

## The Bible as an Historical Document

"We have not followed cunningly devised fables . . ." 2 Pet. 1:16

Biblical writers see God as the source of history because "of him, and through him, and to him, are all things" (Rom. 11:36). History begins with Him, manifests His sovereign control, and has its consumation in Him. Except for the creation (Heb. 11:3) and the final consummation of all history (2 Pet. 3; Rev. 22) the truth of which are unknowable apart from divine revelation, the historical events referred to in the Bible are matters of verifiable history.

The central event of all history with which the Bible deals is the coming of Christ Jesus to earth (Gal. 4:4; John 1:14,18) His resurrection from the dead on the third day is the best attested fact in history. He placed his divine seal of approval upon the historical accuracy of the OT, i.e. creation, flood, Abraham, destruction of Sodom, manna in the wilderness, Jonah and the great fish, etc.

## Verrifying data given by archaeology:

Existence of the Hittites was once doubted.

Existence of early writing once doubted. Now is known that writing existed 3000 B.C., date of documents excavated at site of ancient Uruk (Biblical Erech, Gen. 10:10). Predates Biblical Hebrew by nearly 1000 years. Sure Moses could write!

Issue of Mosaic authorship important to anyone taking NT as truthful records of Christ's words and work. Until 17th cent. Mosaic authorship of Pentateuch almost universally held by Christian church.

Mari tablets attest names used in patriarchal stories.

Nuzi tablets supply cultural confirmation of stories in Genesis.  
One tablet confirms custom of selling one's birthright, as Esau did.  
Rachel's household gods

Hammurabi's code & similar laws in Mosaic legislation

Covenant treaty forms of the great kings of ancient near East & the format of Deuteronomy and of the Decalogue itself. Original classic form dates from middle of 2nd millennium & has striking similarity of format with book of Deuteronomy lending weight to 2nd millennium composition of Deuteronomy.

(see Smick's article on Pentateuch in ZPEB for more of same)

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