Is the Bible as God’s Word Trustworthy: Historical Accuracy OT?

Zanesville, OH | December 23, 2018 | Sermon Notes

**Foundational Scripture:** 1 Thess. 2:13

**Intro**:

* Can we trust that the Old Testament stories, its numerous accounts related to God and His people, the prophets and the kings are historically accurate? The evidence that we (mankind) have collected over the years is overwhelming and it says: **YES WE CAN!**

**The External Evidence**

1. **Historical Accuracy: Archaeological Evidence**
	1. **Old Testament**
		1. **Hittite Civilization non-existent?**(Gen 23:10; 25:9; 49:29-30; Josh. 3:10; 2. Sam. 11:3, 6). There are more than 50 references in the Old Testament scriptures to a people called the Hittites. These are those who descended from Heth (Gen. 10:15; 23:3).
		2. For centuries, there was no evidence in history (outside the bible) that the Hittites existed; thus, scholars and skeptics rejected the bible’s affirmation of these people and called it a fabrication.
		3. In the late 19th to early 20th century, German archaeologist Hugo Winckler performed excavations at Boğazkale (Black sea region of Turkey, Northern Turkey) along with Ottoman archaeologist Theodore Makridi.
		4. From 1906-1912, they were able to find remarkable amounts of evidence not only proving the existence of the Hittite civilization but that it was also a major empire (2 Kings 7:6) dating back to the 14th and 13th centuries BC.
		5. They were able to excavate the capital of the Hittite empire (Hattusa) and they also found thousands of hardened clay tablets with Akkadian cuneiform inscriptions citing their history and practices.
		6. *“The Museum of Anatolian Civilizations in Ankara, Turkey houses a magnificent collection of Hittite artifacts”* (Mauldin, *Truth Magazine 2014*).
		7. **Tel Dan Stele.** (1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings, 1&2 Chronicles). Much like our previous example, for centuries there was no evidence outside the bible to support David being a historical figure of the bible.
		8. Many scholars and skeptics believed that as a result of a lack of evidence David didn’t exist. *“…David was either a shadowy, perhaps mythical, ancestor or a literary creation of later biblical authors and editors”* (Mykytiuk, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, March/April 2014).
		9. However, in 1993, an excavation expedition led by Israeli archaeologist Avraham Biran discovered a stele in northern Israel with an inscription on it which mentioned the *“House of David.”*
		10. The stele is believed to be a victory monument which commemorates the victory of an Aramean King over Kings of Israel and Judah. While we don’t know exactly which Kings these are, it would seem to fit well with the story of Hazael defeating Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah (2 Kings 8:28-29; 9:14-28).
		11. The discovery of the Tel Dan Stele not only proves David’s rule as King, but it also gives us a direct reference to as many as 8 different Kings of Israel, Judah and Aram.
		12. **Belshazzar King of Babylon?** (Daniel 5).The book of Daniel is a skeptic’s paradise in terms of the number of stories which “cannot” be corroborated with historical evidence or others say the bible simply does not know what it’s talking about.
		13. One such case is that of Belshazzar. He is the famous King of Babylon remembered by biblical students for the daunting scene of the disembodied hand writing on the wall. During his “reign” the Kingdom of Babylon falls to the Medes and Persians.
		14. The apparent problem, however, is there is no record in history of Belshazzar being the last King of Babylon when it falls. Rather, it is well documented that Nabonidus was the final King.
		15. Concerning this dilemma, Ernest Lucas writes: *“He is not mentioned in any extant classical sources. There seemed no place for him among the kings of Babylon, since Nabonidus was known to be the king at the time Babylon fell to Cyrus. This led to some doubt as to his existence as a historical person. In 1854 some inscribed, barrel-shaped cylinders were found at the corners of the temple of the moon-god Sin in Ur. They recorded the repair work Nabonidus had done on the temple, and ended with a prayer for Bel-sarra-usur (Belshazzar), son and heir of the king. Since then, a considerable number of references to him have come to light in cuneiform sources”* (Lucas, *AOTC*).

**The Evidence Shows:**

1. The Old Testament accounts is both true and historically accurate.
2. The Old Testament can most certainly be trusted as the word of God!

**Sources:**

Lucas, Ernest. *Apollos Old Testament Commentary: Daniel.* Downers Grove, MI: InterVarsity Press, 2002.

Mauldin, L. (n.d.). Why Should I Believe the Bible? Its Historical Accuracy. *Truth Magazine*, *58*(10), 20-22.

Mykytiuk, L. (n.d.). Archaeology Confirms 50 Real People in the Bible. *Biblical Archaeology Review*, *67*(2).