



Exploring Faith: Belief

March 4, 2024

Where does belief begin?

› It has to start with, well, the beginning.....

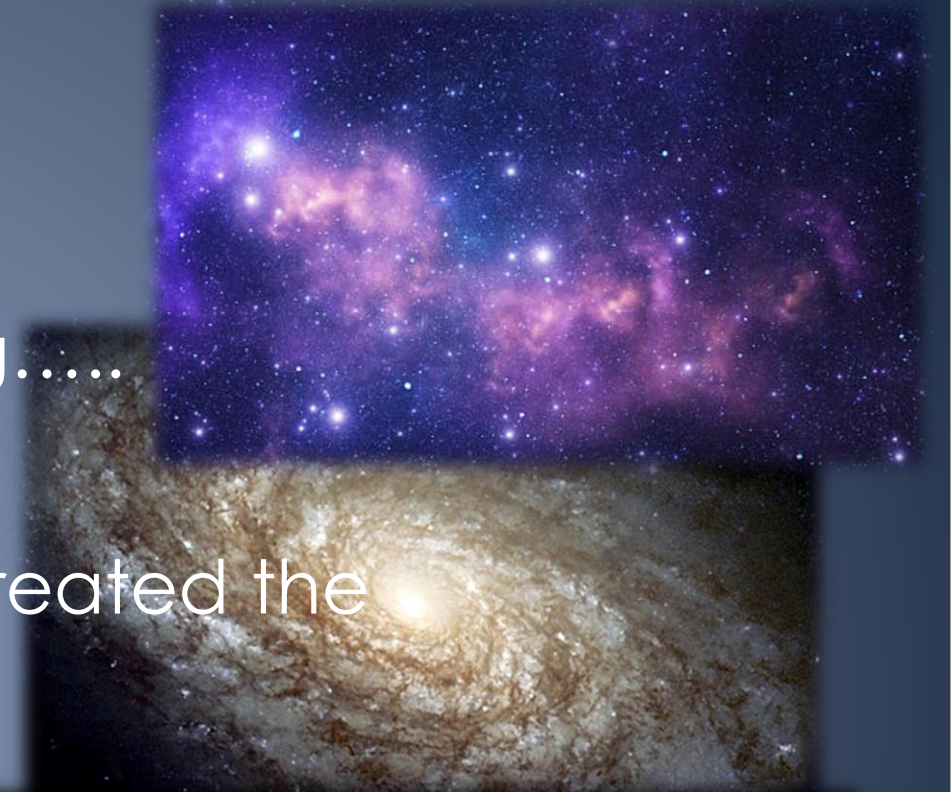
› Genesis 1:1 – In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth.

› But do you believe that?



“In the beginning
God created
the heaven
and the earth.”

— Genesis 1:1



What created the universe, and life?

- › Some people believe everything just appeared in a “big bang”.
 - Can life create itself? Have you ever seen anything just created from nothing? No....
 - Have scientists ever created life without using things that are or were already living? Can you create a living being from rocks or chemicals? No....
- › Christians believe that everything that is created, has a creator.

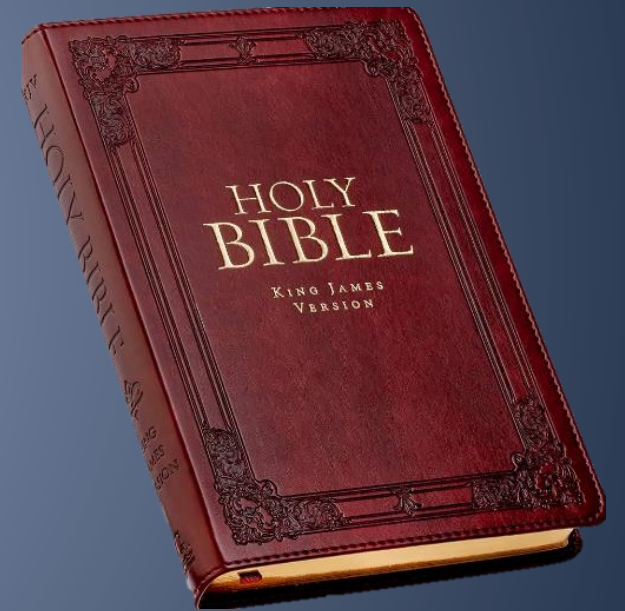
Thousands of years ago, God's word told us:

Job 26: 7

- › God stretched the northern sky over empty space.
He hung the earth on nothing.

Leviticus 17:11

- › ¹¹For the life of the flesh is in the blood



What about the Bible and it's "stories"?

Some people say that the stories in the Bible are just make believe. They couldn't have happened.

- › National Geographic – Not a Christian Organization
- › Smithsonian – Definitely not a Christian Organization

I referred your inquiries to our staff archeologist, Dr. George Stuart. He said that archaeologists do indeed find the Bible a valuable reference tool, and use it many times for geographical relationships, old names and relative chronologies. On the enclosed list, you will find many articles concerning discoveries verifying events discussed in the Bible. ~

*National Geographic Society,
Washington D.C.*

“Much of the Bible, in particular the historical books of the old testament, are as accurate historical documents as any that we have from antiquity and are in fact more accurate than many of the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, or Greek histories. These Biblical records can be and are used as are other ancient documents in archeological work. For the most part, historical events described took place and the peoples cited really existed. This is not to say that names of all peoples and places mentioned can be identified today, or that every event as reported in the historical books happened exactly as stated.”

6. R.D. Wilson who wrote "A Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament" pointed out that the names of 29 Kings from ten nations (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon and more) are mentioned not only in the Bible but are also found on monuments of their own time. Every single name is transliterated in the Old Testament exactly as it appears on the archaeological artifact – syllable for syllable, consonant for consonant. The chronological order of the kings is correct.

Smithsonian Institute

Kings of Israel verified archeologically



From the Old Testament, there are other sources that have verified the existence of most Kings of Israel.



Kings of Judah	Dates (BC)	Source
David	1010-970	Mesha Stele; Tel Dan Stele; Egyptian inscription of Shoshenq I
Jehoram	848-841	Tel Dan Stele
Ahaziah	841	Tel Dan Stele
Ahaz	734-728	Summary Inscription 7 of Tiglath-pileser III
Hezekiah	728-699	Taylor Prism, Chicago Prism, Jerusalem Prism (Annals of Sennacherib)
Manasseh	699-643	Victory Stele of Esarhaddon of Assyria
Jehoahaz	609	Babylonian Chronicles
Jehoiakim	609-598	Babylonian Chronicles
Jehoiachin	597	Jehoiachin's Rations Tablets
Zedekiah	597-587	Babylonian Chronicles

Kings of Israel	Dates (BC)	Source
Omri	885-874	Mesha Stele; numerous Assyrian records of Shalmaneser III
Ahab	873-853	Mesha Stele, Kurkh Monolith of Shalmaneser III; Tel Dan Stele
Jehoram	852-841	Tel Dan Stele
Jehu	842-813	Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III; other inscriptions by Shalmaneser III
Jehoash	797-782	Tell Rimah Stele of Adad-Nirari III
Menahem	747-742	Iran Stela of Tiglath-pileser III; Annals of Tiglath-pileser III
Pekah	740-731	Inscriptions by Tiglath-Pileser III
Hoshea	731-722	Summary Inscription 4 of Tiglath-Pileser III



Dead Sea Scrolls

- › The dead sea scrolls were an almost complete account of the Old Testament dated to about 300 BC.
- › It shows the Bible has been accurately handed down over thousands of years.



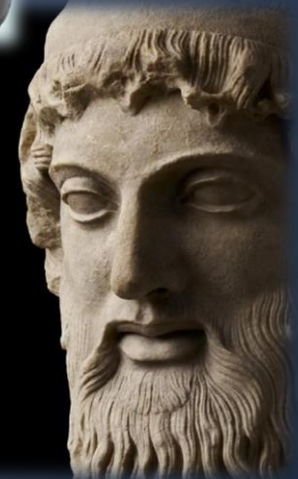
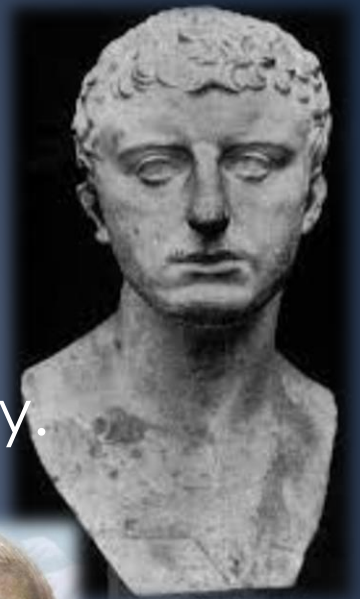
Did Jesus really exist?



Who can verify that He really lived?

› Outside of the Bible and even Christianity, these people wrote about Jesus and their writings have been verified archeologically. But these are just some examples.

- Cornelius Tacitus, Roman Historian
- Suetonius, secretary to Roman emperor Hadrian
- Flavius Josephus, Jewish Historian
- Pliny the Younger, A Roman government official
- Thallus, cited by Julius Africanus
- Emperor Trajan
- Emperor Hadrian
- Toledot Yeshu – a Jewish book about Jesus
- Lucian, Greek
- Mara bar Serapion, A Syrian
- Clement of Rome
- Ignatius

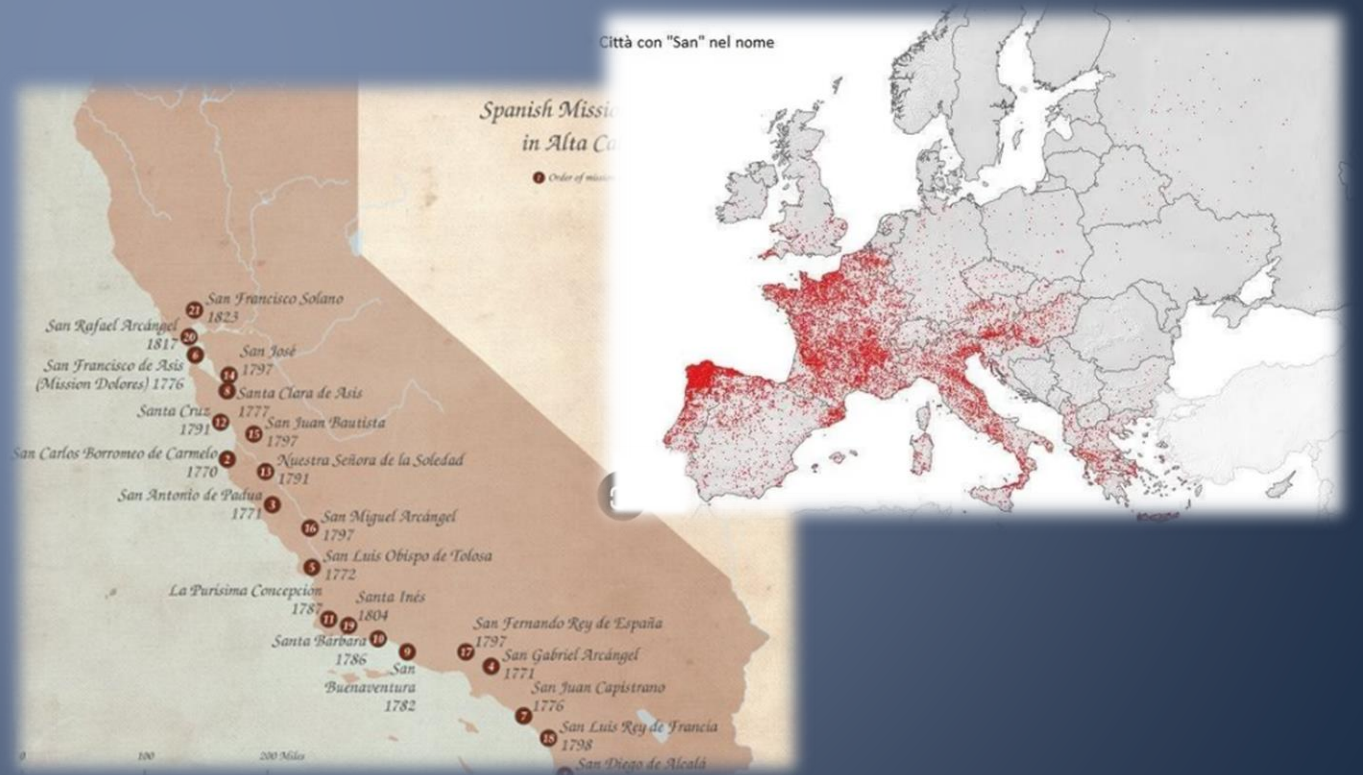


What else would point to Jesus being a real person?

- › What other things point to him being a real person?
 - **98 Nations** were founded on Christian beliefs
 - **Our Calendar** begins with the birth of Jesus.
 - › It replaced all other calendars and they are no longer used.
 - **At least 20,864 cities** were named after Jesus or Saints.
 - **The Bible is the best selling book of all time** and every year (100M copies per year, 6 Billion all time)

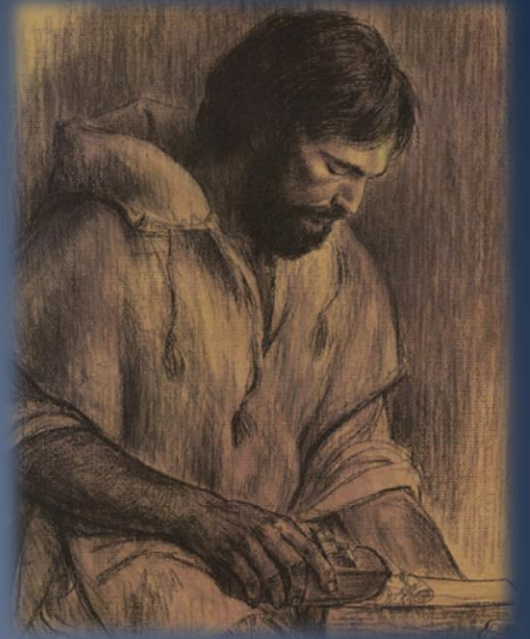


Fig. 4.7. Rejected French calendar.



Facts about Jesus

- › He was born in Bethlehem in a stable for animals.
- › He became a carpenter under his father.
- › He had no home of his own.
- › He had very few cloths and very little money.
- › Many of the rulers hated him and put him to death.



How many people today would be popular and liked based on the above facts?

How could this all be true?

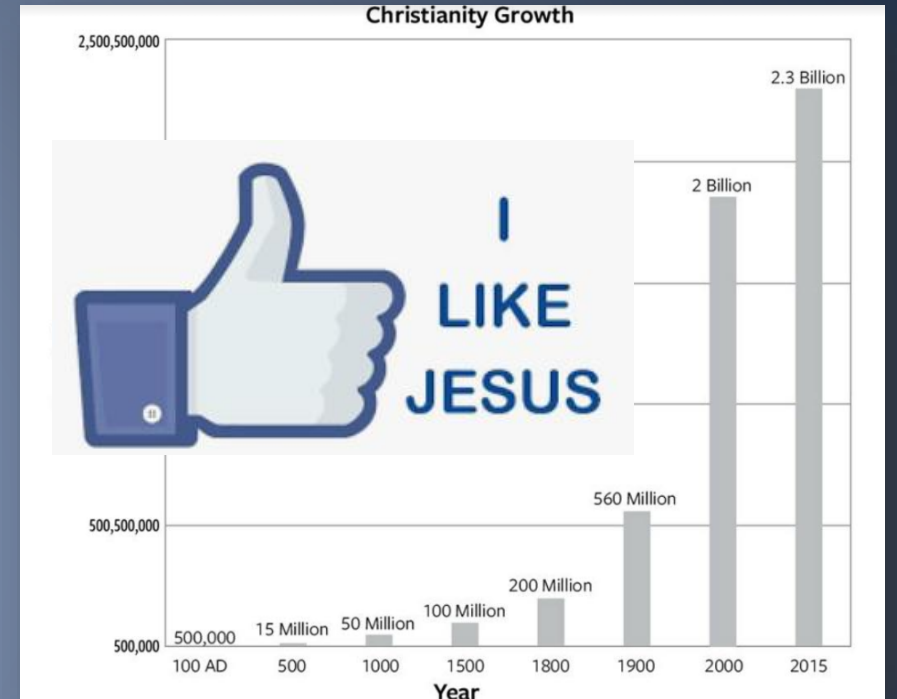
› Jesus today has over 2.3 Billion Followers.

The top 5 most-followed people on social media:

- Cristiano Ronaldo - 901 million followers.
- Selena Gomez - 690.5 million followers.
- Justin Bieber - 594.9 million followers.
- Taylor Swift - 539 million followers.
- Ariana Grande - 509.7 million followers.

In 100 years, most people will not remember their names!

If Jesus was not a real person, the people around the time He was alive would have testified to him not being a real person.





Review

- › Christians believe that God created EVERYTHING. Not that we are an accident or that everything came from nothing.
- › The Bible is an accurate, historical document verified by many historians and non-Christian sources.
- › Jesus was a real person. Many non-Christians testified to His life. And it is not reasonable to think that He was not a real person.

What does it mean to believe?

When used with God or Christ as its object; to believe means three things:

- 1) to assent to the truth of what He says or makes known;
- 2) to receive and trust Him personally; and
- 3) to commit oneself to Him in obedience.

