

“Lucky Guesses” found in Genesis

and

What is Incontrovertible about the History of the Bible

This was taken from Lessons 154–155 in [Genesis Lessons 101–200 HTML](#)

At this point, we have covered the first 15 chapters of Genesis, and it is quite clear that whoever wrote the book of Genesis made an incredible number of lucky guesses in this first chapter. These are things that, if you think about them, they help to confirm that the Bible is the Word of God.

There are a significant number of people who doubt that the Bible is the Word of God. To them, some old guys a long time ago, wrote this book trying to pretend that they were writing God’s Word, and they fooled a lot of people. If this indeed describes the origin of the Old Testament, then the writer (or, writers) of Genesis made some marvelously lucky guesses about the future, about theology and about science.

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The Lucky Guesses	Scripture
A sudden creation akin to the Big Bang theory, which theory was developed in the 20 th century.	Gen. 1:1
The idea of an ice age is hidden in the language of Gen. 1:2; where the Member of the Trinity who represents power and energy—the Holy Spirit—warms the surface of the earth.	Gen. 1:2
The concept of an atmosphere. God spends one entire day making the earth’s atmosphere. That there is an atmosphere and that it is dramatically significant to our lives was not known until thousands of years later (air, as being a mixture of gases, was not studied by science until the 1700’s). One of the most significant arguments of my generation—the CO ₂ in the atmosphere—is all about something that we cannot even see. Mankind, for thousands of years, took the atmosphere for granted—man literally did not know it was there—and yet, the author of Genesis 1 tells us that God took one full day to make the atmosphere. God took a full day to make something that ancient man did not know existed.	Gen. 1:6–8
The concept of the Trinity, found over 1000–3000 years before it became Christian doctrine.	Gen. 1:26 (see also, Gen. 18:1, 2, 9)
Man is made out of the same chemicals found in the ground.	Gen. 2:7 3:19

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The Lucky Guesses	Scripture
<p>In the first few chapters of the Bible, we have the most fundamental relationships and human behavior patterns defined. Work is fundamental to man, whether in innocence or in a fallen state. Even today, we have cultures which try to give primacy to vacation time and to the weekend, but people who are happiest are not those who live for the weekend, but those who have passion for their work.</p>	Gen. 2:15 3:17
<p>From the very beginning, the Bible defines and describes the singular relationship between a man and a woman, even though, throughout the ages, people try to claim this relationship is old fashioned or even dead. Nevertheless, marriage between one man and one woman continues to be the both the primary and fundamental relationship in all societies. No matter what society, the most common organization is marriage and family.</p>	Gen. 2:18
<p>The Bible speaks of the concept of cloning and genetic manipulation in the second chapter of Genesis. Science never considered such concepts until maybe the last 50 or so years. Prior to this, it seemed silly that God could take a rib from man, and somehow, from that rib, design another person. Now we know, that is more than enough genetic material to work with.</p>	Gen. 2:21–22.
<p>From the very beginning, the Bible speaks of <i>the Seed of the Woman</i> when this would be an oddity to speak of at any point in time. Culturally and biologically, <i>seed of the man</i> makes sense and the <i>Seed of the Woman</i> does not. Yet key to Jesus Christ being born into this world without a sin nature is His being born to a virgin, apart from the <i>seed of man</i>. How was the writer of Genesis able to lay the groundwork for what is a fairly subtle and difficult point of Christian doctrine?</p>	Gen. 3:15 Isa. 7:14 Matt. 1:18–23
<p>The relationship between God Incarnate and Satan is defined from the very beginning. God speaks to Satan, saying, “I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He will strike your head, and you will strike His heel.” How did the writer of Genesis know that Satan would be allowed to strike the heel of Jesus Christ? Jesus would take upon Himself the venom of sin, and yet, after He had paid for our sins, God would raise Him from the dead. And in the 2nd Advent, Jesus Christ would crush the head of Satan, casting him and his angels into the lake of fire.</p>	Gen. 3:15 1Peter 2:24 Rev. 20:10

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<p>The fundamental importance of a blood sacrifice, which is taught from the very beginning. This is fundamental to Christian doctrine. 1000–3000 years before Jesus, men in the Old Testament recorded the importance of the blood sacrifice. In order for Adam and the woman’s nakedness to be covered by animal skins, an animal had to die. Both Cain and Abel offered up sacrifices to God: Cain offered up the works of his hands and Abel offered up a sacrificed animal—God ignored Cain’s offering and respected Abel’s. There is no such thing as Christianity apart from the blood sacrifice; and the foundation for this is laid in the Gen. 3–4.</p>	Gen. 3:21 4:1–7
<p>The idea that there could be a flood which would cover the entire earth. The idea that God could change topography and that would prevent a worldwide flood from reoccurring. When we studied the flood, we found out that a similar flood <i>could not</i> occur today. However, if the world were completely flat, then we would be covered in water. We know today that, if the topography of the earth was different, all the earth could be flooded. Again, what a lucky guess!</p>	Gen. 7–9
<p>Also, the dimensions of the ark are both seaworthy and able to carry the cargo of the animals spoken of. This was written anywhere from 3000 to 5000 years ago. Again, a tremendously lucky guess on the part of the writer of flood epic.</p>	Gen. 7–9
<p>The general historical trends of the people to be descended from Shem, Ham and Japheth are described.</p>	Gen. 9:24–27
<p>The naming and distinguishing of all the major peoples in the world is laid out.</p>	Gen. 10
<p>Data that shows the reduction of age of each successive generation would follow an exponential decay curve. All life and death is based upon exponential curves; and these ancient writers guessed that?</p>	Gen. 11:10–32
<p>The concept that the Jews would be a blessing to the world (which would come through Jesus Christ) and that nations would be blessed or cursed, depending upon their relationship with the Jews. This is an historical fact, whether we are speaking of Assyria, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Spain, Great Britain, the United States, or Iran.</p>	Gen. 12:2–3

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The Lucky Guesses	Scripture
The idea that the stars in the sky could be used as an analogy to refer to an incredibly huge number. In the ancient world, they could only see a few hundred, or, at most, a few thousand stars. Yet Abram’s descendants are compared to both the dust of the earth and to the stars in the heavens.	Gen. 13:16 15:5
The concept that faith alone in Jehovah Elohim is all that is needed to be declared righteous by God. This is not just the most fundamental concept of Christianity and the Bible, but this is absolutely unique in religious thinking—that one can be justified by faith alone, apart from any works. What is thoroughly amazing is, when Jesus walked on this earth, those Jews who taught the Old Testament, taught that salvation was gained by being a Jew and by obeying the Law of God (despite Gen. 15:6). In all religions and in all cults, works are a part of salvation; except for Christianity. Only in Christianity, faith alone in Christ alone results in eternal salvation, a salvation which cannot be taken from you; a salvation which you cannot lose by your lousy manner of life. And Gen. 15:6 (among other passages) telegraphs this fundamental of the faith 2000 years before Jesus Christ and the recording of the words of the New Testament.	Gen. 15:6
The very idea that the Jews would remain and that the major peoples of that day would be blotted out from history. Given the tremendous amount of anti-Semitism which has occurred throughout the ages, it is amazing that there are any Jews alive.	Gen. 15:18–21 Ex. 23:23

There are so many different writings about creation, about how man started; by the Greeks and Romans of course, and by the ancient Egyptians and Assyrians. Yet, what creation story, apart from the Bible, is ever taken seriously? *In Norse mythology, there was only a chasm, Ginnungagap, in the beginning (somewhat like the Greeks’ Chaos) bounded on either side by fire and ice. When fire and ice met, they combined to form a giant, named Ymir, and a cow, named Audhumbla, to nourish Ymir. She survived by licking the salty ice blocks. From her licking emerged Bur, the grandfather of the Aesir.*¹ When, over the past 500 years, have influential people suggested, “We need to take another, closer look at the Norse view of beginnings; I think there may really be something there for us to study”? I took this particular example simply because it was at the top of the page; I could have taken any mythology of beginnings as illustrative of the fact that, the Bible is in a different classification from all other stories of creation. Look at any of the myths of creation and tell me which ones deserve a second look.

¹ From <http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/creationmyths/tp/090808CreationMyths.htm> accessed October 10, 2011.

We are only 15 chapters into the first book of the Bible, and, already, there are 20 amazing things—20 lucky guesses, if you will—about things that no one should have known about. Could you sit down and write out scientific concepts before they are even thought of? Thousands of years before someone discovers them? Can you choose several peoples from the earth and tell me which of them will be here in 1000 years and which would be blotted out or no longer have a clear identify? Could you choose various peoples and tell me how they will interact over the next few thousand years? Could you outline some of the fundamental doctrines of a religion that will be established 1000 years (or more) from now?

I will agree that if you say, “1000 years from now, marriage is going to be the fundamental building block of all societies and work will still be fundamental to the well-being of man,” you would be right. So, I will agree that, if you hold to these predictions, then you are correct about the future.

But, apart from those 2 things, how did the Bible get so many things right? What in the Bible in these first 15 chapters can you point to, and say, “Well, they got it totally and completely wrong there.” Even evolution versus creationism or evolution versus intelligent design are still debated today. There have been college courses discussing this scientific debate, and, in the cases I am aware of, more people exit such a course believing in creationism than began the course believing in creationism.

When it comes to the Bible, there are three logical choices that you are left with: (1) some ancient, primitive man (or, a group of men) just happened to make some phenomenally lucky guesses (and without making any mistakes); (2) some religious fanatic trying to pull the wool of everyone’s eyes just manages to make all of these lucky guesses, without making any mistakes (besides being able to fool everyone as to the time of writing of Genesis), or, (3) the Bible is the inspired Word of God, just as it claims to be. Writers of Scripture were carried along by the Holy Spirit, Who is God, Who knows the end from the beginning. Which is the most logical approach? What other alternatives are there? Is it really that logical that someone was able to write this stuff down, 3000–5000 years ago, and get it all right?

God gave us a brain and God does not expect us to disengage this brain when it comes to our faith in Jesus Christ. Faith is a choice that we make, but God gives us a lot of reasons why the choice of faith that we have made—faith in Jesus Christ and faith in the Bible—is the right choice.

Everything that you know is based fully or mostly upon faith, which is a result of making a choice to have that faith. Most of us do not fully understand how gravity works, but we all believe it exists, and we have dropped stuff, which has confirmed our belief in gravity. I get into planes all of the time—into tons and tons of metal—and I believe, each and every time, that monstrosity of metal is going to go into the air, rise to an altitude of 5000 ft. and take me to my destination. Obviously, my faith has been confirmed again and again. But then, so has my faith in God and in God’s Word.

In the previous lesson, we looked at 20 “lucky guesses” which are found in the first 15 chapters of the Bible. These guesses involved science, scientific theory, historical events (future from the time of writing), sociology and Christian theology. The logical choice is, some author, or group of authors, writing thousands of years ago, took 20 shots in the dark and scored 20 bulls-eyes or, the Bible is the Word of God. God knows science, God knows the future as well as He knows the past, and God invented Bible doctrine. Therefore, it is logical that God is able to inspire writers to write that which is true, even though that truth may not be fully apprehended until centuries or millenniums later.

When I was younger, and did not know much about anything, I was told some things about the Bible which simply were not true. One of them was, some group like the Catholics took out all references to reincarnation in the Bible.

Even though we cannot prove, beyond a shadow of a doubt, when the portions of the Bible were written and by whom, anyone who knows any history knows these things:

What is Incontrovertible about the History of the Bible

1. The Old and New Testaments are the products of many authors over a long period of time. Even the most hardened liberal scholar believes the Old Testament to be written over a period of 600 or more years. Most believe it to be written over a period of 1000 years or more (I personally believe the Old Testament to be written over a period of 2500 or more years).
2. I have given a partial list of amazing things found in the first 15 chapters of Genesis. No matter when these chapters were written, they are still extremely amazing things and the writing precedes the science and theory by thousands of years, even if the most liberal beliefs about when the Bible was written are applied.
3. There is a long tradition of the Jews, early on, accepting the writings of the Old Testament as divine, and of Christians accepting the Old and New Testaments as divinely inspired. There does not appear to be some murky area of a few hundred years where these writings go from just popular writings to becoming the Word of God. The acceptance and recognition of these books as the Word of God happened almost immediately. Only a handful of books in both testaments were ever seriously questioned.
4. Because the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) was put together some time between 300–100 B.C., we know that the canon of the Old Testament was *closed* and that the Jews clearly recognized which of their ancient writings were divinely inspired.
5. We also know by the treatment of the Old Testament Scriptures—how they were copied and the high status of those who devoted their lives to making copies of the Old Testament—that the Jews believed the Old Testament to be the Word of God, and that this belief historically extends back centuries before Jesus Christ.
6. We know that the copying of the Bible throughout the ages was extremely accurate. We have dozens of Old Testament manuscripts ranging in time from the Dead Sea Scrolls (which go back to approximately 100 B.C.—there were

What is Incontrovertible about the History of the Bible

several means of dating methods used to determine the date of these manuscripts) to complete and nearly complete manuscripts from the early second millennium. These manuscripts are preserved by very different groups of people in a number of ancient languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, Latin, and Arabic). Although there are differences in manuscripts, these differences are clearly human mistakes or quirks of translation as opposed to their being intentional alterations in the text in order to put forth this or that doctrine. The vast quantity of manuscripts that we have confirm that Jews and Christians over hundreds of years have made every attempt to preserve the accuracy of each and every letter of the Old and New Testaments.

7. Examples of the accuracy of the text:
 - a. After the Dead Sea Scrolls had been discovered, textual critics compared the ancient manuscripts of Isaiah to the Masoretic text (which is the accepted version of the Old and New Testaments based upon manuscripts produced around A.D. 1000). In all of the 66 chapters of Isaiah, only 13 different readings were from the Dead Sea Scroll copy of Isaiah as preferred over the Masoretic text. 8 of those alternate readings were already known because of other ancient texts; and few of these readings represent a significant change of meaning.
 - b. A common example given to confirm the accuracy of later manuscripts, is Isa. 53, which is compared word-by-word, letter-by-letter, the Masoretic text to the Dead Sea Scrolls text. There are 166 words in Isa. 53, but only 17 letters are different. 10 of these letters represent a slightly different spelling of the same word and 4 letters represent minor, stylistic changes (such as, conjunctions). The most dramatic difference in these manuscripts, copied down over 1000 years apart from one another, is the 3 letter word *light* in v. 11, which had been dropped out of the MT.
 - c. These examples indicate that there was no attempt to slant the text of Isaiah toward one theological point of view or another; these are mostly changes in spelling, a few differences of grammar, combined with very few minor human errors.
 - d. Textual critics have laid the texts side-by-side and have examined every single word and every single letter of Dead Sea Scrolls and the MT.
8. It should be noted that people who strongly disagreed with one another preserved the manuscripts of the Bible, which manuscripts are in close agreement even to this day. We do not have the Jews making the Old Testament more Jewish and the Christians making the Old Testament more Christian. There are Christian and Jewish Bibles, but they are based upon the same set of manuscripts. The idea that anyone or any group made widespread changes in the Bible at various times in history is completely unfounded and contradicted by hundreds of manuscripts which exist today. No one could make dramatic changes in the Old or New Testaments then any more than they could today. This is because copies of the Old and New Testaments were held by and preserved by widely divergent groups far apart from one another.

What is Incontrovertible about the History of the Bible

9. Now, you may say, "But isn't there a Catholic Bible and a Protestant Bible?" There were books written in between the testaments called the apocrypha. The Catholics accept these books as inspired and they are a part of the Catholic Bible. Christians do not believe that the books of the apocrypha are inspired (neither do Jews, and these are Jewish writings). However, when it comes to the Old and New Testaments, there is little if any difference between a Catholic-approved Bible and a "Protestant" Bible. In fact, Jerome, who is claimed by the Catholic church, translated the Bible into Latin, because that was the language of his day, and some Catholic translations use this Latin translation (called the Latin Vulgate) as their primary or secondary basis for translation. When I translate a verse in Scripture, I always make reference to the Catholic Douay-Rheims Bible, which was a translation made around 1600. Jerome's Latin translation is a very good translation of the Bible and so is the Douay-Rheims Bible. A Catholic may do well to ignore the apocrypha and any commentary found in his Catholic-approved Bible; but, other than that, the Catholic translation is as good as any "Protestant" Bible.
 - a. As an aside, the approved Catholic Bibles are: the Douai-Rheims Bible, the Confraternity Edition, Revised Standard Version (RSV) - Catholic Edition, New American Bible (NAB), Jerusalem Bible, New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)- Catholic Edition, New Jerusalem Bible (NJB), Today's English Version - Catholic Edition.
 - b. I use the NRSV, the NJB and the NAB nearly every day. They are wonderful translations of the Bible. They are very readable and some of their translated verses are insightful.
10. Because of the Greek Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scrolls, we know that there is a large gap of time between the Old and New Testaments. There is a bare minimum of 200 years between the testaments, between hundreds of prophecies about Jesus Christ and the fulfillment of all these prophecies. Even the most liberal of scholars would admit that this gap is 200 years or more. Conservative scholars put this gap at 400 years.
11. Therefore, all of the types in the Old Testament (animal sacrifices, specific incidents in the Old Testament) which have their fulfillment in the antitype, Jesus Christ, were written prior to incarnation of Jesus Christ. There is absolutely no historical question about this.
12. All of the prophecies about the coming Messiah and the types, therefore, were written long before the Messiah came. We are not talking about 1 or 2 or even 9 or 10 prophecies; I have counted over 180 Messianic prophecies and types in the Old Testament, and I am certain there are more. All of these prophecies were written before Jesus was born—that is incontrovertible. How is that possible? How did that just happen?
13. Furthermore, these prophecies were recorded by a myriad of authors over many centuries. There are just not one or two authors of the Old Testament who churned out a lot of lucky prophetic guesses; prophecies about Jesus Christ are found in the old books of the Bible as well as the most recent as well as in nearly

What is Incontrovertible about the History of the Bible

every book of the Bible.

14. There was a lot of writing which took place during the time of the New Testament, and Christians were decidedly unpopular during this era. All historians agree on this. Therefore, if people seriously questioned the Person of Jesus Christ and His resurrection, we ought to find writings of critics from that era. There were critics of Christianity and there were disputes, and we have writings of all of this. That is, if there are historical events found in the gospels or in the epistles which were in dispute at that time, then we ought to have hundreds of manuscripts from that era disputing the basic claims of historical Christianity. Today, there are many best-selling books which criticize Christianity and the Bible; so it is logical that books which criticize the historical facts found in the gospels ought to be numerous. However, even though there are anti-Christian writings which come out of subsequent centuries, there are no writers in the first century who dispute the historicity of Jesus, the crucifixion, or the Apostles and what they did. Why are the historical facts of Christianity not questioned in the 1st and 2nd centuries? Given the appreciation for logic, which has a tremendous history in Greek culture, why did not ancient critics write, "None of this stuff ever happened"? Rome was, in many ways, based upon Greek culture. There was the great historian Josephus (and several others). But no one of that era questioned the historicity of Jesus or His death on the cross. Logically, if these things could have been disputed, then that would have been the first line of attack on Christianity.
 - a. As an aside, there are many modern books which attack Christianity based upon historic matters. One of the examples given was the Hittites; archeology, for a long time, did not produce a history of the Hittites which could be squared with the Biblical record; so the Bible was questioned for many decades. However, as more information was unearthed from the ground, it became apparent that the Biblical record of the Hittites was quite accurate.
15. No other religion, apart from Judaism, is so firmly dependent upon actual human history. Christianity is rooted in his historical events. Christianity is not a philosophy or a set of ideas; it is a system of thought and doctrines concerning a relationship between man and God which is grounded in actual human history. If the history is just fiction, then there is no Christianity.
16. Our partial manuscripts of the Bible go way back, within 100–200 years of their being written (which is very rare—most ancient manuscripts are separated in time by 1000 years or more from the actual events which took place). Therefore, recognizing Jesus as divine did not occur over a long period of time, this perception of Jesus occurred almost immediately after, if not simultaneous, with the events of His life. For people to grow in stature by legend and rumor, generally 400 years or more must pass before their historicity is distorted and falsely magnified. We have commentary by people from His generation and from the generation which followed Him who recognized Him as God. We have manuscripts that are so ancient that we know this understanding of Jesus goes back to His time on earth. The literature which we have—and we have a lot of

What is Incontrovertible about the History of the Bible

- it—indicates that Jesus was believed to be God from the very beginning; and that there was no evolutionary process which takes us to that doctrine.
17. The power of the Bible is as strong today as it ever was. Do you know what was the best selling book last month? The Bible. Do you know what was the best-selling book the month before that? The Bible. Do you know which book sells more copies month after month, year after year than any other book that has been written? The Bible. This book is so powerful that governments will do everything in their power to keep the Bible out of their country. Some governments will incarcerate or execute people who bring Bibles into their country. People will sue to keep the Bible out of the classroom; a controversy which continues in the United States today. If an English teacher wants to teach Greek or Roman mythology, no one bats an eye. But if that same English teacher wants to teach this or that book out of the Bible, then expect there to be near riots at the school board meetings. There are books written every year which denigrate the Bible. Hundreds of times, authors believe that they have written the book that will, for all time, bring the Bible down. And these books and these authors always fade into obscurity, and the Bible still stands, as the most powerful living document today. *For the Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing apart of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart* (Heb. 4:12).

The points above are not disputed by any serious historian.

You may ask, *how can all of these things be true, and yet, some scholars still doubt that the Bible is the Word of God?* Negative volition is the key. People who are negative toward God and toward the Word of God will allow almost anything to dissuade them. For some of them, the idea that the Bible is the Word of God in some real and unique way is simply fundamentally impossible to them, regardless of the facts.

As a simple example, Jesus performed miracles on many occasions; He healed people who had suffered particular maladies for decades. Yet, some people who observed the healing or knew the person healed, did not believe in Jesus.

We see people closing their minds to the truth over and over again. One of the true conspiracies of our day—the Communist conspiracy, which reaches back into the 30's in the United States—is still scoffed by many, despite overwhelming evidence for it. We know for a fact, for instance, that Joseph McCarthy had real concerns about communist infiltration into the highest levels of government and society in the United States; and yet, he is treated by many, historically, as a joke and a blowhard. What is almost never discussed, when he is historically maligned is, *was he right?* Despite whatever personal failings McCarthy had, the question, *was he right*, is the most important consideration to any discussion about Joe McCarthy. Yet, this fundamental historical fact is ignored or glossed over by those who speak of *McCarthyism* or of *the McCarthy era*.

Another example: we are presently in a war with Islam—a war which Islam started—and this war is against all of the west and the east, with 5 or more attacks occurring every single day. Yet, there are still people who will say, “All religions have their radical fanatics; there are just as many radical Christians who are a threat to us as radical Muslims.” Many people have made that statement because (1) they know some nice Muslims and (2) they have never seen an Islamic attack close up (and have blotted the significance of 9/11 from their minds). This is called, negative volition. Despite all the empirical evidence to the contrary, they say, “There are radicals in all religions—Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam.” They try to equivocate things for which no such equivocation exists. If you say, “What about the crusades?” you have just made my point. More people are killed in the name of Allah each year than all those who died as a result of the Spanish Inquisition over a period of 350 years. If you were to name all of the attacks made by radical Christians over the past 50 years (and, in most cases, you would be wrong), that would be fewer attacks than those which take place each and every single day in the name of Islam. Yet millions of Americans are either willfully ignorant of this war we are in or they completely misjudge it.

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[Introductory Lessons](#)
[HTML](#)

[Genesis Lessons 1–100](#)
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[HTML](#)

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