

SO MANY QUESTIONS

***Question 4: You can't trust what the Bible says—
it's been changed too much over the years!***

Think about it

1. What kind of question is this?
 - a. Knowing
 - b. Meaning
 - c. Living

2. What are some of the reasons someone might have for asking this question?

3. How would you go about answering this question? Jot down the kinds of things you think could be included in an answer.

Summarize your answer

In your own words, using three or four simple points, write down how you would answer the question/challenge "You can't trust what the Bible says—it's been changed too much over the years!"

Do not turn page over until after you complete this side! 😊

For further thought:

You can't trust what the Bible says—it's been changed too much over the years!

- People often make this claim, but when you look at the evidence, you discover quickly that it is really a convenient modern fiction. The Bible won't be dismissed that easily.
- Behind the many different English translations we have today, there are the same Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts. This is why English translations are all so similar.
- We have many, many copies of the Old and New Testaments (over 5,000 manuscripts and fragments, in the case of the New Testament!). We have copies that are old and in good condition. They are often quite complete, coming from different locations and different branches of the church's history.
- By comparing these documents, it is very easy to spot when someone has changed the text (either accidentally or deliberately), and it is usually easy to correct those changes.
- We can also compare the Greek and Hebrew text to the many translations that were made into other languages, and the many quotations in other books and documents.
- There is too small a time lapse between when the Bible was written and the date of the earliest existing manuscripts; too many manuscripts for comparison with too much agreement and too few differences; and too much concern for accuracy in the transmission process for the claim that it has been changed to be true.

There is much more to be said on this topic (for example, responses to objections that the Bible accounts were biased and inaccurate to begin with). An excellent book to both read and give away is *Is the New Testament History?* By Paul Barnett (rev. Edn, Aquila Press, Sydney, 2003).

Further reading:

- FF Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments*, Pickering & Inglis, Basingstroke, 1984.
- Josh McDowell and Bill Wilson, *A Ready Defence: The Best of Josh McDowell*, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 1993.