. Yet, these texts were carefully written messages to the honor of the gods, revealing a strong mentality of canonicity!
 - b. William F. Albright's, The Proto-Sinaitic Inscriptions and Their Decipherment (Harv. Theol. Studies XXII, Harv. U., '69, p. 20) records the following find on a stelliform rock panel close to a turquoise mine in Nubia: "O Merciful One, with the Serpent Lady, lords of the mines of Wawat, (I) swear (to bring) a sacrifice." Since the "Wawat" spelling is in the Old Kingdom form, the inscription is at **least** 1,500 years B.C. up to 2,160 B.C.! Deep respect for religious writings existed in Moses' day!
- C. Compared to comparative ancient secular records, the Bible surpasses excels as to manuscript credibility:
 - 1. The testimony of ancient New Testament mss is great when compared to **esteemed** secular ancient mss:
 - a. McDowell's A Ready Defense, p. 45 quotes Metzger [Chapters In The Hist. Of N. T. Text. Critic., '63, p. 144) who says Homer's Illiad alone ranks next to the New Testament in manuscript credibility.
 - b. The Illiad has a span of **500 years** between its date of authorship and the earliest existing copy.
 - c. There are **643 existing ancient manuscript copies** of Homer's Illiad.
 - d. In comparison, the New Testament's timespan between its date of origin and earliest manuscript is only **25 years**, and there are over **24,000 manuscript copies** of that work!
 - 2. The testimony regarding the Old Testament's mss credibility is even greater: Until the scroll finds at the Dead Sea in 1947, the earliest Hebrew manuscript was dated A.D. 1008. These scrolls were dated 1,000 years earlier, and showed **no** significant variations from the A.D. 1008 text! The accurate transmission of the Hebrew text by its scribes was herein verified, *Ibid.*, McDowell, p. 106-107!

Lesson: *The testimony of archaeological finds for SECULAR literature contemporaneous to the Old and New Testaments reveal the high credibility of the Bible as being what it claims to be -- from GOD! As Jesus said in Matthew 5:18-19, every word, letter and part of a letter in Scripture came from God.*