



FRONTLINE ACADEMY

*"Equipped to Share: A Biblical & Apologetics Approach to
Online Evangelism"*

Session Five



Apologetics Applied

Recap of last session

- Is the practice of apologetics Biblical
- How should we practice apologetics
- Approaches within apologetics

Approaches within Apologetics

- **Fideism** – Faith and Reason do not overlap
- Presuppositionalism – Logical comparison of world views
- **Reformed Epistemology** – All people have an innate sense of God
- **Experientialism** – Experience is only proof
- **Pragmatism** – What works = truth

Approaches within Apologetics cont.

- **Verdicalism** – Givens + corroboration
- **Combinationism** – Three aspect test: rational, **empirical**, existential
- **Classical Apologetics** – Prove theism, then Christianity
- **Evidentialism** – Evidence based. Can even be reduced to Resurrection alone
- **Rationalism** – Starting with undeniable facts and building from there - “I think, therefore I am.”

This Session

- Is the Bible reliable? (Can we trust the received text today?)
- "The problem of evil"
- "Science vs. Religion"
- The Resurrection

Is the Bible reliable?

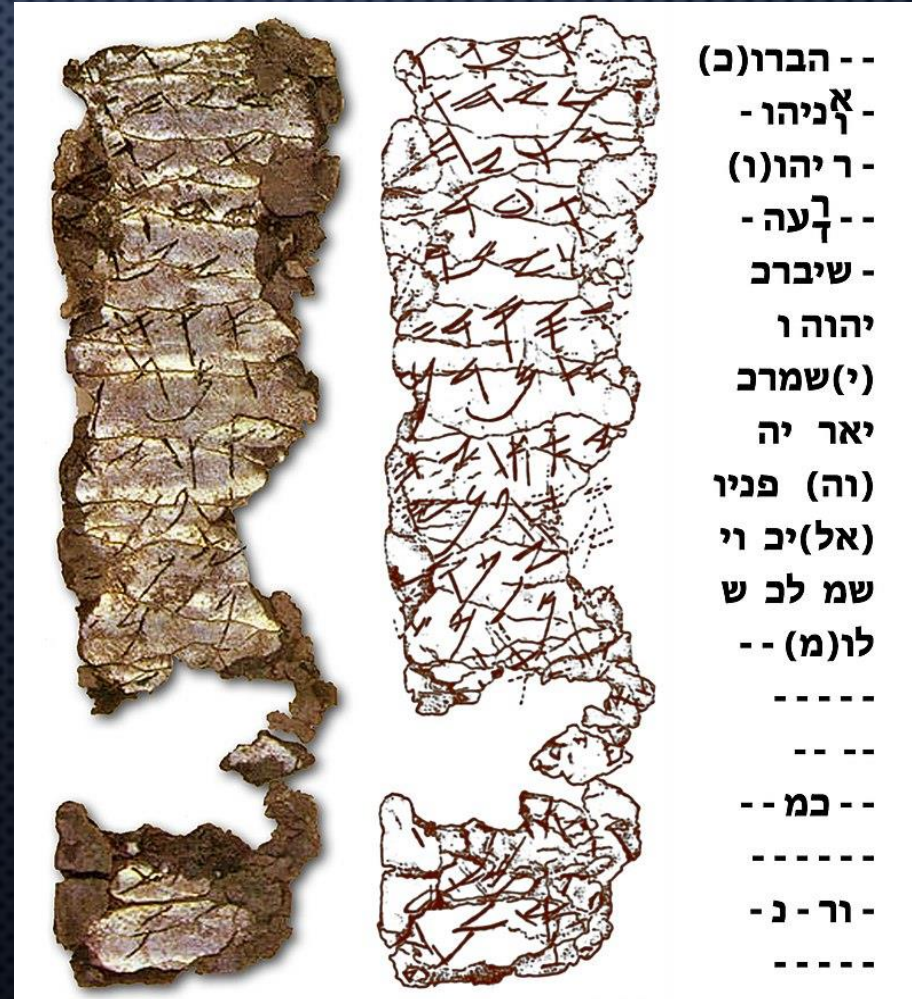
Why we trust the received text today:

Old Testament

- Sopherites, clans of scribes 1 Chronicles 2:55
- Every skin, contained certain number of columns
- Could not be copied by memory

Why we trust the received text today:

Ketef Hinnom scrolls,
6th century BC.
Identical to MT.
Only two letters
are different.
Image by Tamar
Hayardeni



Why we trust the received text today:

Old Testament

- Masoretes , counted every word and letter
- Consonantal text is completely stable
- Vowel pointing and cantillation

Why we trust the received text today:

Old Testament

Genesis 1

1 בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: 2 וְהָאָרֶץ הִיְתָה תֵהוֹ וּבְהוּ וְחָשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וּרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים
מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם: 3 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי־אוֹר: 4 וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאוֹר כִּי־טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין
הָאוֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ: 5 וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים | לְאוֹר יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד: 6
וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי רָקִיעַ בְּתוֹךְ הַמַּיִם וַיְהִי מַבְדִּיל בֵּין מַיִם לַמַּיִם: 7 וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָרָקִיעַ וַיַּבְדֵּל בֵּין הַמַּיִם

Why we trust the received text today:

Old Testament

- Dead Sea Scrolls
- Over 900 ancient documents, over 200 Old Testament
- Demonstrates the stability of the text

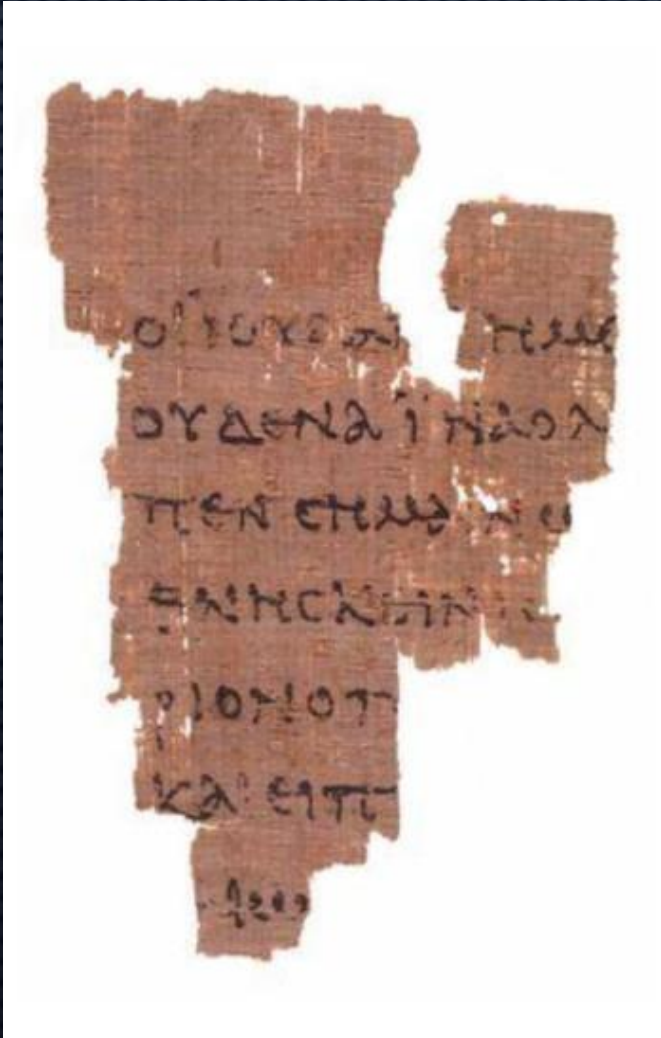
Why we trust the received text today:

New Testament

- Over 5700 and counting ancient New Testament portions
- Over 1,000,000 quotations from patristic writers
- The amount of ancient witnesses is a good thing,
contra Islam

Why we trust the received text today:

New Testament



P52 John Ryland's papyrus
John 18:31-33, John 18:37-38

Why we trust the received text today:

New Testament

- Tyndale House 2007-2017
- Took all the texts and started again
- NT came out, exactly the same...
- We have 100% of the NT

"Non-canonical gospels"

- Earliest Christian writers state there are four Gospels
- All supposed other "gospels" date after 125AD, too late!
- They are much rarer and not widely circulated

Is the Bible reliable?

Key take away

Seeker: Is the Bible we have today corrupted?

Responder: We have thousands of ancient documents available to us. They demonstrate that the text of the Bible has not changed over time. *For example...*

Seeker: But don't all those texts say different things?

Responder: There are no valid variants that change the meaning of the text, change who God is, who Christ is, or how we are saved. Almost all variants are obvious scribal errors or regional spelling variants.

The Problem of Evil

- God cannot exist as there is evil in the world

The presence of evil does not logically lead us to the conclusion that there is no God

The Problem of Evil

- The acknowledgement of evil demonstrates a sense of right and wrong

If there is right and wrong there must be a moral law giver

The Problem of Evil

- The conversation style should emphasize compassion and counselling over facts and philosophy

"Science vs. Religion"

- Christianity has nurtured and encouraged science
- Robert Boyle (chemistry), Isaac Newton, Blaise Pascal
- Galileo etc. All started from Biblical inerrancy

"Science vs. Religion"

- In 2016 Cambridge University researcher Douglas Axe proves the theory of macroevolution to be mathematically impossible
- Irreducible complexity
- You can ask people to defend their views
- You don't have to be on the defensive all the time

The Resurrection: minimal facts

- Facts accepted by virtually every legitimate Bible scholar
 1. Jesus really did die, and by crucifixion
 2. The tomb was empty!
 3. Appearances of Jesus after the resurrection
 4. The church exploded right out of 1st century Israel

Useful apologists to know:

- **Dr. Gary Habermas**, about to release a 5300 page book on evidence for the resurrection with all new material from his other ten or more books!
- **Dr Peter J Williams**, principal of Tyndale House Cambridge. His books are short and accessible
- **Lee Strobel**, former journalist