

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLE VS. THE QUR'AN

(by Jay Smith)

CHRISTIANITY

MANUSCRIPTS

NEW TESTAMENT CANON: written before the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, & before the fire of Rome, because these events plus the martyrdoms of James (62 AD) Paul (64 AD) & Peter (65 AD), all pivotal Christian events, are not mentioned in Acts.

NEW TESTAMENT EXTANT MANUSCRIPTS:

-Rule of thumb: 'the more MSS the more credible the document', 'that which is closest to the event is most authoritative'.

5,300 Greek

10,000 Latin Vulgate

9,300 other early versions

=+ **24,000** manuscript copies of portions of the New Testament in existence today!

=**230 MSS** compiled before the 7th century (i.e. before the Qur'an)!!

DATING:

Secular and Biblical Manuscript Comparisons:

<u>Author</u>	<u>Date Written</u>	<u>Earliest Copy</u>	<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Copies (extent)</u>
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Secular Manuscripts:

Herodotus (History)	480 - 425 BC	900 AD	1,300 years	8
Thucydides (History)	460 - 400 BC	900 AD	1,300 years	?
Aristotle (Philosopher)	384 - 322 BC	1,100 AD	1,400 years	5
Caesar (History)	100 - 44 BC	900 AD	1,000 years	10
Pliny (History)	61 - 113 AD	850 AD	750 years	7
Suetonius (Roman History)	70 - 140 AD	950 AD	800 years	?
Tacitus (Greek History)	100 AD	1,100 AD	1,000 years	20

(McDowell 1972:42)

Biblical Manuscripts (N.T.):

Magdalene Ms (Matthew 26)	1st century*	50-68 AD*	co-existent(?)	*debatable
John Rylands (John)	90 AD	130 AD	40 years	
Bodmer Papyrus II (John)	90 AD	150-200 AD	60-110 years	
Chester Beatty Papyri (N.T.)	1st century	200 AD	150 years	
Diatessaron by Tatian (Gospels)	1st century	200 AD	150 years	
Codex Vaticanus (Bible)	1st century	325-350 AD	275-300 years	
Codex Sinaiticus (Bible)	1st century	350 AD	300 years	
Codex Alexandrinus (Bible)	1st century	400 AD	350 years	

-Magdalene Manuscript (Dr. Thiede) = 50-68AD?

(KE = Kurios = Lord) oldest of 98 Papyri

EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS: Luke 1:1-3 (disciples), Acts 2:22 (Jews), Acts 26:24-26 (Secularists)

HOSTILE ACCOUNTS:

Thallus, Tacitus, Josephus, Suetonius, Pliny the Younger

15,000 TRANSLATIONS: (150AD - 6th cent) Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Gothic, Nubian, Georgian, Ethiopic

2,135 LECTIONARIES: from 6th century

EARLY CHURCH FATHER'S LETTERS:

-**86,489** Biblical quotes; (**32,000** before 325AD)

-all the New Testament quoted except for **11 verses**

Clement = 2,406 quotes,

Tertullian = 7,258 quotes,

Origen = 17,922 quotes

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

-Moses didn't write?, yet Black Stele found = laws of Hammurabi 300 yrs. before Moses.

-Daniel not 2nd but 6th BC, East India Inscription = Dan.4:30 = Nebuchadnezzar's building.

-Dead Sea Scrolls=100BC = Massoretic MS = 916AD (except Essene cult variations Lam.\Jer.)

-Armana tablets: (Egypt) "Apiru" = Hebrew (?),

1st given to Abraham (Gen.14:13)

-Ebla tablets: (Syria) 17,000 = Tell Mardikh,

2300 BC = Deuteronomy law code, which included the cities of **Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah,**

Zeboiim, Zoar = Gen. 14:8

-**Mari tablets:** (Euphrates) Arriyuk = Arioch = Gen.14; Nahor, Harran = Gen.24:10, Benjamin

-**Nuzi tablets:** (Iraq) speaks of 6 Patriarchal customs found in Genesis:

a) a barren wife giving a handmaiden to her husband

(i.e. Sarah, Hagar)

b) a bride chosen for the son by the father

(Isaac and Rebekah)

c) a dowry paid to the father-in-law

(i.e. Laban and Jacob)

d) work done to pay a dowry

(i.e. Jacob)

e) the unchanging oral will of a father

(i.e. Isaac)

f) a father giving his daughter a slave-girl

(i.e. Leah, Rachel)

g) the sentence of death for stealing cult gods

(i.e. Jacob).

-Thus the Torah could not have written with such accuracy in 5th or 2nd century BC.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ACCURACY

***50 Old Testament people** have been found and corroborated in extra-Biblical material

***Noah's Flood** - 138 accounts of a flood have been found in every culture except that of Egypt (i.e. Gilgamesh Epic, Tablet 11).

***Tower of Babel** (Gen. 11:1-9) found in Sumerian tablets, and with the Babylonians.

-**Abraham** = name found on Babylonian inscription

-**Field of Abram in Hebron** =918 BC by *Shishak* of Egypt, on walls of *Karnak* temple

-**Doors of Sodom:**2200-1600BC = heavy = Gen.19:9, 900-600BC = arch/curtains (security)

-**Beni Hasan Tomb:** Asiatics went to Egypt/famine

-**Joseph's price:** (20shekels) Gen.37:28 = 1,700 BC, earlier cheaper, later more

-**Joseph's Tomb:** Joshua 24:32 = in *Shechem*- found mummy with Egyptian sword!

***Jericho's walls** fell outwards (Kathleen Kenyon) = Joshua 6:20, and Northern wall intact (Rahab's dwelling was there Joshua 2:15)

***David's Water shafts** used by Joab (II Sam.5:6-8; I Chron.11:6) found by Macalister, Duncan & Kenyon.

-**Daniel** not 2nd but 6th BC, East India Inscription (6th cent.) = Dan.4:30 account of Nebuchadnezzar's building.

***Cylinder Inscription of Nabonidus** (539BC) Balshazzar = Nabonidus' son, last Babylonian king, unknown to Herodotus 450 BC

***Nabonidus Chronicle** (555-539 BC) co-regency of Nabonidus and Balshazzar, answering why Daniel was 3rd (Daniel 5:16).

***27 New Testament people** have been found in extra-Biblical material.

-**LUKE'S accuracy:**

-(**Erastus**)= *Corinth* treasurer (Rom. 16:23), pavement found in 1929 with this name.

-(**Meris**) =Philippi a "district" of *Macedonia* doubted until inscriptions use it for district.

-(**Politarchs**)=civil authority of *Thessalonica* (Acts 17:6) 19 inscriptions use it, 5 in *Thessalonica*

-(**Praetor**)= *Philippian* ruler instead of *Duumvir*, Romans used Praetor earlier.

-(**Proconsul**)= title for *Gallio* (Acts 18:12) -corroborated by Delphi Inscription (52 AD) Gallio held this position for 1yr.

-(**Quirinius**)=governor of *Syria* at Jesus' birth=an inscription from *Antioch*

F.F. Bruce states, "Where Luke has been suspected of inaccuracy, and accuracy has been vindicated by some inscriptional evidence, it may be legitimate to say that archaeology has confirmed the New Testament record."

BRITISH MUSEUM BIBLICAL EXHIBITS:

-**Shalmaneser III** (Assyrian King= 859-824 BC) names Ahab & Benhadad of Syria.

-**Jehu** is pictured and named on the black obelisk.

I kings 22:1; II kings 9-10

-**Tiglath-Pileser III** (Assyrian king= 745-727 BC) Menahem (Israel King) mentioned Bible 9 times (2Kings)

-**Sargon II** (Assyrian king=722 BC) mentioned in Is.20:1 = Sargon & Ashdod city's fall. Sargon's annals mention fall of Ashdod. Nimrud Prism mentions Israel's fall.

-**Sennacherib** (Assyrian king= 701 BC)

-Taylor Prism = mentions Jerusalem will not fall, that 30 talents of Gold will be given, that Hezekiah would be shut up, that the Assyrians left Lachish's & of Judah's fall. Also on 2 scorched walls of Ninevah. = Ninevah will burn, mentioned in Nahum 1:10; 2:6,13; 3:13,15.

-**Siloam Tunnel** (710 BC) 1,777 ft. (Gihon spring to Siloam Pool), built by Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:20; 2

Chron.32:3-4,30), found in 1880

-Hazor, Canaanite City (1280-1230 BC)

- Canaanites before Israelites (1200 BC), then displaced violently twice by Israelites (Joshua 11 [1400BC]; Judges 4-5 [1235 BC])

-Amarna Letters (1400-1367 BC) -Shows result of Joshuas conquest (Joshua 5-14)

-Ahab's Ivories (850 BC) -from I Kings 22:39

-Lachish Letters (586 BC) by Lachish military leader of Judah's king, Zedekiah.Nebuchadnezzar; writes Yahweh & Azekah(Jer.34:7)

-Nimrud Palace Inscription (732 BC) Tiglath-pileser III's annals= imprisoning Israelites, Ahaz's tribute, Rezin's (Syrian king) & Pekah's (Judan king) deaths, king Hoshea's reign (2Kings 15:22-31; 16:5-9; 1Chron. 5:25; 2Chron. 28: Is.7)

-Royal Tombs of Ur (2500 BC), proves that Ur existed. Ram in a thicket helps authenticate the Biblical narrative.

-Epic of Gilgamesh (600 BC), Mesopotamian account of the flood, some similarities with Genesis account: boat, animals, etc... pointing to roots in oral tradition stretching back to the event itself.

***Cylinder Inscription of Nabonidus** (539 BC)-Daniel 5 tells us that Daniel interprets Balshazzar's dream. Yet who is Balshazzar? Nabonidus was the last recorded Babylonian king by secular historians. This inscription mentions that Balshazzar is Nabonidus's son. Later historians (i.e. Herodotus in 450 BC) didn't know this because when Babylon fell no inscriptions had been written, as Balshazzar had not become the sole ruler. Thus the author of Daniel had to have been an eyewitness to have known something so specific!

***Nabonidus Chronicle** (555-539 BC)

-But why was Daniel promised the third position in the kingdom when he interpreted the dream (Daniel 5:16)? This chronicle mentions that while Nabonidus was in Tema, Arabia, his son [Balshazzar] was in Babylon, thus the two were co-regents, explaining why Daniel was promised the third place in the kingdom. Only an eyewitness could have known this, for this fact was not known even 100 years later by the historian Herodotus!

-Cyrus Cylinder (540-530 BC)

-Explains Cyrus's policy to restore liberty and social standing of foreign captives, allowing them to return to their homelands, and worship according to their own traditions, echoing Ezra 1:1-3

ARCHAEOLOGIST'S COMMENTS ON THE BIBLE:

G.E. Wright states, "We shall probably never prove that Abram really existed...but what we can prove is that his life and times, as reflected in the stories about him, fit perfectly within the early second millennium, but imperfectly within any later period."

Sir Frederic Kenyon mentions, "The evidence of archaeology has been to re-establish the authority of the Old Testament, and likewise to augment its value by rendering it more intelligible through a fuller knowledge of its background and setting."

William F. Albright (a renowned archaeologist) says, "The excessive skepticism shown toward the Bible by important historical schools of the 18th and 19th centuries, certain phases which still appear periodically, has been progressively discredited. Discovery after discovery has established the accuracy of innumerable details, and has brought increased recognition to the value of the Bible as a source of history."

Millar Burrows of Yale states, "On the whole, archaeological work has unquestionably strengthened confidence in the reliability of the scriptural record."

Joseph Free confirms that while thumbing through the book of Genesis, he mentally noted that each of the 50 chapters are either illuminated or confirmed by some archaeological discovery, and that this would be true for most of the remaining chapters of the Bible, both Old Testament and New Testaments.

Nelson Glueck (a Jewish Reformed scholar and archaeologist) probably gives us the greatest support for the Bible when he states, "To date no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a single, properly understood biblical statement."

ISLAM

MANUSCRIPTS

-Oral tradition is open to embellishment (i.e. griots), mss. aged, disintegrated - did early mss. exist?

-Why in the 7th century can we not find MSS for a Qur'an, or for the many traditions?

-UTHMANIC RECENSION: (claimed 650 AD)___

not **Topkapi** / **Sammakand**

-must do 'Accelerated Mass Spectrography' (**AMS**) analysis and **SCRIPT** Analysis

-SCRIPTS:

1. **Ma'il** 7th-9th century (Medina and Mecca).
2. **Mashq-Hijazi** 7th century onwards.
3. **Kufic** 8th-11th century (needs **landscape** format).
4. **Naskh** 11th century till today.

-COINS:

Mashq/Hijazi = from 697AD - 750AD, thus **Umayyad**

Kufic = 750AD onwards, same as MSS, thus **Abbasid!**

-Quraish = Mecca; Kufa conquered in 636 AD = Persia

-Noldeke, Hawting, Schacht, Lings, Safadi all date Topkapi/Sammarkand to 9th century.

-Ma'il Qur'an in British Library, Lings = **790AD** **-Conclusion: no Uthmanic recension, & Qur'an is 1,200 years old, not 1400 = 150 year gap!**

-TALMUDIC SOURCES:

-**Cain & Abel**: (raven) S.5:3 = Targum Jonathan-ben-Uzziah, (blood) S.5:32 = Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5

-**Abraham**: (smashed idols, fiery pit) (S.21:51-71) = Midrash Rabbah

-**Solomon & Sheba**: (hoopoo bird, mirrored floor) (S.27:17-44) = II Targum of Esther

SIRA, HADITH, TARIKH, TAFSIR PROBLEMS:

-**late dates**: Sira (Hisham = 833AD), Hadith (Buhari = 870AD), Tarikh, Tafsir (Tabari = 923AD)

-**Credibility**: reflect 9th-10th century, bias based on *ra'y* (opinion), conflicting akhbars

-**Contradictions**: Al-Tabari's conflicting accounts (i.e. 15 differing accounts of Muh. meeting)

-**Proliferation**: Waqidi & Abdallah; Bukhari ->

from 600,000 down to 7,397 (or 2,762 originals)

-**Isnad**: names of transmitters, begins with Sha'fi (820AD), yet no documentation till 9th century.

-**Storytelling**: *Kussas* responsible for stories of Biblical & Iranian legend, much like *Griots* today.

-HADITH COMPILATION CRITIQUE:

Buhari: -Abu bakr (632-634) with 1st compilation (6:509)

- Uthman (644-656) revised Hafsa ms, and has all

other mss destroyed (Mas'ud & Ka'b) (4&6:510)

-Verses canceled (5:416) or now are missing (Rajam = stoning S.24:2) (8:817)

Imam Malik - Some verses have been changed

Sahih Muslim - Parts of the Qur'an has been forgotten Ibn Dawud -Verses were lost, overlooked, & modified

As-Suyuti - Much of Qur'an has disappeared

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

JEWS:

-split with Muhammad in 624 AD, in Medina

(S.2:144-150), yet:

-**Doctrina Iacobi** = in 642AD Jews/Saracens were still allied

-**Armenian Chronicler** 660 AD = Jews & Ishmaelites allied in 640AD, common **Abrahamic ancestry**

-**Hijra** historical accounts show that it was from Arabia **to the north** and not from Mecca to Medina.

MECCA:

-(S.3:96)=1st sanctuary, **Adam** =1st city, **Abraham & Ishmael** rebuilt **Kaaba**, centre of **Trade**

-**No reference** till 724AD [Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius]

-note: Pliny's "**Makoraba**" is not Mecca, as different root letters [MKK vs. KRB, 'ma' = 'place of']

-**Sources**: Orientalists used **Lammens**, who used **Periplus** (50AD), **Pliny** (79AD)

-Should have used **Cosmas, Procopius, Theodoretus** (5th-6th cent) closer to events in place & time:

-**No overland trade** post-1st cent., as all international **trade was maritime** through the **Red Sea**.

-For obvious reasons, as it was cheaper 1,250 miles by ship than 50 miles by camel!

-**Trade declined** post-3rd cent, with **Ethiopians** not Arabians controlling trade (capital = **Adulis**)

-**Mecca in a valley**, little water, couldn't support trade & off trade route unlike **Taif** 50 mi. away.

-If no mention of Mecca at all, then **historical credibility** eradicated, no sanctuary, Sura 2 in Qur'an at fault, as well as the later traditions.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ACCURACY

QIBLA

-(S.2:144-150) change from **Jerusalem to Mecca** in **624AD** (so all Qiblas should be to Mecca)

-**Wasit, Baghdad & Kufa** = **West**, Al 'As = **East**

-**Syrian Caliphal Palaces** = **Jerusalem**

-**Jacob of Edessa** 705 AD mentions in a letter that the **Saracens** prayed towards **Jerusalem**

DOMES OF THE ROCK:

-by **Abd al-Malik** in **691AD**, yet nothing written about the **Mi'raj** on **inner ambulatory**

-**Inscriptions Polemical** & not quite the same as found in the Qur'an!(i.e. Shahada adds 'no partners')

(variant verbal forms, & extensive deviancies)

-no **Qibla**, **octagonal**, best suited for **circumambulating**, perhaps 1st sanctuary, or one of many?

NEVO'S INSCRIPTIONS:

-**Arabic**, and **religious** after 661 AD

-no **Muhammad formula** until 690 AD

-then **Tawhid, Muhammad rasul Allah** (Muhammad formula) **Jesus = man**, basically **polemical**

-Muhammad formula found on **Protocols** suddenly in 691AD, but not accepted until 724AD.

Note: compared to the Biblical archaeological evidence, there is no archaeological evidence for Adam,

Abraham, or Ishmael in **Arabia!**

BRITISH MUSEUM QUR'ANIC EXHIBITS:

-Ma'il Qur'an in MSS exhibit (790 AD, though recent attempts to bring it forward 100 years)

-Kufic Qur'ans in MSS exhibit (9th centuries)

-**COINS:** Umayyad (*Naskh, Mashq*) & Abbasid (*Kufic*)

-coins place the Kufic script from 750 AD and not before, so Samarkand and Topkapi must be post-750 AD!!

CONCLUSION:

What does this evidence tell us concerning the historicity of Islam?:

- 1) that the **Hijra** was more-than-likely not towards Medina, but towards Palestine;
- 2) that the **Qibla** was not fixed towards Mecca until the eighth century, but to an area much further north, and possibly Jerusalem;
- 3) that the **Jews** still retained a relationship with the Arabs until at least 640 A.D.;
- 4) that **Jerusalem** and not Mecca was more-than-likely one of a number of cities which contained the **first sanctuaries** for Islam, as **Mecca** was not only unknown as a viable city until the end of the seventh century, but was not even on the trade route;
- 5) that the **Dome of the Rock** was the likely position of a sanctuary in the late 7th cent.;
- 6) that **Muhammad** was not known as God's universal prophet until the late 7th century;
- 7) that the terms '**Muslim**'/'**Islam**' were not used until the end of the seventh century;
- 8) that **five** daily **prayers** as well as the **Hajj** were not standardized until after 717 A.D.;
- 9) that the earliest we even hear of any **Qur'an** is not until the mid_eighth century;
- 10) that the earliest Qur'anic **writings** don't coincide exactly with the current Qur'anic text.

The Qur'an gives authority to the Bible:

-argument of corruption began with Ibn Hazam (1064), so a much later polemic.

2:136 no difference between Taurat, Injil & the Qur'an

4:136 admonishing the **Muslims** to **Believe** in preceding scriptures.

5:46-47 **Christians** must **believe** in their scriptures & **judge** by them.

5:68 **Christians** must **stand fast** by the Gospel.

10:94 **Muslims**, if in **doubt** **ask** those who read the book before thee.

21:7 **apostles** were **inspired**, so **Ask them**: they possess the message.

29:46 **don't dispute** with **Christians**, **believe** in their **scriptures**

-**Qur'an endorses the Torah and the Gospel.**

Why is there is no warning?

2:140 says (of the Jews), "...*who is more unjust than those who conceal the testimony they have from Allah...?*"

-not a challenge of corruption but a ringing endorsement to the Bible's credibility!

God does not change His Word (found in both the Qur'an and the Bible):

Qur'an: 10:64 = "*No change can there be in the words of Allah.*"

6:34: "*There is none that can alter the words of Allah,*"

(see also Suras 3:2,78; 4:135; 18:26; 35:42; 50:28,29)

Bible: Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Isaiah 8:20; Matthew 5:17-18; 24:35; Revelation 22:18-20.

-a recurring theme, so why would the Bible be different?