

The Reliability of the Bible, Inerrancy and Where we got our Bible. What are the flaws in the DaVinci Code Movie?

I was talking to a very earnest young man one day. And I was explaining why I was a Christian. During the conversation he said this. He said, the problem I have with trusting the Bible is that it is a translation of a translation of a translation; it's so full of inaccuracies and contradictions that I just can't trust it.

This brings up a very very important point.

Is the Bible full of inaccuracies and contradictions?

Has the Bible been translated so many times that what we read today is nowhere close to what the original authors wrote?

There are many many ideas about the Bible floating around, in fact at one point when I was talking to a ultra fanatic feminist who seemed to hate Christians, she said in effect: The words of Jesus have been so twisted right from the beginning. I believe he was a good man. I believe he was a holy man, but they've twisted what he said so much, and then the King James Translators took what he said and twisted it to make it very Male Chauvinistic. I don't believe that God ever says that he is a male. I don't believe God would do such a thing. That's something that King James added because King James was a Male Chauvinist Pig.

Now in both cases the people I was talking to had made some very fundamental errors. Their understanding of the translations of the Bible was completely incorrect. Their understandings of the origin of the Bible was incorrect. But you know what's worse. A lot of Christian's understanding of the Bible is similar. Not very many of us know the origins of the Bible or of the origin of our translations of it. Of course this conversation also shows a danger that we as Christians have. If we ever say anything like: I don't care what these verses say, I can't believe that God is really like that. We are doing exactly the same as my feminist acquaintance. We are saying, hey we know better who God is.

Now when we talk about Bible Accuracy there are a few issues to consider.

1. Was it written by whom ever claimed to write it? E.g. a prophet or an apostle or Moses. Or did it come about as legends.
2. Was it corrupted over time?
3. Were the people who wrote it telling the truth when they wrote it?

So today we will cover the following mainly for the New Testament because of time, but we will talk briefly about two Old Testament issues.

Today's Goals:

1. The manuscripts of the NT, where they are from, how many are there.
2. Explain the accuracy of the NT based on the manuscripts.
3. Explain how the translations of the Bible were/are made.
4. How do we know the NT is not a bunch of Legends?
5. Provide brief overview of how the Canons were created. How did they decide what went into the NT?

6. The DaVinci Code: Has the Church been lying to us all these years?
7. The Old Testament: Where did it come from, can it be trusted?

This list by the way is in no way exhaustive. You can spend your entire life working on just the above issues and still not be done, and there are many many more issues.

Plus, for every defense I give you, some skeptic will contradict it with a new twist and we have to study quite a bit to cover all the twists and defend that new twist. Why because it's easy to make a claim, but hard to defend one. But don't be disheartened. God is Sovereign and if He is God, He'll defend His own word if he's real. The key is to look for the truth and don't accept partial information or feelings. Remember if God isn't real or Jesus is not God and didn't die and rise from the dead, you aren't doing anyone any favors believing a lie.

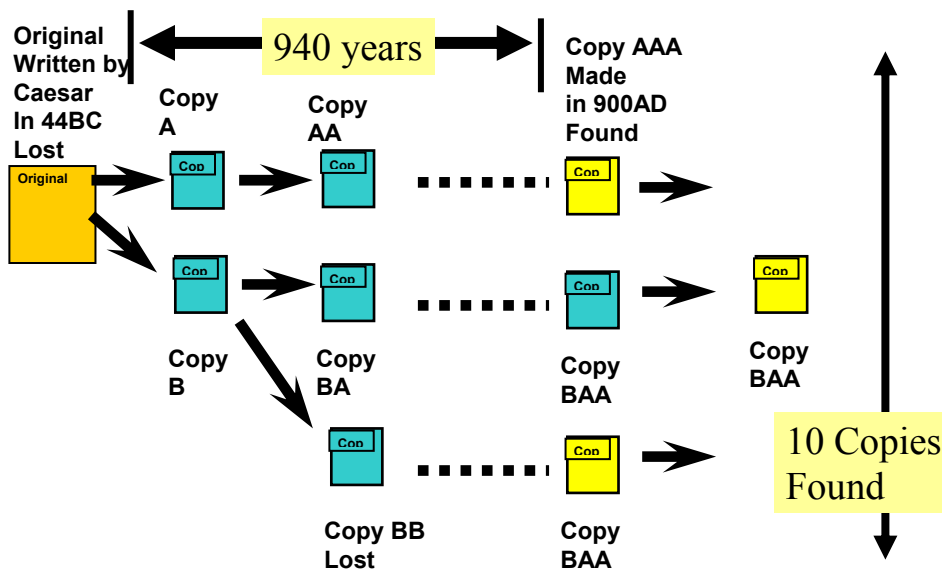
1. The Manuscripts of the NT.

The first question to ask is "How did we get the New Testament? And how did it get to us over the ages?" Well, before we start that you should know that many many years ago, Caesar wrote a historical account.

AUTHOR/ WORK	WHEN WRITTEN	EARLIEST COPY/FRAG FOUND	TIME SPAN FROM ORIG TO COPY	NO OF COPIES/ FRAGMENTS
Caesar	100-44 BC	900 AD	940 yrs	10
Plato	427-347 BC	900 AD	1200 yrs	20
Herodotus	480-425 BC	900 AD	1300 yrs	8
Aristotle	384-322 BC	1100 AD	1400 yrs	49
New Testament	60-100 AD	_____	_____	—

It was called The Gallic Wars. It was written in about 44 BC. Now, we never found the original manuscript that Julius Caesar wrote, but people had made copies of that original manuscript and distributed it and years later we found some of those copies. The earliest fragment of those copies we have found was of a copy that had been made in 900 AD. That was 940 years after the original was written.

Caesar's Gallic Wars



That means, Caesar wrote this thing in 44 BC, over the years people made copies, but they were all lost, then 940 years later someone made a copy of a copy and that's the one we found.

And over the years we've found 10 fragments of other copies of Caesar's Gallic Wars.

Now, nobody doubts the accuracy or the authenticity of The Gallic Wars! Of course they think Caesar was biased in what he says but they don't doubt that the things happened.

Plato wrote a historical account in 347 BC. Again many people made copies of it. We never found the original but we did find fragments of some of the copies.

The first copy we have is from 900 AD, about 1200 years after the original was written, 20 copies or fragments were found.

Aristotle wrote some stuff in 322 BC we found 49 copies.

But nobody doubts the historical accounts that Plato and Aristotle talk about.

Now let's talk about the Bible. It was written between 40-100 AD, the earliest copy or fragment of the Bible was found in ---125 AD, that's only 45 years after the original were written. The earliest NT fragment is from John's gospel; it was written in about 80 AD and copied in about 125 AD, no more than forty-five years after the gospel was originally written.

Now you may ask - how many copies of the entire Bible, or fragments of copies have we found over the years? Good question, the answer is 24-----thousand 'copies' and fragments.

No you didn't hear wrong, I said 24,000 copies. 24,000 copies. And every one of those 24,000 copies can be seen (except perhaps for the few that are kept at the Vatican), ..the rest can be seen even today in the museums around the world. About 5000 of them were in the original Greek and the rest in languages ranging from Ethiopic to Frankish.

But a subject matter error changes the meaning of the passage.

These subject matter errors were errors made by the person copying the document by hand, usually they were spelling errors that mutated into similar words or missing lines or sections. Or someone had added their own clarification that accidentally got included in the text. So as I said we've found about 1% subject matter differences between all the 24,000 manuscripts. All in all of 20,000 lines in the NT each of about 10 words (200,000 words) and of all these there are only 400 words are in question. Which means that 1% is really an exaggeration because $400/200,000 = 0.02\%$

But, we do need to address even these 400 word differences.

What were they?

Well I'm going to show you one of them right now. Are you prepared for your theology to be rocked? Turn to Matthew 19:29. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother¹ or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.

Your Bible tells you these differences so you know what's going on. It's not hidden. It's not some deep dark secret. Now does your Bible have a little footnote right above the word "mother¹". What does the footnote say? It says: Some mss mother or wife. That means that some of the many manuscripts we've found don't say mother there but say wife there. Did your world get rocked, did your theology change? Not at all. You see this word doesn't really change the theology of the Bible one bit does it, but all these changes are documented for you to know, so nothing is hidden.

Mark 16:v9-19 is a similar passage, except in this case, this passage is not in some of the earlier manuscripts. And while this portion gives some specifics about the resurrection, verses 1-8 proclaim the resurrection in no uncertain terms. So again the Gospel and the Theology of the Bible never changes.

So we can be assured and we should realize that in all of that the Fundamental Message of the Old and New Testaments and the Gospel has never changed a bit.

And in all the errors there are no errors that even remotely shed doubt on the main issues: The death, resurrection, and Divinity of Jesus Christ our Lord, nor is there any confusion as to the purpose of his death and resurrection, or of the basic nature of God.

There is no other religion in the world that can match this sort of scrutiny or has been this stable.

If you look at Buddhism as an example, as it moved from India where it originated to China, Vietnam and so on, it absorbed much of the local religions, it mutated and changed over time to survive the different cultures it was been taken to.

Buddha mutated from just a wise man into a pseudo god where people pray to him, this is very similar to many other religions. Where overtime the religion has evolved and changed. Sometimes I hear this from Americans. They say “well Christianity needs to evolve to stay with the times”. My response to that is: How can it? First of all it’s a Religion of the Book. And the book is not mutating.

Second, morals don’t change. If it was immoral for me to kill you on the spot for fun 10,000 years ago, it’s still immoral for me to kill you on the spot for fun today.

Third, if God is eternal and timeless, 1000 years to him is like a blink to you. Are you seriously suggesting that God is going to change over a mere blink of time?

You see all the other religion that are not of the book have evolved, mutated and changed. But the basic nature of God and Jesus in Christianity has NOT changed in the centuries that Christianity has been around and in the eons that Judaism has been around.

But we can even go a step further to verify that the Bible we have today is accurate, and reflects what the original author wrote. You see not only was the Gospel message and the Bible copied in the original languages, but it was also translated into various other languages. For instance Syriac and Latin and Arabic. And what is just as important, is that the Gospel message in those languages still maintain the basic message of the Gospel, the life, death and resurrection of Jesus for the Salvation of mankind from their sins. The Gospel didn’t change.

But what is more impressive is that the Bible has more documentation of it than of any other book. You see the Bible also has the privilege of being the most quoted document in the entire history of man. You see when your Pastor or a priest or someone writes a sermon they often will quote the Bible. And the early church Fathers were quite quote happy.

Why is this important? Well it’s important because even if you didn’t have the Bible but knew the framework of it, you could reconstruct almost 99+% of the Bible just from the quotations in sermons and writings of the early church fathers.

Writer	Gospels	Acts	Pauline	General	Revelation	Totals
Justin Martyr	268	10	43	6	3	330
Irenaeus	1,038	194	499	23	65	1,819
Clement (Alex)	1,107	44	1,127	207	11	2,406
Origen	9,231	349	7,778	399	165	17,992
Tertullian	3,822	502	2,609	120	205	7,258
Hippolytus	734	42	387	27	188	1,378
Eusebius	3,258	211	1,592	88	27	5,176
Grand Totals	19,368	1,352	14,035	870	664	36,289

Let me explain that again.

You see if you went through all the old documents of the Church leaders and the sermons prior to the 3rd Century and you just started reassembling the Bible from that, **you'd be able to reconstruct all but 11 verses of the entire New Testament.**

Now of course many of these verses are paraphrases, but that is still an acknowledgment of their existence and in many cases of their accuracy. (pg. 51 Evidence that Demands a Verdict, Josh McDowell).

And here's what is most important. All those match the manuscripts which we have. And secondly all the references to Jesus as God and Jesus as having risen from the dead also match. So we know that the idea of Jesus being God is not new and dates back to the early church from the beginning. In fact we even have quotes from Pliny a Roman who was going around hunting and killing Christians in the First century who talks about the Christians who were singing Hymns to Jesus as to a God

Pliny the Younger governor of Pontus/Bithynia from 111-113 AD.

Letters 10.96-97

“They asserted, however, that the sum and substance of their fault or error had been that they were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and **sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god**, and to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, but not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, not falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so.”

In addition remember those 24,000 manuscripts well some of them were translations into other languages (remember it was originally written in Greek).

Translations of the Greek into other languages that we've found:

Latin Vulgate	10000 plus
Ethiopic	2000 plus
Slavic	4101
Armenian	2587
Syriac Pashetta	350
Boharic	100
Arabic	75
Gothic	7
Sogdian	3
Old Syriac	2
Persian	2
Frankish	1

Let briefly look at the Greek Documents we found as well

Greek Documents found

Greek Uncials	267
Greek Minuscules	2764
Greek Lectionaries	2143
Greek Papyri	88
Recent finds of Greek documents	47
Total of just Greek documents	5309

And remember these all match within 0.2% in meaning.

What is fascinating is that there is more doubt about some of the passages of Shakespeare's plays than are there doubts of the New Testament. (Evidence that Demands a Verdict pg. 19). And this makes sense doesn't it, since various producers may have edited the plays to fit the actor's personality etc.

So in summary for this section: Here are the reasons why we need not doubt the Bible Today (why we know it matches the Author's original writings)

1. Copies dating back to within 25 years of the original
2. Copies spread around the world over the centuries, these documents match 99%.
3. 1% differences are minor and not theology or resurrection differences.
4. 24,000 copies and manuscripts from around the world and all available today
5. Most quoted document in the ancient church, we can recreate the Bible from the quotes alone
6. Translated into many many other languages, can be used to verify the original words

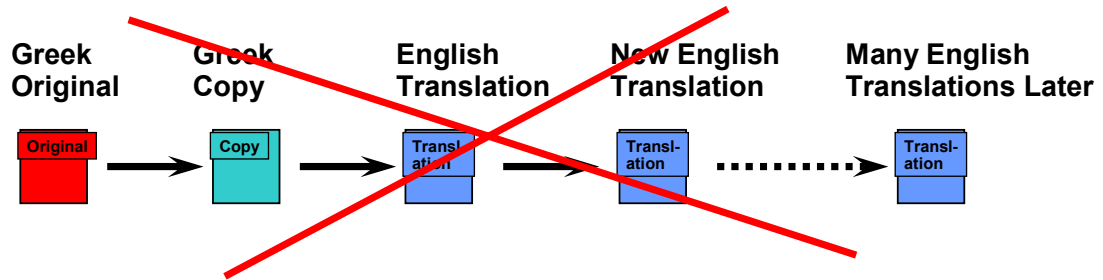
In addition this ALSO explains why the early church fathers could not have suppressed information they didn't like. Because the Church had spread throughout the known world, and those manuscripts that oppose what we know would turn up dating to the same time or older than the documents we have. Plus why would the Romans validate the belief of Jesus as God? Even the enemies of the Church validate their beliefs.

3. The translation process of the Bible

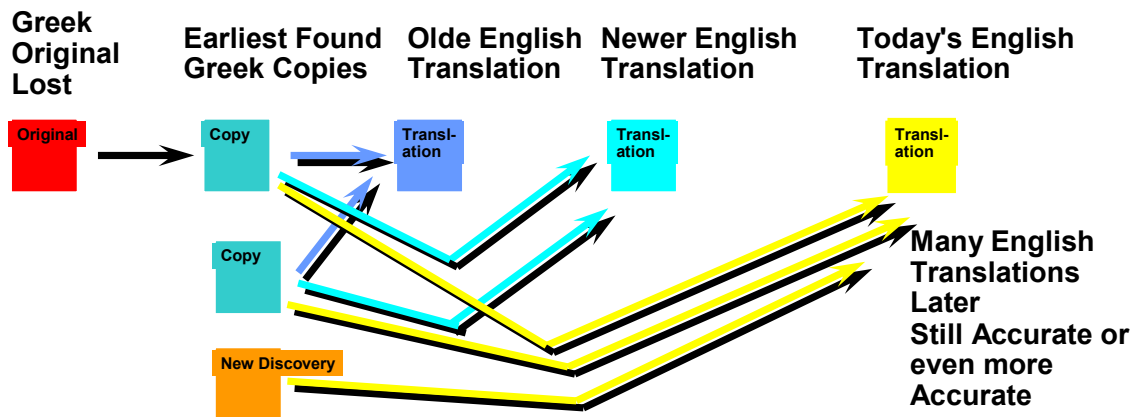
Now if you recall the feminist I'd been talking with said the Bible had been translated so many times that we were missing the real meaning. The theory being that it was first written in Greek or Hebrew and then translated to Olde English and then to one version of English and then another. And each time along the way the people who translated it added their own biases and modified it to suit their own intentions.

But the truth of the matter is patently obvious. I mean if you had all these original copies in the original Greek or Hebrew lying about, why on earth would you mess around with someone else's translation. And that is exactly what we have today. Remember all those 24,000 fragments and full copies, you see our latest translations are not a translation of a translation, but a translation from these original manuscripts.

Common Concept of Translations



Truth of the Translations



And as the years go by, we find more and more fragments and copies, and as we find more, we are able to verify that our translations are more accurate.

Plus when we have a difference in the manuscripts as I showed you before they are marked clearly with a footnote.

4. How do we know the NT is not a bunch of Legends?

Couldn't the stories about Jesus be a myth that was invented over a period of time? Well the answer is no. Because

"..tests show that even two generations is too short to allow legendary tendencies to wipe out the hard core of historical facts."

William Lane Craig, The Son Rises, P. 101

That would be like everyone believing today that Hitler had supernatural powers and could kill people with his stare. Even 70 years after the event this hasn't happened.

Remember it's not the date from now to when it happened, it's the date from when it was written down to when it happened that counts. And that was not more than 30 years if not less.

5. The Canon: How did they decide what went into the Bible?¹

Who decided which books belong in the Bible?

Some people say that the Bible was put together by a bunch of men who wanted to oppress the ignorant peasants. They are close, it **was** put together by a bunch of men. But not to oppress anyone.

So how did the New Testament get put together and if it was put together by a bunch of men, what guarantee is there that they picked the right books

The Books included in the Bible were decided over the years but two major councils played a major role of Canonizing the New Testament, these were (not in AD325 as Dan Brown claims) but:

1. The Council of Hippo (North Africa) in AD 393 they approved a list of OT and NT Canon (same as later Trent) and
2. The Council of Carthage (North Africa) in AD 397 similarly approved the same list of OT and NT Canon (same as later Trent).

In both of these councils one of the key people was a priest named Augustine. Remember that, because Augustine plays a major role in a lot of our theology. And you will run into his name again in life.

Meanwhile you'll notice that it seems that before AD 393 there was no New Testament Bible. In a sense yes. So we can quite clearly see that you don't need to believe the Bible as a set of books is the word of God to be saved. You need to know the Gospel of Salvation to be saved because that was passed by word of mouth. However having said that I've found that those who reject the Bible as the word of God tend to quickly get mired into heresies and drift away from the truth over time, sometimes generations. So while believing the Bible is the inerrant word of God is not necessary to be saved, but remember not believing it can lead you into heresy and into creating your own religion which would be invalid.

So what did we have before AD 393? And could the stuff in the Bible be skewed by people with an Agenda?

What a lot of people forget is that unlike all other religions with one exception (remind me to tell you what that religion is), Christianity is completely and fully documented? Why? Because everyone was giving sermons and writing letters and sending copies of letters to everyone and their uncle.

¹ From:http://www.forerunner.com/forerunner/X0017_How.html

They had council meetings. For instance in 51AD there was the Council of Jerusalem. Where Peter and Paul and James and probably Thomas and any other surviving apostles all are present including many of the of the folks who saw Jesus physically after he rose. Imagine what this meeting would have been if some people were claiming they'd actually seen Jesus alive and others were saying that it was just an illusion they had, whilst others were saying..."Hey, it's just about the good sayings he taught us."

Then we have what we call apostolic succession. You see there are only about 6 people between the time of the Gospel Writers and 393 AD when the Bible is fixed. Remember during this time, all that is needed is someone to say: Yes these are the principles that the church has passed on thru us, and this is what we believe. It's not some deep dark legend passed on over the eons.

Some of these dates are tentative but most are probably in the ball park.

	Birth	Conversion or writings	death	
Jesus	-4	-4	30	
Paul	2	33	62	
Peter	-15	27	67	
John the apostle	10	27	100	*0
Clement of Rome		81	101	Disciple of Peter 4th Bishop of the Church, 81 is when he wrote so he was converted before this Estimated conversion in AD60 since he was Bishop of Antioch for 40 years
Ignatius	35	60	110	
Papias	60		132	Disciple of John and Polycarp
Polycarp	69		155	*1 Disciple of John
Justin Martyr	100	130	163	
Theophilus	120		190	Bishop of Antioch *2 estimated conversion Bishop by
Irenaeus	115	167	202	177
Clement of Alexandria	150		215	
Tertullian	155	197	225	Became a montanist in 207
Hyppolytus	170	199	236	*3
Cyprian	202	245	258	
Gregory Thaumaturgus	213	233	270	*4
Victorinus of Pettau	250	270	304	*5
GREAT PERSECUTION Around				

300AD

Council of Nicea			325	
Constantine	272	312	337	
Eusebius	250	296	340	*6 History project started around
Athanasius	297		373	296. He is the "great Historian"
Augustine	354	387	430	
Marcion				Though he was excommunicated in 144 for rejecting Old testament and
Edict of Milan	313			most of the New Testament...tells us that the NT was around by 144 AD
Council of Hippo	393			Gave Christians equal rights
				NT canonized

Around 150 AD or so, a Christian writer, Justin Martyr, stated that on Sundays in the Christian worship assemblies the "memoirs of the apostles" were read together with the "writings of the prophets." – which would be the Old Testament. So we know that not long after the last of the apostles had lost their lives, the New Testament writings were being read generally among the churches. And you should remember that this didn't happen in some obscure way. Most of the churches consisted of disciples of the Apostles. And you should also remember that the church was being tremendously persecuted at this time. It wasn't a political movement, it wasn't a way to oppress people because they *were* the oppressed.

But the disciples of Paul carefully gathered his letters into a single whole; next came a collection of the Four Gospels gathered by the disciples of the original 12 apostles and so on, and then all the others books followed. But because these collections were made at different times and places, the contents of the various collections were not always the same. So at first not all of the New Testament books were at first received without hesitation. More books were excluded than included.

By 200 AD Origen names all of the New Testament books, but says that Hebrews, James, II and III John, and Jude were questioned by some.

Eusebius of the fourth century likewise names all of the New Testament books. He says, however, that some books James, II Peter, II and III John, and Jude were suspected, but that they were accepted by the majority. Suspect doesn't mean they were bad, it just means that they were still validating its authenticity and its content. In 367 AD Athanasius of Alexandria published a list of 27 New Testament books which were the books accepted during his time, and these are the same twenty-seven which are recognized today.

So finally, when the Councils met, in AD 393 and 397 they didn't really have much work to do. They didn't meet to decide what went into the Canon, but rather they came together to ratify what was ALREADY being used around the world and to test each of the documents. So they

never decided what was in the Canon, they just ratified what was ALREADY being used by the Churches, so they could prevent any new forgeries coming in like the Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of Philip or Mary or Judas.

So what happened to the books they didn't think went into the Canon. i.e. when Churches were found to be using books that had no history or could not be traced back....Did they burn them?

No actually what they did was compile it all and put it together as the Apocrypha and keep it with the other books so you could check it out for yourself and decide for your self, in fact in most Catholic Bibles still have the Apocrypha in them. Most Protestants don't use them so they don't have them. But you can always buy them at the book stores.

But what about the new gospels? These were not even around during the councils so they were unknown and if they were unknown that means that nobody was using them and there is definitely a problem with their authenticity.

Now here's another issue. If a new book shows up e.g. a John IV, written by John. Should it be part of the NT? No, not at all. Because if John had written it, but the Churches had not been using it and Polycarp and all the other disciples of the disciples had not seen fit to consider it important enough to be used in churches then it was never part of the NT and we don't need to worry about it.

How did they test each of the books and if they belonged in the New Testament? The Principles for Discovering Canonicity

They had 5 basic criteria.

The Principles for Discovering Canonicity of the New Testament

1. Is the book authoritative? Does it claim to be of God?
2. Is it prophetic? Was it written by a servant of God? Can they trace it to one of the original Apostles?
3. Is it authentic? Does it tell the truth about God, man, etc.? When you test it does it test out correct about human nature etc?
4. Is the book dynamic? Does it possess life transforming power?
5. Is this book received or accepted by the people for whom it was originally written? Is it recognized as being from God? For instance when Paul wrote the Book of Romans, to the Romans, did the Romans think it was from Paul? Did they accept it? Similarly for the book of Corinthians, Ephesians, etc.

So again, the council didn't really pick and choose the books, but rather studied the books that were already accepted by the majority of churches and merely ratified them and then made sure no fakes could enter into the Canon.

This is also by the way why vague books like the Gospel According to Thomas never made it into the Canon.

6. The DaVinci Code: Has the Church been lying to us all these years.

In his Book The DaVinci code and the movie that will come out in the next few days. If you watch the movie or read the book you will hear them make these claims:

1. In 325 AD at the Council of Nicaea the Church voted to see if they would consider Jesus a God or not and they decided that he would be God by just a few votes.
2. The Dead Sea scrolls showed that Jesus was just a man. Not God (in the book only)
3. Gnosticism shows that Jesus was just a man not God
4. All the original books of the Bible that did not agree with the Church were collected and burned (in the book only).
5. There are many lost books of the Bible e.g. the Gospel of Judas and these tell the untold REAL story of Jesus.
6. Jesus married Mary and had a child

OK Let's answer these.

1. In AD325 at the Council of Nicaea the Church voted to see if they would consider Jesus a God or not and they decided that he would be God by just a few votes. **THIS IS FALSE**

THE FACTS:

Long before the Council of Nicaea in AD325 the Church fathers were already teaching that Jesus was God e.g. Ignatius, Justin Martyr and Irenaeus in AD110.

At the Council of Nicaea the vote was NOT close it was 318 to 2. They had called the Council specifically because those 2 people were causing problems claiming Jesus was NOT God and they needed to stop the **heresy**.

2. The Dead Sea scrolls said that Jesus was just a man. Not God – **THIS IS FALSE**

THE FACTS:

The Dead Sea Scrolls never mention Jesus because they all date to almost 200 years before the Birth of Christ. In fact the only mention it would have was the Prophecy of Isaiah foretelling Emanuel the Almighty GOD

3. Gnosticism shows that Jesus was just a man not God. **THIS IS FALSE**

THE FACTS

Gnosticism is a heresy but what is funny is that Gnosticism claims Jesus was fully spirit and not man in any way. In Gnosticism they think anything physical is evil. So Dan Brown can't even get the Gnostics on his side.

4. All the original books of the Bible that did not agree with the Church were collected and burned: **THIS IS A LIE**

THE FACTS

Just 20 short years before the council of Nicaea, the Christians were being tortured and hunted and killed. Many emperors including Diocletian in AD303 and Maximian in AD304 tried to eradicate their writings and could not do it. Imagine going all the way from Europe to Asia to Africa on a Camel to find and burn and replace bible manuscripts and do you think anyone would let you do that? It's not possible.

5. There are many lost books of the Bible e.g. the Gospel of Judas and these tell the untold REAL story of Jesus. THIS IS FALSE

THE FACTS

Many of the books that show up nowadays were written before the 2nd century so we KNOW it was not written by the Apostles.

Some of the Books were around before and the Church said they didn't pass the tests we mentioned before and were very public about it. Nothing hidden here.

6. Jesus married Mary and had a child: THIS IS MADE UP

THE FACTS

The Gospel of Philip

Is the Gospel of Philip Reliable?

Wesley W. Isenberg author of *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, p. 141 says:

“Because of the contents, the eccentric arrangement, and the literary types exhibited, it is likely that *The Gospel of Philip* is a collection of excerpts mainly from a Christian Gnostic sacramental catechesis.In these and other ways *The Gospel of Philip* resembles the orthodox catechisms from the **second through fourth centuries.**”

So we know that The Gospel of Philip doesn't even date as far back as the rest of the Gospel manuscripts and could not have been written by the real Philip.

Except about Mary from the Gospel of Philip

[words in these brackets are missing from the manuscripts and what Dan Brown claims should be there]

The wisdom which (humans) call barren is herself the Mother of the Angels. And the Companion of the [...Lord...] is Mariam the Magdalene. The [...Lord...] Mariam more than [...the other...] Disciples, [...the Lord...] kissed her often on her [...lips...]. The other [...Disciples...] saw his love for Mariam, they say to him: Why do thou love [...her...] more than all of us? The Savior replied, he says to them: Why do I not love you as [...much...] her? (...) a blind (...) and one who sees are both in the dark, they do not differ from one another. When the light comes, then he who sees shall behold the light, and he who is blinded shall remain in the darkness.

Issues with this:

1. If the Gospel of Philip was correct and Jesus was married, when the disciples asked: They said to him "Why do you love her more than all of us?" The Savior answered and said to them, "Why do I not love you like her? Then why didn't he go on to say: Because she's my wife!"
2. If Jesus was married why wouldn't Paul in Eph 5:25 use Jesus as the great example for Husbands and Wives? (See point 4 as well)
3. Why did Jesus ask John to take care of only his mother?
4. And if Paul was trying to hide the marriage that means there was something wrong with the marriage and with Jesus – but Paul's whole life was focused on Jesus being God and he ended up dying for that, in which case why go to your death for a fake Jesus that you yourself knew to be fake?
5. Quote from the Gospel of Philip: "As for the Wisdom who is called "the barren,...Mary Magdalene."

But if she was barren when she was with Jesus how did she have Jesus' kids years after Jesus had died?

Other Dan Brown DaVinci Code Claims and Issues

The Priory of Sion

The Book claims the Priory of Sion was a secret cult started centuries ago to defend the secret of Christ's daughter – **FALSE**

Fact: In 1996 the BBC had the founder on TV and he said:

"The Priory of Sion doesn't exist anymore. We were never involved in any activities of a political nature. It was four friends who came together to have fun. ... I haven't seen Pierre Plantard in over 20 years and I don't know what he's up to but he always had a great imagination. I don't know why people try to make such a big thing out of nothing."

André Bonhomme

The "daughter of Jesus"

The "daughter of Jesus" Sarah is known as Saint Sarah and is a Patron Saint venerated by the Roma (Gypsy) people and has an altar at **Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer** in France. But she's known as Sara-la-Kali (Sara the black).

And the Church identifies her as the servant of the two saints Mary commemorated in the town. Not the Daughter. And if she was Black does that mean Jesus was Black.

Opus Dei

In the Movie, the Opus Dei is a secret Catholic Sect who is trying to kill the guardians of the Holy Grail and kill the descendants of Jesus so that nobody ever finds out that Jesus was married and really meant to start a Feminine Mystery Cult not Christianity. Meanwhile they pray to him and others beat themselves in penance so they will "suffer" with him.

BUT let's think about this...

- a. They really know that Jesus was not God,
- b. They really know that he was just a human being with a wife and kids.

- c. They really know that he really intended to start a Feminine Mystery Cult and wasn't really God.

But if they knew he was an ordinary human being, why were they praying to him? And why did they think he wanted them to go about killing his descendants? That just doesn't make sense.

The Real Opus Dei?

Was founded in 1928 not in the 1st Century, it's not secret. Check out www.opusdei.org

Opus Dei is a Catholic institution founded by Saint Josemaría Escrivá.

Its mission is to help people turn their work and daily activities into occasions for growing closer to God, for serving others, and for improving society.

Opus Dei complements the work of local churches by offering classes, talks, retreats and pastoral care that help people develop their personal spiritual life and apostolate.

7. Are there lots of contradictions in the Bible or not?

Many times when I talk to non Christians they tell me that the Bible is full of contradictions. But when I ask them to show me the contradictions they can't. BUT don't be fooled by that. They are just not that knowledgeable. There ARE indeed quite a few things that LOOK like contradictions. The good news is that we have reasonable rational explanations for all of them. This is very normal. Whenever two or more people tell a story, it is possible to seem like they contradict each other. For instance: Let's say that I was standing by the roadside and suddenly my friend said oh my gosh. I turned around and saw a huge SUV slamming into a minivan. When the cops come to question us they ask me what happened. I say: That SUV hit the minivan.

But when they talk to my friend a day later, my friend says: Well this SUV was driving down the street when this stupid kid ran in front of it. So he swerved and hit this mini car and then hit another car.

Did we contradict each other? Did I lie, was I wrong?

Absolutely not. You see I didn't see the rest of the story. My story was correct and I reported what I saw. My friend saw a little more and he reported what he saw.

Many times when the authors of the Bible wrote what they wrote, they wrote what they saw to the best of their knowledge. It was accurate, and they are all individually accurate but until you put all the Gospels together you don't get the full picture. That is also why you should never take a verse out of the Gospel without looking at it in context of the entire book. But in the same way you should never consider a book of the Bible without looking at it in context of the Entire Bible.

Other times the Bible uses common vernacular. What that means is that they use the common terms of the time.

For instance. Let's say you worked at NASA and were a scientist. Let's say you were preparing for a Space Shuttle Launch at 0700 hours on June 4th. As you were preparing for that you may turn to the scientist next to you and say: What time does the sun rise on June 4th.

Your fellow scientist would say: The sun rises that day at 06:14 hours.

Was the scientist lying? Was the scientist wrong or stupid? Why am I asking this?

Well he's a space aeronautical scientist and works with planet movements and the lot. But does the sun really rise?

You could turn to him and say AHA gotcha. The sun doesn't rise. It stays right there in its place. The earth turns, not the sun.

But was the scientist lying, or stupid or wrong? No, he was using common vernacular, you knew what he meant and he knew what you meant. So in the same way the Bible uses the common vernacular of the time when it was written to tell us things.

So in light of that we are going to look at two simple apparent contradictions in the Bible.

First is in Matt 13 verse 31-32:

31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

32 Which indeed is the smallest of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

I was on an atheist web site recently and the guy said: Look there's a contradiction. First Jesus says the Mustard seed is the smallest of all seeds and we know there are much smaller seeds around (like the Orchid seed), second the Mustard doesn't grow into a tree it only grows into a bush. So Jesus was stupid and didn't know what he was talking about.

So how do we deal with this?

Well first of all: If you look at the actual translation of this you see that the real translation of the word used in the Greek is "Least" not smallest.

Matt 13:31-32

31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

32 Which indeed is the **least** of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

Moreover Jesus was talking to the local farmers so to them this WAS the smallest of the seeds they'd ever seen.

Secondly if you look at the type of Mustard plants found in Israel, it indeed grows into a bush almost 12 feet high. So it's the biggest of their herbs.

Here's another one: Some people have said that there are contradictions as to how many angels were at the tomb of Jesus when he rose. Here are the 4 gospel accounts by the four different authors talking about the day Jesus rose and what the women who found the grave empty saw:

1. An angel of the Lord on the stone (Matthew 28:1-2) - "Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. 2And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it."
2. A young man (Mark 16:5) - "And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe; and they were amazed."
3. Two men (Luke 24:4) - "And it happened that while they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling apparel."
4. Two angels (John 20:1-2,12) - "Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene *came early to the tomb, while it *was still dark, and *saw the stone already taken away from the tomb. 2And so she *ran and *came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and *said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him. . 12and she *beheld two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying."

But let's look at this.

There really are no real contradictions here. Each of these people was recounting what the women had told them. Each may have talked to one or more of the women.

First you notice Matthew who talks about the one Angel, never said that there weren't any other angels.

Second Mark also says there was one man on the right. Maybe at where the head was. Luke who talked to Mary the mother of Jesus.

There is no discrepancy at all. An angel of the Lord moved the stone and was sitting upon it outside (Matthew 28:2). The two men (Luke 24:4) were angels (John 20:12). Mark 16:5 presents the only potential issue and it isn't one at all. If there were two angels in the tomb, then there was at least one. This one was on the right. Therefore, we see that there was one angel outside and two on the inside of the tomb. There are also other possibilities.

There are many many solutions like this to what people think are contradictions. Again remember Christianity is a rational faith build on a logical and historical foundation.

For more answers to contradictions go to:

<http://www.christiananswers.net/menu-at1.html#contradictions>

http://www.carm.org/bible_difficulties.htm

8. What about if just the scientific stuff in the Bible is wrong, but all the spiritual stuff is correct?

Here's the problem with this. We can test the scientific stuff can't we? But we can't test the spiritual stuff. Let's say you had a friend and the friend always lied to you. One day you get a

new bike and he says: Well I just got a new bike too. You later find out that he never got a bike, he was just lying to you. Then later he says: I went to Hawaii this summer for a vacation. But then you find out he really went to Alviso for vacation. So you know he's wrong on the stuff you can trust. Then one day he comes to you and says hey my Uncle in Australia died and left me \$1M but I won't get it till I'm 21. Should you trust him? Why not? Well if you can't trust him on the things you can test, why should you trust him on the things you can't test. In the same way, if the bible is wrong on scientific things that you can trust, you shouldn't trust it on the spiritual things that you won't find out the truth about until you are dead. But this is the truth for any religion isn't it?

9. What about if just minor parts of the Bible are wrong?

Some people I know say: "Well you know above that 0.2% that is misspelled or missing, we really don't know if the rest of the Entire Bible is really and truly 100% accurate. So they say they believe most of the Bible but not all of it. Usually the part they don't believe is that Jesus claimed to be God or that we should not sin etc.

Here's the problem here. If some parts of the Bible are wrong but other parts are right, then what's the question: How do I know which parts are right and which are wrong? Who decides? Let's say that you are out on a deserted highway and your car breaks down and you are trying to fix your car. You have the car manual out, but some minor parts of it are wrong but you don't know WHICH parts, and **if** you follow the wrong parts, you will destroy your car and never get it running. How many of you think that car manual is a good manual? Obviously it's useless.

So you see it is not only critical that the Bible be true, but it is critical that all the important parts are true and if there are any errors or questions we know precisely where they are. So anyone who says they accept part of the Bible but that other parts are wrong, you should ask how do they know which part is right and which part is wrong. And "Are you sure?" Because if you aren't you could go to HELL.

10. I think the Church modified and changed the Bible to oppress people and hide what Jesus really said.

We already covered this but let's go over it again. They think the original writings and sayings of Jesus was changed by the Church. I had one person say: Well I don't think Jesus ever said he was God. I think that was added later.

Well that is an unsupportable idea; you see the Church was never one large institution. It was at least 3 separate large groups and many small ones. The church in Rome, the church in Constantinople and the Church in Africa and a whole slew of small ones. Imagine if you will the manuscripts that we found in Ethiopia and the manuscripts we found in Turkey. Do you think there was one guy who went around saying: OK churches in Ethiopia we are now going to change all your Bibles to say that Jesus is God. OK let me now travel 3000 miles by donkey to the churches in Turkey and we want you to do the same thing. Oh and we'd better make sure that we burn all the old copies so that there isn't even one stray copy way out in the wilderness of

southern Macedonia. So we know that nobody could have single handedly gone and manipulated the Bible texts. The idea that there was a vast conspiracy by the Church is silly.

11. Inerrancy and Infallibility?

Inerrancy means having no errors. If something is inerrant it has no what? Errors!

What is infallibility? Infallibility means it never fails. It's always correct. It's never wrong. They sound the same or tied very closely.

So what do we really know about the Bible.

We know it was written by the Disciples of Jesus and the Old Testament Prophets. We know they were human. We know that after they wrote the New Testament they all went on to die horrible miserable deaths claiming that what they had written and were teaching was true. But they are human aren't they? So they could have made mistakes couldn't they?

Remember what we said before: What if there are some errors in the Bible that are major and we didn't know them and they had to do with who Jesus really was and if he didn't rise from the dead? That would make the Bible pretty useless wouldn't it?

Well in 1978 a bunch of church leaders decided they needed to clarify what the Church's stance on the Bible was as to it being incorrect or correct. They also wanted to clarify what we Christians believed about the Bible. Note that this went a step further before we were talking about what we know about the Bible, now we want to clarify what we Believe about the Bible based on what we know.

These people came up with something called The Chicago Statement on Inerrancy.

If you ever want to know the official stance of the Church you need to read this statement on Inerrancy. Today we will cover only two of it's major points.

1. The Statements says that we believe that the Bible is the inerrant word of God. It contains no mistakes as it was **ORIGINALLY** written by the Apostles and Prophets.

This means that the translation you have here may have mistakes but the original written by the Apostles had no mistakes in the Original languages. This means even the copies made may have mistakes, but the originals written by the Apostles were perfect.

So does that mean all the translations are correct? No. Someone could have made a bad translation from the Greek, couldn't they? So we are **ONLY** talking about the original manuscripts as written by the Apostles.

2. They then said that you cannot separate inerrancy from infallibility. Infallible means it can never fail. Inerrant means it has no errors. Today there are people who are trying to say

that the Bible is Infallible but it is not inerrant. They are saying it can never fail, it is the word of God, but it has errors. The Chicago Statement says this is a ridiculous concept and should be rejected outright.

12. THE KJV only crowd.

Now let's talk about a cult of Christians.

Back in the 1611's during the reign of a King named James the First (note at the time he was only called James, because there was no other James, it's only after there was a James the II that they started calling him James the 1st. Anyway during his reign a group of Priests and Pastors decided that they wanted to get a translation of the Bible into English. Before that it was only available in the original languages Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic and also in the official language of the Catholic Church: Latin. Well this King was petitioned by this group of Christians and they asked him to pay for the translation of the Bible into English. He agreed and paid for some of it. Note that he did not do the translation himself and he certainly didn't write it. These Priests and leaders took the texts they had and translated from the Greek and Hebrew and Aramaic and they also used the old Septuagint (in Greek) into what was later called the King James Version or KJV. Back then not as many manuscripts of the Bible had been found. So they used the most common one called the Textus Receptus. Which means, the received text.

Over the years more earlier manuscripts were found and those 0.2 percent errors were discovered and fixed in later translations like the NASB - New American Standard Bible and NIV New International Version. (again remember none of these were on important things like who Jesus was or any of the miracles etc)

But many many years later a group of people started believing that only the original King James version was from God and anybody else who translated the Bible was evil and part of the devil's plot to ruin the Bible. These folks are so fanatic about their belief that they think that all the new translations are all done by Satan. Now ofcourse this is a very silly idea. Their main contention is that the later translations use more manuscripts and they have this idea that only King James and his translators were divinely ordained by God to translate the Bible and it's because they mainly used that one major document called the Textus Receptus.

So if you ever run into folks like this, remember while they are Christians they are like a Christian Cult. So don't buy into their nonsense. There are lots of good websites that will show you why they are wrong.

13. How about the Old Testament.

There were a bunch of other tests for the OT. But for Christians the ratification of the Old Testament is a lot easier. You see way back when the Jews had assembled the Old Testament together and a bunch of about 70 scholars had translated it into Greek. That being the language of the day. This translation was called the Septugint (for the 70).

Jesus quoted directly from the Septuagint. So for Christians once you accept and prove the validity of the New Testament and the Historical Evidence for the resurrection of Jesus we can feel comfortable that it was good enough for Jesus.

14. What is Textual Criticism and who are JEDP?

Textual Criticism is actually unsupportable in the end. A bunch of non-believers got together and decided to analyze the 5 books of Moses in the old testament. After lots of time and effort they broke up each statement in the Bible. For instance, whenever God calls himself Yahweh, they said that a guy code named J wrote that. Whenever God calls himself Elohim, a guy code named E wrote that. And so on. So their theory is that Moses did not write the first 5 books, but that 4 different authors over the years wrote separate things and over the years it was combined together to make up the 5 books of Moses. They call it the JEDP theory. The JEDP all stand for supposedly different authors who emphasized different areas in their stories. Needless to say a lot of it has been completely disproved by people like Cyrus H Bruce and others, and it is worth studying about it so you aren't stuck on it. Unfortunately we don't have time to cover it in any detail except to say that a few scholars took Moby Dick and did the same sort of evaluation on it and found that using those principles half of it was really written over 5000 years by 12 different people and not by Herman Melville.

But here's the theory so you can be ready in case you run into it:

J Yahwist

- Preference for Yahweh
- Anthropomorphic descriptions of God
- National Epic for new Davidic Kingdom
- Interest in southern tribe of Judah
- God's intentions fulfilled in reigns of David and Solomon
- Folklore

E Elohist

- Preference for Elohim
- Defends moral character of patriarchs and matriarchs
- Angels and Dreams
- Moses is of supreme importance

D Deuteronomist

- Laws couched in sermonic form
- Exhortations to ethical living
- Moses's "Last Words"
- Obedience to God's law brings blessing; disobedience brings curse
- Reminiscent of language used by prophets

P Priestly

- Interests of priesthood and ceremonial sanctity
- Precise attention to detail and order
- Ritual origins and law
- Genealogies

No dreams, no talking animals, no dream
Israel could preserve their identity through strict separation from other peoples
Goal was to help Israelites deal with the experience of the exile
Written as a theological alternative to JE

15. The OT historical accuracy.

I want to briefly talk about the Old Testament historical accuracy at this point.

Last week we talked about how Jericho can be proven to have really happened. And how the Bible is not a collection of legends but a historical document with archeological evidence. Let me read you this quote. You see it turns out that

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

Nelson Glueck, *Rivers in the Desert*, P. 31

Maybe one day we'll do more on this topic.

Link for more info: <http://www.gospelcom.net/rbc/ds/q0402/>

Our final subject is the subject of:

16. The Fulfillment of Prophecy²

The Bible is full of Prophecy that has been fulfilled. We only have time for one example, I'm hoping this will prompt you to research all the other prophecies.

The City of Tyre

The two great cities of Phoenicia were Tyre and Sidon. Ezekiel as a captive in Babylon made some very specific predictions about the seacoast metropolis of Tyre. In Ezekiel 26 and 27 the destruction of Tyre was given in detail (592-570BC)

Ezekiel 26

3 therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring many nations against you, like the sea casting up its waves.

4 They will destroy the walls of Tyre and pull down her towers; I will scrape away her rubble and make her a bare rock.

5 Out in the sea she will become a place to spread fishnets, for I have spoken, declares the Sovereign LORD. She will become plunder for the nations,

6 and her settlements on the mainland will be ravaged by the sword. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

² For detailed study: Josh McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, Here's Life Pub., Inc., San Bernardino, CA, 1989

7 "For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: From the north I am going to bring against Tyre Nebuchadnezzar [1] king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses and chariots, with horsemen and a great army.

...

12 They will plunder your wealth and loot your merchandise; they will break down your walls and demolish your fine houses and throw your stones, timber and rubble into the sea.

...

14 I will make you a bare rock, and you will become a place to spread fishnets. You will never be rebuilt, for I the LORD have spoken, declares the Sovereign LORD.

Well on schedule, Nebuchadnezzar came against Tyre in 585 BC (fulfilling vs. 26:7). The siege lasted until 573 BC. When he broke down the gates of the city he found most of the population had escaped by ship to a city they had built on an island about a half mile out into the sea.

At this time most folks probably thought the prophecy was incomplete, and incorrect because what about all that jive about fishing nets and never being rebuilt and the lot. Well in 333BC, along comes Alexander III to take over Tyre. But how was he going to get all his men across to the Island. Well he notices that the old demolished city of Tyre I is right there and decides to put the stones and dirt to use. He (fulfilling verse 26:4) built a causeway to the new city which had been built out on the island. Finally after a long siege, he destroyed the island city and cast all the debris into the sea (fulfilling 26:12). Today you can still see that great causeway there.

But wait a minute, the Bible said that many nations shall come against you. So eighteen years after Alexander's defeat of Tyre on the island, Antigonus laid siege to the city and again destroyed it. And still later the Moslems decided to attack it and occupy it for a time, and they in turn were attacked and taken over by the Crusaders. Finally the Moslems again retook the city and this time utterly destroyed the city with a vengeance, seeming to hate the very stones on which the Crusaders walked. All these "waves" of conquerors fulfilled vs 26:3.

Today if you visit the proud commercial seaport of ancient Tyre II, you will notice that it has never been rebuilt and you will notice one more thing, fishermen to spreading their nets to dry out there near the ruins. The great city has never been rebuilt (fulfilling vs 26:5 and 14), all that is there is a small fishing village. Perhaps some guy bent on trying to dispute prophecy will try and build a great city there. That would be a good experiment.

Now the chances that so many details would be fulfilled are mind numbing. Peter W. Stoner (a Christian) estimates that the possibility of all these prophecies coming true by chance are 1 in 75 Million.

Of course this is only one of the prophecies, there are many more. Read Josh McDowell's Evidence that Demands a Verdict for more.

References:

Pictures of the manuscripts <http://www.schoyencollection.com/>

