


**CANONICITY #1: HOW DID WE GET THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?**

Coastline Life in 3d Class, Paul & Yvon Prehn


### The Christian faith is:

- Historical
- Evidential
- True History
- True Evidence
- This makes it unique
- The eternal destiny of our souls is too important to trust to fanciful stories or uplifting sayings




### Why this matters

- Great push today for “religious tolerance”
- Though “gentleness & respect” (1 Peter 3:15) is always required
- We must respectfully point out that all religions are not the same
- They teach contradictory methods of salvation
- One of the key areas for this is in our the sacred scriptures of various religions



### Example: Hinduism

- **Upanishads:** “There is no fixed list of the *Upanishads* as newer ones are constantly being composed: whenever older *Upanishads* do not suit the founders of new sects they compose new ones of their own.”
- **Bhagavad Gita:** Battle involving Krishna, related stories
- No archeological or historical verification, dates written range from 6,000 BC to medieval times





### From the Bhagavad-gita (many similar)

- Lord Shiva said “O Parvati, kindly hear from me the glories of the Fourteenth Chapter of the *Srīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, with the greatest attention. In *Simhaladvīp* was a king of the name *Vikrama-Vetala*. One day, when he was going to the forest for hunting, he took his son and two hunting dogs along with him. When he reached the forest he released one dog to chase a rabbit. . . .
- In this forest, the great sage *Vatsa* lived, who worshipped *Lord Krishna* by reciting the *Fourteenth Chapter of the Srīmad Bhagavad-gītā*. Near the ashram of *Maharaja Vatsa*, one of his disciples was washing his feet while chanting the *Fourteenth Chapter of Srīmad Bhagavad-gītā*. The earth at that spot became wet. Just then that rabbit came running and slipped in the mud. Immediately that rabbit attained a heavenly body. An airplane came down, picked him up and took him off to the heavenly planets. After a moment, the dog arrived there in search of the rabbit, and he also slipped in the mud. He gave up that dog body, attained a heavenly body and was also taken off to the heavenly planets. . . . In *Maharashtra* there is the town of the name *Pratudhak*. A brahmana of the name *Keshava* had lived there. He was the most cruel of men. His wife’s name was *Vilobbana*. She was a very loose lady who always enjoyed the company of other men. For this reason, her husband became very angry and killed her. In her next life she became that dog, and that brahmana *Keshava*, due to his sinful activities, became that rabbit.”

### Example: Buddha

- Born ? 563-623 BC
- Scriptures not written until 300-400 years after his death
- Primarily spiritual sayings
- Very popular today
  - Dalai Lama
  - Zen, many forms
  - “Buddha nature, self-realization, etc.”

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http://coastlinelifein3d.wordpress.com

## Buddhist "scriptures"

•Large collection of writings, saying, not agreed upon by all. Organized in ways such as:

•**Four Noble truths**

1. Life means suffering.
2. The origin of suffering is attachment.
3. The cessation of suffering is attainable.
4. The path to the cessation of suffering.

•**Eight-fold Path**

1. Right view
2. Right intention
3. Right speech
4. Right action
5. Right livelihood
6. Right effort
7. Right mindfulness
8. Right concentration



## Example: Mormon

□ "It was first published in March 1830 by Joseph Smith, Jr. as *The Book of Mormon: An Account Written by the Hand of Mormon upon Plates Taken from the Plates of Nephi*.<sup>[1]</sup> According to Smith's account, and also according to the book's narrative, the Book of Mormon was originally written in otherwise unknown characters referred to as "reformed Egyptian" engraved on golden plates. Smith said that he received these plates in 1827 from an angel named Moroni, whom Smith identified as a resurrected indigenous American who had written and abridged parts of the book over a millennium ago."



## Summary of book of Mormon

- This account begins in ancient Jerusalem around 600 BC. It tells the story of a man named Lehi his family, and several others as they are led by God from Jerusalem shortly before the fall of that city to the Babylonians in 586 BC. The ok describes their journey . . . to the promised land, the Americas, by ship. These books recount the group's dealings from approximately 600 BC to about 130 BC, during which time the community grew and split into two main groups, which are called the Nephites and the Lamanites that frequently warred with each other.
- . . . book of 3 Nephi is of particular importance within the Book of Mormon because it contains an account of a visit by Jesus from heaven to the Americas sometime after his resurrection and ascension. . . .
- [also] of a record from a previous people called the Jaredites. The account describes a group of families led from the Tower of Babel to the Americas, headed by a man named Jared and his brother. The Jaredite civilization is presented as existing on the American continent beginning about 2500 BC, - long before Lehi's family arrived in 600 BC - and as being much larger and more developed.

## Excerpt from Book of Mormon

- <sup>1</sup> And now I, Mormon, being about to deliver up the record which I have been making into the hands of my son Moroni, behold I have witnessed almost all the destruction of my people, the Nephites.
- <sup>2</sup> And it is many hundred years after the coming of Christ that I deliver these records into the hands of my son. . . .
- . . . And it came to pass also that the armies of the Lamanites came down out of the land of Nephi, to battle against his people. . . . And now there was no more contention in all the land of Zarahemla, among all the people who belonged to king Benjamin, so that king Benjamin had continual peace all the remainder of his days.
- <sup>2</sup> And it came to pass that he had three sons; and he called their names Mosiah, and Helorum, and Helaman.

## Book of Mormon

- Sounds like the King James Bible when you read it
- Story, bits and pieces of OT history
- HOWEVER, not ONE thing in it has been historically, archeologically, or in any way verified
- Use of terms KEY to understanding Mormons and Mormon religion



## Old Testament

- Our Old Testament very different
- Took place in the midst of REAL history
- Time stamps specific:
- Isa 1:1 The vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Time Period	Key Events	Scripture Reference	Significance
1500-1200 BC	Exodus from Egypt, Moses, Ten Commandments	Exodus 1-31	Establishment of the covenant between God and Israel
1000-500 BC	Davidic Kingdom, Solomon's Temple, Exile in Babylon	1 Kings 1-11, 2 Kings 1-25	Construction of the Temple and the Babylonian Captivity
500-300 BC	Return from Exile, Persian Empire	Ezra, Nehemiah	Rebuilding of the Temple and the Second Temple
300 BC - 30 AD	Hellenistic Period, Roman Conquest	1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees	Struggle for Jewish independence and the Maccabean Revolt
30 AD - 100 AD	Jesus Christ, Apostles, Early Church	Gospels, Acts	Founding of Christianity and the New Testament

## An example internally Isaiah

- Isa. 1:1 The vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.
- **approx. 740 BC**
- Isa. 6:1: In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple.
- Isa. 7:1 When Ahaz son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, was king of Judah, King Rezin of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel marched up to fight against Jerusalem, but they could not overpower it.



## Adds legitimacy to prophecy

- **Isaiah 44:28** who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid."'
- **Isaiah 45:13** I will raise up Cyrus <sup>[a]</sup> in my righteousness: I will make all his ways straight. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free, but not for a price or reward, says the LORD Almighty."
- **Propheisied by name BEFORE the Babylonian Captivity, approx. 740s, BC**
- **Return took place in 538 BC**



## Challenge of history

- A true historical understanding important to a correct hermeneutic
- Meaning: you need to understand the situation, the history a passage was written IN to have a foundation for correct INTERPRETATION and APPLICATION
- One example:  
**Jeremiah 29:11** *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*
- Written to the exiles in Babylon, consider context; hope in judgment and under discipline not a blank check for good things to always happen



## How to know the history

- Read the book, in most cases it is right there
- The best commentary of Scripture is always Scripture, **cross-reference**
- Always read the context, verses surrounding a verse, the entire chapter, the book it is in
- Don't read the Bible with a pre-conceived system or demand, wish or dream



## Finally: we can trust our souls to a trustworthy & loving God, Rom. 8:28

- The entire chapter key...v. 18: "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. . . .<sup>28</sup>And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. . . .<sup>35</sup>Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?<sup>36</sup>As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."<sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup>neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Questions

- Go around your group and give your name
- How is our Bible different than the scriptures of other religions?
- Why is this important?
- How can you keep from misapplying a promise or passage in the Bible?
- What helped you the most in the lesson today?