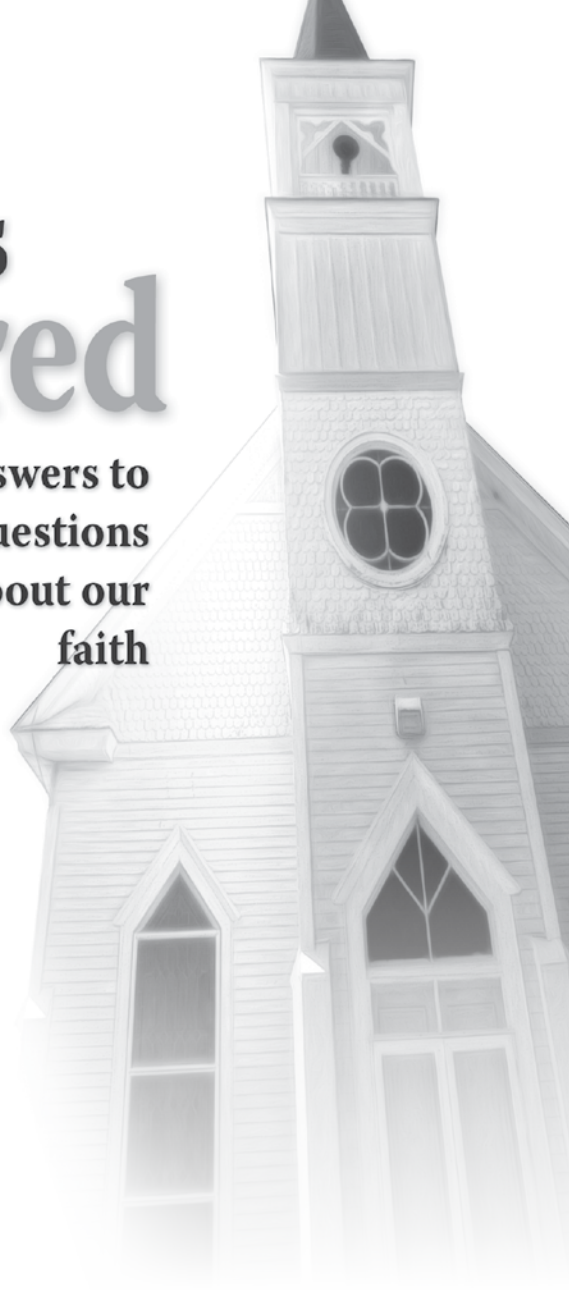


Always
Prepared

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Answers to
questions
about our
faith



Edited by **HUMBERTO M. RASI** and **NANCY J. VYHMEISTER**



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Introduction

Most human beings are inquisitive and seek something beyond themselves that will give meaning and purpose to their lives. Through the centuries, men and women have chosen myths, religions, philosophies, or political ideologies to serve as the basis of their convictions, decisions, and their lives on this planet. Thoughtful people have examined the ideas and options available to them to find a core of beliefs they can affirm as trustworthy and embrace as true. Of course, relativists deny the existence of truth, agnostics attempt to remain uncommitted, and postmoderns maintain that even if truth exists, it lies beyond human reach. But a philosophy that denies the possibility of truth undermines its own validity, and reality forces fence-sitters to make ethical choices in real life on a daily basis.

When beginning our search for a reliable set of beliefs with which to guide our lives and on which we can base our moral choices, we must decide between either a natural or a supernatural explanation for the existence of the universe and life. A supernatural explanation leads us either to a myth or a religion. However, a naturalistic explanation—

that matter and life arose spontaneously from nothing and evolved progressively by blind chance and natural laws—is also mythical or quasi-religious, since it requires a belief in the miraculous.

The search for truth

All religions claim to hold and communicate truth, but not all can be equally true. All may be false or only one might be true because their beliefs contradict one another. If all are proven false, we revert to a relativistic or agnostic position. However, if one of them can be true, we must evaluate its truth claims. Do the claims offer satisfactory answers to our deepest questions and yearnings? Are its beliefs internally coherent and applicable to real life situations? Does it provide evidence that appeals to our reason? Do its true followers live worthwhile lives? The answers to these questions are vitally important because the way we live our lives is generally illustrative of what we hold to be true, and furthermore, because the ultimate validity of these truths will determine what happens to us now and at the end of life.

Christianity is a religion that makes specific truth claims. Its Founder, Jesus Christ, appealed to the Scriptures and to His own actions as evidence of the truths He lived and taught (John 5:39, 40). He anticipated that His followers would fight their major battles on the terrain of the human mind. It is in this arena that arguments are weighed and conclusions are reached—where reason and will are engaged. He was also aware of the great potential for ideas to transform us. “You will know the truth,” He said, “and the truth will set you free” (John 8:32, NIV). And He added, “I am . . . the truth” (John 14:6, NIV). This leads us inevitably to examine the reliability of the Bible as a trustworthy document and to assess the consistency and lasting impact of Jesus’ teachings on His followers and the world at large.

Furthermore, the apostle Peter challenged Christians with these words:

“Do not be frightened.” But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience (1 Peter 3:14–16, NIV).

In this short passage, Peter outlined our Christian responsibilities as we prayerfully relate to and interact with our family members, neighbors, friends, and colleagues who may not share our faith convictions.

- *Be prepared.* We must be acquainted with the prevalent ideas of our time and the arguments used against biblical Christianity. Before getting deep into a religious discussion, we should explore some of the general assumptions of the person with whom we are in dialogue.
- *Give reasons.* We must be able to articulate an explanation for our basic beliefs so they can be understood and evaluated by others, and also respond to the common objections against biblical Christianity. Our arguments should be consistent and based on reasonable evidence.
- *Our faith commitment.* The Christian trust and hope centers on the Person of Jesus Christ—His divinity, the truth of His existence and actions, and the reliability of His teachings and promises.
- *Everyone who asks.* Our explanations must be attuned to the one to whom we are speaking, whose ideas may range from those of an

honest seeker to those of an astute critic. That person may lack a formal education or possess a postdoctoral degree.

- *Do it with gentleness.* We should present our convictions with courtesy and respect, and be open to dialogue. Truth may be rejected simply because it is communicated in an arrogant or condescending manner.
- *A clear conscience.* Our reasons and explanations may not persuade the other person during the discussion, but may have a greater and longer-lasting impact if our words and our behavior are consistent.
- *Our focus and goal.* The ultimate purpose of our interaction, beyond communicating specific aspects of our faith, is to lead our interlocutor to know and accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord of his or her life.

The purpose of this book

This book articulates twenty common questions that Bible-believing Christians encounter regarding their beliefs as they progress in their studies, pursue advanced degrees, and interact with other professionals. The coeditors, in addition to contributing two of the chapters, have assembled an international group of experienced authors, educators, and researchers who have provided thoughtful answers to these foundational questions. Each author, naturally, assumes responsibility for the content of the chapter that bears her or his name.

All contributors share several convictions: that the biblical record is a reliable document on which our faith is anchored; that the Scriptures reveal a wise and powerful God who cares deeply about each human being; and, that God has given us sufficient evidence to place our trust in Him. In other words, that faith and reason are not incompatible. We agree

that biblical Christianity can stand up to scrutiny, and, at the same time, that our comprehension of total truth is limited and progressive. In fact, God is honored when we seek to understand and love Him with all of our minds (Matthew 22:37), and He is always ready to lead us “into all truth” (John 16:13).

We also believe that the Bible conveys the broad contours of a meta-narrative that includes seven key moments in universal history: (1) at some point in the remote past, God creates a perfect universe and populates it with intelligent and free creatures; (2) an exalted creature rebels against God’s principles and, after a struggle, is banished to earth with his followers; (3) during one week in the recent past, God makes this planet habitable and creates plant and animal life, including the first pair of humans, who are endowed with free will; (4) tempted by the rebel creature, the first couple disobeys God and the entire web of life on this planet suffers the consequences, including a devastating global flood; (5) Jesus Christ, the Creator Himself, comes to earth to rescue fallen humans, offering them free salvation and power to live transformed lives; (6) at the end of time, Christ returns in glory, as promised, and grants eternal life to those who have accepted His free offer of forgiveness and salvation; and (7) after a millennium passes, Christ returns to execute final judgment and restores the entire creation to its original perfection, a state which will last forever.

This book, then, is addressed to Christians interested in the rational arguments that support their personal faith and who wish to communicate them to friends and colleagues in a reasonable manner, while helping to remove obstacles to faith in the minds of nonbelievers. It is also addressed to those who wish to learn more about the basic beliefs held by Christians in general and, in particular, by Seventh-day Adventists. The authors and editors have attempted to provide clear

and honest answers based on their own studies, reflections, and life experiences with the purpose of reaching a broad circle of readers.

Our gratitude

We wish to express our deep appreciation to each of the contributors to this volume for willingly sharing their expertise and preparing their contributions while actively involved in responsibilities related to research, teaching, and administration. Of course, more questions might have been posed, but those we have chosen will serve as samples of an approach to faith issues from a coherent and integrated biblical worldview perspective. We thank Jerry D. Thomas, vice president for product development at Pacific Press®, who supported this project from its inception and encouraged us along the way.

We also thank you, dear reader, for devoting time to this book and trust that its chapters will help you to find a deeper understanding of truth, which in turn will lead you to a more hope-filled life.

As we begin to explore together the issues, questions, and answers contained in this book, we leave you with the profound wisdom of this ancient prayer:

*From cowardice that shrinks from new truth,
From laziness that is content with half-truths,
From the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth—
O God of truth, deliver us!*

Author Unknown

Humberto M. Rasi and Nancy W. Vyhmeister

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Chapter 1

How Reliable Is the Bible?

Throughout the history of the Christian era, and in particular since the time of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, many skeptics have called into question the reliability of the Bible. The recent rise of postmodernism has brought about a new round of questioning regarding Scripture's reliability. In this essay we examine various lines of evidence supporting the conclusion that the Bible is indeed reliable.

The Bible's self-testimony and inner validation of its reliability

The Bible claims to be fully trustworthy and reliable, because it insists that its message ultimately comes from God Himself. In the Old Testament, there are about sixteen hundred occurrences of four Hebrew words (in four different phrases with slight variations) that explicitly indicate that God has spoken: (1) "declares [*n^eum*, literally "the utterance of"] the LORD," (2) "thus says the LORD," (3) "and God spoke," and (4) "the word of the LORD."¹ Various Old Testament writers claim

that what is written in Scripture is fully reliable truth (2 Samuel 7:28; Nehemiah 9:13; Psalms 19:9; 119:142, 160; Proverbs 22:21; Daniel 10:21). The primary Hebrew words for “truth,” *’emunah* and *’emet*, imply the specific nuance of “reliability.”² Jesus Himself unhesitatingly affirmed the reliability of Scripture: “Your word is truth” (John 17:17); “Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35). New Testament writers insist that Scripture is inspired by God and thus is fully reliable (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).

Textual reliability

We first look at the reliability of the manuscripts of the biblical text in its original languages of Hebrew and Aramaic (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament). The history of the textual transmission of Scripture reveals how carefully and painstakingly the biblical text has been preserved down through the centuries to the present day. With regard to the Old Testament, during the decades of the twentieth century prior to the end of World War II, critical scholars had a very low estimate of the accuracy of the received (Masoretic) Hebrew/Aramaic text, since its earliest manuscript dated back only to about A.D. 900 and critical editions of the Hebrew Bible proposed thousands of conjectured emendations to the text. But since 1947 and the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), which contained manuscripts or fragments of every Old Testament book except Esther, scholars have been amazed to discover how the Masoretes handed down virtually without change the textual tradition from a thousand years earlier. As Bruce Waltke puts it: “The presence of a text type among the DSS (c. 200 B.C. to A.D. 100) identical with the one preserved by the Masoretes, whose earliest extant MS [manuscript] dates

to c. A.D. 900, gives testimony to the unbelievable achievement of some scribes in faithfully preserving the text.”³

With regard to the New Testament, the amount of manuscript evidence for the Greek text is far more abundant than for any other document of the ancient world. There are more than five thousand Greek manuscripts of part or all of the New Testament text, some two thousand ancient Greek lectionaries (NT readings arranged in order of liturgical usage), about eight thousand Latin manuscripts, more than one thousand manuscripts in other ancient versions such as Syriac and Coptic, and thousands of quotations—virtually the whole New Testament—in citations by the various early church fathers. The actual amount of substantive variation among these many manuscripts is very small. F. F. Bruce summarizes, “The variant readings about which any doubt remains among textual critics of the New Testament affect no material question of historic fact or of Christian faith and practice.”⁴

Historical reliability

Unlike the sacred texts of most other religions, the Bible is replete with historical references, and therefore is amenable to cross-checking with other historical sources. Numerous examples have been brought forward to allegedly demonstrate the historical inaccuracy of Scripture, and time and again these claims have been disproved as ancient historical records have come to light. In the nineteenth century, it was frequently claimed, for example, that the Hittite nation, mentioned often in the Old Testament, never existed; but the extensive Hittite Empire has subsequently been uncovered in modern-day Turkey.⁵ Until a few years ago, scholars continued to insist that camels were not domesticated until

long after the time of Abraham, thus rendering the accounts of camels among the herds of the patriarchs as anachronistic; but extensive evidence has recently appeared for the early domestication of camels.⁶ Historical evidence has also appeared that confirms the accuracy of various other aspects of domestic life among the patriarchs, which had been challenged (see the Mari and Nuzi tablets).⁷ The existence of the Babylonian king Belshazzar was long questioned by critical scholars, despite his mention in the book of Daniel; but many details of his life and reign have since appeared in historical records.⁸ Scholars long considered the chronology of the Hebrew kings as hopelessly muddled and inaccurate, but the work of Edwin Thiele and others has demonstrated the amazing reliability and consistency of the chronology in the books of Kings and Chronicles.⁹

The world-renowned Egyptologist Kenneth A. Kitchen devoted a large part of his scholarly career to comparing the historical data of Scripture with other ancient Near Eastern records. In his magnum opus, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, he details his findings. His conclusion is straightforward: “We have a consistent level of good, fact-based correlations right through from circa 2000 B.C. (with earlier roots) down to 400 B.C. In terms of general reliability—and much more could have been instanced than there was room for here—the Old Testament comes out remarkably well, so long as its writings and writers are treated fairly and evenhandedly, in line with independent data, open to all.”¹⁰

The same can be said regarding the New Testament. Paul Barnett, in his comprehensive volume *Is the New Testament Reliable?* summarizes numerous ways “in which we are able to objectively crosscheck historical data from source to source with respect to Jesus and Christian origins. . . . At many points of historical importance about Jesus and Christian

beginnings we have not one but several independent sources, not all of them sympathetic to Jesus. If we accept the historicity of the Jewish War on the grounds of independent sources that are able to be crosschecked it is inconsistent to doubt the essential historicity of Jesus and the early church.”¹¹

Unlike much of the ancient Near Eastern and Greco-Roman propaganda writing of history, as in the historical annals of the major world empires, where no defeats or personal faults of the kings are recorded, the biblical records do not gloss over Israel’s defeats in battle nor the moral faults of its historical figures. We have numerous occasions mentioned in Scripture when Israel failed to trust in God and suffered defeat at the hands of their enemies. With regard to prominent individuals in the covenant line, we find, for example, a record of Jacob’s deception of his father and stealing his brother’s birthright (Genesis 27) and of King David’s sins of adultery and murder against Bathsheba and Uriah, respectively (2 Samuel 11; 12). Biblical history is thus actually *more* “true to life” than the historical writings of surrounding nations.

Prophetic reliability

What most distinctly sets Scripture apart from the sacred texts of other religions, and from all other ancient literature, is its claim to accurately predict the distant future. Out of the entire Bible’s 31,124 verses, 8,352 verses contain predictive material, about 27 percent of the total.¹² The prophet Isaiah challenged the so-called gods of the ancient Near East to prove their existence by their ability to tell the future: “Tell us what the future holds, so we may know that you are gods” (Isaiah 41:23; cf. 45:21; 46:10). Jesus likewise emphasized fulfilled prophecy

as an evidence of the truthfulness of His claims: “I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe” (John 14:29).

Another chapter of this book will address predictive prophecy in more detail, but here we sample some of the Bible’s amazingly accurate predictions of future events.¹³ Already in the time of Moses, God predicted that the Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10). Later Old Testament prophets predicted His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14), the place of His birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), and His growing up in Galilee (Isaiah 9:1, 2). The book of Daniel records the angel Gabriel’s prediction of the exact time of Christ’s coming as the “Anointed One,” in the seventy-weeks-of-years prophecy (Daniel 9:24–27), starting with Artaxerxes’s decree in 457 B.C. to rebuild Jerusalem, and being fulfilled when Christ was anointed by the Holy Spirit at His baptism in A.D. 27. In this prophecy Christ’s death is also predicted to occur in the midst of that last week-of-years, A.D. 31.

Daniel’s prophecies of the sixth century B.C. also foretold the exact course of world history, with the world empires coming in succession just as shown in vision: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome (Daniel 2; 7; 8), and the divided kingdoms. Jeremiah predicted the seventy years of Judah’s Babylonian captivity (Jeremiah 29:10). Isaiah foretold a century in advance—by name!—the rise of Cyrus, king of the Persians, his troops’ conquering of Babylon by diverting the waters of the Euphrates River, and Cyrus’s decree that would allow the Israelite captives to return to their homeland (Isaiah 44:24–28; 45:1, 13). Ezekiel predicted the fall of the city of Tyre, giving details that would have been impossible to know in advance: the mainland (old city) destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, another

nation (Alexander and the Greeks) coming later against the (new, island) city, scraping the old site bare as a flat rock used for the spreading of nets, with debris thrown into the midst of the water, and the kingdom of Tyre never rising again (Ezekiel 26:1–21). It has been calculated that there was one chance in seventy-five million of all these facts concerning the fate of Tyre coming true as predicted.¹⁴ These and many other predictions that have come to pass just as predicted constitute powerful evidence of the Bible's reliability.

Scientific reliability

Although the Bible does not claim to be a textbook on science, statements made by Scripture that deal with issues of cosmology and the phenomena of nature reveal a remarkable reliability and precision, notwithstanding common assertions to the contrary. For example, it has frequently been claimed that the Hebrew word *raqia'*, which appears in Genesis 1 and is usually translated as “firmament” in English Bibles, was understood by the ancient Hebrews to be a solid, hemispherical dome or vault resting over a flat disc—the earth. But recent research has shown that this interpretation is based upon a faulty translation of the Babylonian term from which the Hebrew concept was allegedly borrowed. As it now turns out, ancient Mesopotamia had no such concept of a solid heavenly vault, and the Hebrew term *raqia'* does not refer to a solid dome but is best translated as “expanse” or “sky.”¹⁵ Furthermore, the Hebrew Bible describes the earth, not as a flat disc, but as spherical in shape and suspended in space without resting upon anything. Isaiah testifies,

Always Prepared

He sits enthroned above the circle [*chug*] of the earth,
and its people are like grasshoppers.
He stretches out the heavens like a canopy,
and spreads them out like a tent to live in (Isaiah 40:22).

The Hebrew word *chug*, often translated as “circle,” literally means “sphere.” Job declares, “He spreads out the northern skies over empty space; he suspends the earth over nothing” (Job 26:7; cf. 28:25).

The account of Creation in Genesis 1 and 2 has been widely discounted among biblical scholars and scientists in favor of some form of naturalistic evolutionary theory. However, much evidence has been forthcoming in recent years for an alternative paradigm of “intelligent design.”¹⁶ Moreover, a growing number of highly educated scientists have chosen to believe in a literal six-day creation of life on earth rather than Darwinian or theistic evolution.¹⁷ Discussions of creation often maintain that Genesis 1 and 2 present two contradictory accounts of origins, and thus these chapters are discounted as historical; but careful analysis reveals that Genesis 1 and 2 are fully complementary accounts.¹⁸ Perhaps the most weighty argument against a recent six-day Creation comes from radiometric dating of earth’s rocks that yields very long ages, but a close reading of Genesis 1:1–3 suggests that the unformed-unfilled earth could indeed have been created in deep time (verses 1, 2), while the life on earth was created more recently during the six days of Creation week (verses 3–31).¹⁹

Biblical passages accurately describe the earth’s hydrologic cycle (Job 36:27, 28), global wind currents (Ecclesiastes 1:6, 7), and the sea’s currents (Psalm 8:8). Contrary to the consensus of scientists and philosophers in antiquity that the universe was not decaying, the Bible accurately

describes the phenomenon of the universe “wear[ing] out like a garment” (Psalm 102:26; Isaiah 51:6; cf. Matthew 24:35). Jeremiah accurately describes the human impossibility of numbering the stars (Jeremiah 33:22). An array of other passages illustrating the Bible’s scientific reliability may be cited in areas of hydrology, geology, astronomy, meteorology, biology, and physics.²⁰

The Bible is amazingly up-to-date with regard to healthy lifestyle principles. A few examples include the injunction to avoid eating the fat and blood in meat (Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 3:17; 17:10–14); the benefits of a plant-based diet (Genesis 1:29; Daniel 1:10–20); reduction of anxiety and worry in one’s lifestyle (Proverbs 12:22; Matthew 6:25–34; Philippians 4:6); the psychosomatic benefit of a cheerful attitude for optimum health (Proverbs 17:22); and the benefit of regularity and simplicity in eating habits (Ecclesiastes 10:17). Biblical legislation from thirty-five hundred years ago also reflects knowledge of hygiene and sanitation and quarantine far in advance of its time (e.g., Deuteronomy 23:12–14; Leviticus 11–15).²¹

Theological and spiritual reliability

Several lines of evidence converge to support the theological and spiritual reliability of the Bible. The remarkable unity and consistency of the Bible’s central themes, although composed over a period of fifteen hundred years by more than thirty-five different authors from various walks of life, testifies to the reliability of Scripture’s entire theological message (see 2 Peter 1:21).²²

The exquisite literary artistry of the Bible’s poetry and narratives, coupled with the stunningly beautiful literary patterns of the Bible, point

toward the truthfulness and reliability of its message, just as in science the truthfulness of a given hypothesis often is ultimately verified by its aesthetic elegance.²³

The profound depth of theological thought contained in the Bible's great and majestic themes, with mysteries that continually unfold as one searches deeper, are evidence of a great and majestic Divine Author, and thus of its theological reliability (Psalms 92:5; 119:18; Romans 11:33–35).

The moral power of Scripture to change people's lives bears witness to the reliability of its spiritual claims (Hebrews 4:12; John 17:17). Stories of transformed lives, such as that of John Newton, composer of the hymn "Amazing Grace,"²⁴ may be combined with the accounts of the constancy of martyrs in holding to Scripture even in the face of death,²⁵ to give evidence of the reliability of Scripture in its claim to provide transforming spiritual power and sustaining grace through the Spirit of Christ.

The Bible contains more than five thousand promises and specifically invites the reader to claim these promises and prove for oneself its spiritual reliability. Peter testifies, "Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires" (2 Peter 1:4). The abundance of personal testimonies as to God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises to those who claim them constitutes powerful evidence of the reliability of the spiritual claims of Scripture.²⁶

The ultimate proof of the Bible's reliability: Personal experience and the inner witness of the Holy Spirit

John Calvin has rightly pointed out that all of the various kinds of

evidence (“proofs”) for Scripture’s reliability (such as summarized above) are only of relative value, and are helpful only in light of the ultimate evidence: the inner witness of the Spirit. He writes,

The testimony of the Spirit is superior to reason. For as God alone can properly bear witness to his own words, so these words will not obtain full credit in the hearts of men, until they are sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit.²⁷

In vain were the authority of Scripture fortified by argument, or supported by the consent of the Church, or confirmed by any other helps, if unaccompanied by an assurance higher and stronger than human judgment can give. Till this better foundation has been laid, the authority of Scripture remains in suspense.²⁸

The Bible invites us to “taste and see that the LORD is good” (Psalm 34:8), and promises that “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17, NKJV). I have personally “tasted” God’s Word. I have claimed many of the Bible’s thousands of promises relating both to spiritual and temporal needs (e.g., Psalm 119:9, 11, 104; Proverbs 3:5, 6; John 16:13; Philippians 4:6, 7; James 1:5), and found that God is faithful in fulfilling His Word. I have come to trust the Person behind the Book, the Living Word behind His Written Word (John 1:1; Revelation 19:13). While the other evidences of the Bible’s reliability have had their due weight in my thinking, it was the inner witness of the Spirit that brought the settled conviction that Scripture is fully reliable (John 3:33; Romans

8:16; 1 John 5:6). I have found true in my own experience what Ellen White describes, “ ‘Why do I believe the Bible? Because I have found it to be the voice of God to my soul.’ We may have the witness in ourselves that the Bible is true.”²⁹ I invite the reader to “taste” and see that the God of Scripture is trustworthy and good, and be open to receive the inner testimony of the Spirit that Scripture is indeed the utterly reliable Word of God!

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Richard M. Davidson pastored in Arizona for a few years before going to the Theological Seminary at Andrews University. There he obtained his PhD in the Old Testament in 1980 and has remained. During these years, he has taught hundreds of seminary students and was for twenty-five years chair of the Old Testament Department. His influence has gone beyond the classroom through his writings, including the books *A Love Song for the Sabbath* and *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament*. He has authored many papers and articles, both for general and learned publics. He has made presentations at learned societies and

Seventh-day Adventist Church gatherings in the United States, Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Even as he carries out professional duties, he is active in his local Adventist congregation in Eau Claire, Michigan. His wife, Jo Ann Davidson, is author of one of the chapters of this book.

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¹ Richard M. Davidson, “Biblical Interpretation,” in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald® Publishing Association, 2000), 63. All biblical references are to the NIV unless otherwise indicated.

² See F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952; reprinted, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1981), 53, 54.

³ Bruce K. Waltke, “The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1979), 1:214.

⁴ F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* 6th ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003), 14, 15.

⁵ Orley Berg, “The Hittites—Fact or Fiction?” in *Treasures in the Sand: What Archaeology Tells Us About the Bible* (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press® Publishing Association, 1993), 163–168; cf. Ekrem Akurgal, *The Hattian and Hittite Civilizations* (Ankara, Turkey: Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture, 2001).

⁶ Randall W. Younker, “Late Bronze Age Camel Petroglyphs in the Wadi Nasib, Sinai,” *Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin* 42 (1997): 47–54.

⁷ M. J. Selman, “Comparative Customs and the Patriarchal Age,” in *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives*, eds. A. R. Millard and D. J. Wiseman (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 91–139.

⁸ Kenneth A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003), 73, 74.

⁹ Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1983).

¹⁰ Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 500.

¹¹ Paul Barnett, *Is the New Testament Reliable?* 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2003), 168, 170.

¹² J. Barton Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1980), 13.

¹³ For a helpful summary of Bible predictions fulfilled in history, see especially Bill Wilson, comp., *The Best of Josh McDowell: A Ready Defense* (Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 1993), 56–73; and John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *A Handbook of Biblical Evidences* (Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1997), 211–257.

¹⁴ Peter W. Stoner, *Science Speaks: An Evaluation of Certain Christian Evidences* (Chicago: Moody, 1963), 80, cited in Wilson, *The Best of Josh McDowell*, 63. Cf. Siegfried H. Horn, *The Spade Confirms the Book*, updated and enlarged ed. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald®, 1980), 296–305.

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¹⁵ See Randall W. Younker and Richard M. Davidson, “The Myth of the Solid Heavenly Dome” (paper presented at the Seventh-day Adventist Faith and Science Council, Andrews University, October 21, 2009).

¹⁶ See especially William Dembski, *Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1999). For a succinct summary of the intelligent design movement and supporting evidence, see Leonard Brand, *Faith, Reason, and Earth History*, 2nd ed. (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 2009), 88–107.

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¹⁸ Randall W. Younker, “Genesis 2: A Second Creation Account?” in *Creation, Catastrophe, and Calvary*, ed. John T. Baldwin (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald®, 2000), 59–78.

¹⁹ Richard M. Davidson, “The Biblical Account of Origins,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 14 (Spring 2003): 19–25.

²⁰ A sampling of this evidence is given in Ankerberg and Weldon, *A Handbook of Biblical Evidences*, 339–340. Cf. A. E. Wilder-Smith, *The Reliability of the Bible* (San Diego: Master Books, 1983); and Henry Morris, *The Biblical Basis for Modern Science* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1984).

²¹ S. I. McMillen, *None of These Diseases: The Bible’s Health Secrets for the 21st Century*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Fleming H. Revell, 2000).

²² See Daniel P. Fuller, *The Unity of the Bible: Unfolding God’s Plan for Humanity* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1992); and Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Recovering the Unity of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2009).

²³ For the aesthetic values of Scripture and their implications for the truthfulness of its message, see especially Jo Ann Davidson, *Toward a Theology of Beauty: A Biblical Perspective* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2008).

²⁴ Wayne Hooper and Edward E. White, *Companion to the Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald®, 1988), 159, 652–653.

²⁵ See, e.g., John Foxe, *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs* (Philadelphia: Key, Mielke & Biddle, 1832; reprint, Springdale: Whitaker House, 1981); and Thieleman J. Van Braght, *The Bloody Theatre, or Martyrs’ Mirror, of the Defenceless Christians: Who Suffered and Were Put to Death for the Testimony of Jesus, Their Savior, From the Time of Christ Until the Year A.D. 1660*, 1st Eng. ed. (New Lampeter Square, Lancaster County: David Miller, 1837; reprint, Scottsdale: Herald Press, 2006).

²⁶ See, e.g., Glenn A. Coon, *God’s Promises Solve My Problems* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press®, 1979); and Arthur T. Pierson, *George Müller of Bristol* (Westwood: Fleming H. Revell, 1899; reprint, Peabody: Hendrickson, 2008).

²⁷ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1966), 1.7.4 (72).

²⁸ Calvin, 1.8.1 (74, 75). In book 1, chapter 8 (74–83) Calvin gives thirteen “proofs” of the credibility of Scripture.

²⁹ Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press®, 1956), 112.