WP-07 HISTORY

Sixty-Six Books, One Coherent Message

STATEMENT

Written by about 40 authors across roughly 1,500 years, on three continents and in three languages, the Bible tells one consistent story. Its apparent contradictions have reasonable, documented resolutions.

Read time **2 min** Sources & resources **6** Series **History**

01 ABSTRACT

Any large document written by many contributors over a long period should be expected to contradict itself. The Bible's 66 books were written by shepherds, kings, fishermen, a physician and a tax collector, from about 1400 BC to about AD 95. This paper looks at the internal consistency of that record, the evidence from "undesigned coincidences," and how alleged contradictions hold up under examination.

02 EVIDENCE

OBSERVATION	DATA & SOURCE	CONFIDENCE
One storyline	From Genesis to Revelation the books follow a single arc: creation, the fall, the promise of redemption, the work of Christ, and final restoration. Later books build on earlier ones without overturning them.	HIGH
Undesigned coincidences	Independent accounts often explain each other in passing, without appearing to be coordinated. Example: in John 6:5 Jesus asks Philip where to buy bread; only Luke 9:10 says the event was near Bethsaida, and only John 12:21 says Philip was from Bethsaida. That pattern is what you expect from truthful, independent witnesses, not collusion.	MODERATE
Different perspectives, same events	The four Gospels differ in detail and emphasis, as independent eyewitness accounts do. Identical accounts would suggest copying; consistent core facts with varied detail suggest authenticity.	MODERATE
Alleged contradictions resolve	Most proposed contradictions fall into known categories: different vantage points, rounded numbers, different naming conventions, translation issues, or copyist errors in later manuscripts. CARM: Bible difficulties ↗	MODERATE

High = directly measured or widely accepted across worldviews. **Moderate** = well-supported, with recognized scholarly debate. **Interpretive** = consistent with the text, but depends on how the passage is read.

03 OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

OBJECTION

There are obvious numerical contradictions, e.g., between Kings and Chronicles.

RESPONSE

A small number of numerical differences trace to copyists, where similar-looking Hebrew numerals were easy to confuse. These are transmission issues in later copies, and the evidence for them is the manuscripts themselves.

OBJECTION

The Gospels disagree on details such as how many angels were at the tomb.

RESPONSE

Mentioning one angel does not deny a second was present. Partial accounts are not contradictory accounts; courts treat this kind of variation as normal in honest testimony.

OBJECTION

Consistency is just good editing.

RESPONSE

Editorial smoothing would remove the surface-level differences that remain in the text. The undesigned coincidences point the other way: the accounts fit together in ways no editor arranged.

04 CONCLUSION

For a collection this large and this diverse, the level of coherence is remarkable. The best explanation is the one the Bible gives for itself: many human writers, one guiding Author.

> *"All Scripture is inspired by God." 2 Timothy 3:16*

05 FURTHER RESOURCES

VIDEO **The Reliability of the New Testament** Dr. Craig Blomberg
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rhPlg_p9TDY

VIDEO **Undesigned Coincidences in the Gospels and Acts** Dr. Lydia McGrew
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2tmn8mySdG8

BOOK **Can We Still Believe the Bible?** Dr. Craig Blomberg
https://www.amazon.com/dp/1587433214

ARTICLE **Introduction to Bible Difficulties and Contradictions** Matt Slick, CARM
https://carm.org/bible-difficulties/introduction-to-bible-difficulties-and-bible-contradictions/

VIDEO **The BEST FACTS: Coherent** GCA

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PiB9TTrwDuI&list=PL59Qh4Scw7PebBz1Q-ixu5G7RPxCLWMt1&index=8

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