

The Historical Accuracy of Holy Scripture

One of the main thrusts of evolutionary disbelief in the Genesis revelation of origins and early human history, is the claim that Holy Scripture is not an accurate historical document. This view is held in varying degrees by materialists, pantheists and theistic evolutionists. But it is a false view. Holy Scripture is a record of Divine history, an historical record of the Almighty's relationship to man. This relationship, whether directly, through the life, death and resurrection of Our Blessed Lord and the miracles revealed throughout the Bible, or indirectly, through man's worship, obedience or revolt against Him, has consequently left many physical proofs that can be investigated to some degree by the natural sciences. In the same way that human origins, the Deluge, and perhaps the division of the Earth in Peleg's day, have left external evidences in the genetic construction of life and in the rock record, so too have other historical events mentioned in the Bible left their external evidence. Whilst for the Christian, the sacred word of Holy Scripture is all that we need to believe because we have already received the supernatural gift of Faith, these matters can, and should, be investigated in order to refute those who wish to destroy belief in Our Blessed Lord and His Holy Church, and to prove the truth of Holy Scripture to the mass of non-believers and the lukewarm.

The testimony of history, however, does not solely rely on Holy Scripture to prove the historical accuracy of Biblical narratives. Secular historical texts, such as those written by Flavius Josephus, provide us with the contemporary confirmation of knowledge about Biblical times that we would not otherwise possess. Indeed, Professor G. R. Habermas, debating the notable champion of atheism, Professor Anthony Flew, wrote in the 1987 book, 'Did Jesus Rise From the Dead?' that more than "...one hundred facts, beliefs and teachings from the life of Christ and early Christendom" are mentioned by eighteen non-Christian sources within 110 years of the Crucifixion. The book also says that these sources "mention almost every major detail of Jesus' life, including miracles, the Resurrection, and His claims to deity." This type of hard evidence that supports the truth of Scripture, is in fact becoming so overwhelming that the Faithful should learn at least something of it, in order to help people with the process of conversion. Professor Flew recently shocked the world of culpable disbelief by stating that science had proven to him that even the simplest cell is so complex that he could no longer consider that it had happened by chance and that it must have been designed that way.

Professional archaeology, which is a relatively new scientific discipline, has made enormous strides in the past few decades in proving, willingly or not, that what the Bible says is very precise in terms of its historic accuracy. Archaeologist Nelson Gluek stated in his book, 'Rivers in the Desert' that:

"...it may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a single biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline, or exact detail, historical statements in the Bible."

Critics used to claim that the Biblical reference to the Hittite empire was wrong, and therefore Holy Scripture could not be Divinely Inspired, because no knowledge of the Hittites had been independently confirmed at that time. Then, one hundred years ago, archaeologists discovered not only the Hittite capital, but that it was in fact the center of a vast and prominent culture for more than 500 years. It was such a powerful empire that it could compel mighty Egypt to trade and peace treaties.

It was even argued at one time that there was no such place as Nazareth in the era of Our Blessed Lord until archaeology proved the skeptics wrong once more. The list of discoveries that confirm the Biblical record is almost endless: Sodom and Gomorrah, with charred roofs covered in several feet of ash; the Walls of Jericho that collapsed in an outward direction, the city covered in a thick layer of soot; the historical existence of Caiphas and Pontius Pilate; the Gospel descriptions of the rent Temple and details of Our Blessed Savior's Crucifixion. Sir William Ramsay, who is considered to be one of the most eminent archaeologists of all time, demonstrated that St. Luke was extremely precise in regard to the 32 countries, 54 cities and 9 islands that he referred to.

Just recently, an enormously important new discovery was unearthed by archaeologist Dr. Eilat Mazar. Dr. Mazar, herself the granddaughter of a notable archaeologist, carefully studied Biblical texts and they led her to what is almost certainly the site of King David's palace. King David is so important in Biblical literature that secular commentators had found it inconceivable that he could have existed without any historic trace of his existence being uncovered. The Hittite syndrome once again!

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eilat_Mazar

The discovery of King David's palace is yet another tremendously important scientific proof that Holy Scripture is the most accurate historical document that mankind possesses. If the historical evidence is

so overwhelming and precise, then scholars should confidently presume its reliability and not so readily scoff at the claim of Divine Inspiration. In addition, the presumption of historic reliability should extend to the early chapters of the book of Genesis as well.

The importance of Holy Scripture, of course, is not the confirmation of empirical proofs relating to its accuracy in the realms of science or history. It is the fact of its Divine Revelation that must be acknowledged and acted upon. For those of us who possess the supernatural gift of Faith, we know that it takes little more to receive this priceless gift than the simple act of humbling ourselves, and our worldly pride, before Our Blessed Lord in the tabernacle, and asking Him with for that grace with sincerity.

We could also mention the numerous miracles that have been vigorously tested, and their Divine mystery confirmed by science. The consecrated host of Lanciano, Italy, is a good example. Science confirms that the Sacred Host consists of human heart tissue. And furthermore, the blood group has been analyzed to be the same as that belonging to the Holy Shroud. In the eighth century, a monk of the Order of St. Basil had a momentary doubt about transubstantiation during the consecration of the host. A few moments later the stunned monk realized that the Sacred Host had physically changed its appearance before his very eyes. For the past twelve hundred years Our Blessed Lord's flesh has not decayed, and it has remained under its true appearance, for all to witness, to this very day.

www.zenit.org/english/visualizza.phtml?sid=70440 www.therealpresence.org/eucharst/mir/lanciano.html

But perhaps the most striking and, having recently celebrated Easter Sunday, the most edifying, is the holy burial cloth of Jesus, the famous Shroud of Turin. Science has indicated the truth of the naturally unexplainable image of Christ again and again. Although some scientists mistakenly claim, honestly or dishonestly, to have disproved its miraculous existence, science cannot explain the Holy Shroud by natural cause or process. Perhaps those who claim the superiority of science over Faith should show a little more consistency in this matter. After all, we are being continually told that, "we must go where the evidence leads." www.newgeology.us/presentation24.html

by Michael Fishwick