

Why should I believe in a God I can't see?

- Because there is a lot of evidence around us that there is a power greater than ourselves
- Because there are many facts that can only be explained by the existence of such a power

We can understand that it's hard to believe in a God we can't see.

We will explore the reasons for believing in a power greater than ourselves.



There is real evidence to support a belief in a God – even though we can't see Him

Problems in belief

We appreciate that you may have problems believing in a God we can't see.

No one can see God. We like everything to be tangible. But we all believe in many things we can't actually see, based on the evidence that we have.



The wind is an example. We don't see it, but we see what it does. Belief in God is the same; we can look at the evidence that He exists.

Another problem can be our personal circumstances that can be hard to fit in with our impression of a loving God. We will be considering why a loving God allows suffering in a later session. But we should realise that suffering in the world doesn't prove or deny the existence of God.

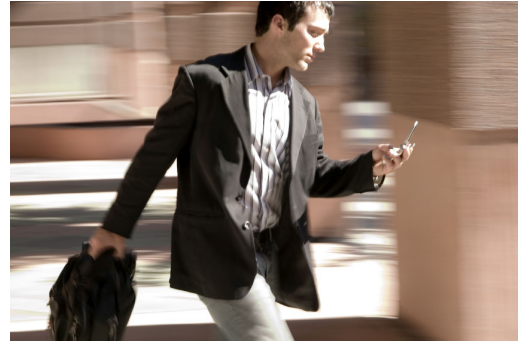


Why should I believe in a God I can't see?



Peer pressure can be a big problem in believing in a God. There are a lot of people who are very vocal in their belief that there is no God - friends, colleagues, family, eminent scientists and BBC newsreaders. It can be very difficult not to go with the flow.

Another problem can be that we lead busy lives. Some things we don't have time to spend investigating, whether that's buying something because a friend recommended it, or taking a certain route home because it's the way we've always done it. We can be like that with God and religion. We just go with what we were brought up with or what our friends believe, or what the BBC or figures in authority say.



Let's put these problems aside and explore some of the reasons for believing in a power greater than ourselves. We want to help you realise that there is real evidence to support a belief in a God – even though we can't see Him.

Assessing the evidence



A judge or jury looks at the evidence put before them. They then decide whether or not the accused is guilty. The more evidence presented, the more convinced the judge or jury are. One or two pieces of evidence may be coincidence. But if there are many pieces of evidence all pointing to the same conclusion, the evidence is compelling.

We should use a similar method when deciding whether we should believe in a God or not.

If there is no real evidence we are wasting our time.

If, however, there is evidence of a God who offers us a long-term future, we would be foolish not to consider it.

We will look at the evidence, both in the world around us pointing to a God, and in the message that claims to be from God.

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Evidence for a God we can't see

The evidence for a designer

We need to consider how we can detect design as opposed to random chance.

If we come across a sequence of letters such as : WDLMNLTDTJBKWIRZREZLMQCOP
we would say they are random; no thought or design is evident.

If, however, we see the letters THIS IS A SEQUENCE OF LETTERS
we can see that someone has thought about it – there is evidence of design.

The same applies to the world around us:



The carved heads of the American presidents on Mount Rushmore clearly show more evidence of design than the eroded rocks on the right.

We can see that complexity indicates a designer.

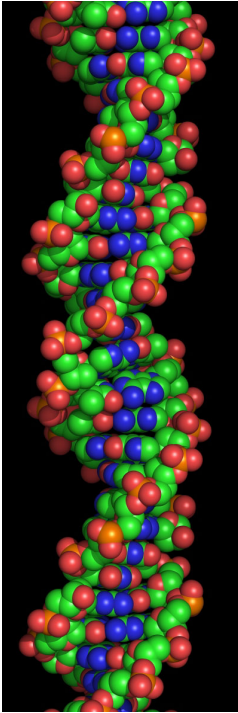


If we had never seen a mobile phone and we saw one lying on the floor, we would maybe pick it up and notice how complicated it looked. We would see that there were buttons and other features that were obviously there for a purpose. We would conclude that the features had been thought about. It would be obvious that it had been designed and therefore there was a designer.

The remarkable complexity that scientists have discovered in the natural world tells us that there is an remarkably intelligent Creator behind it.

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Information stored in life

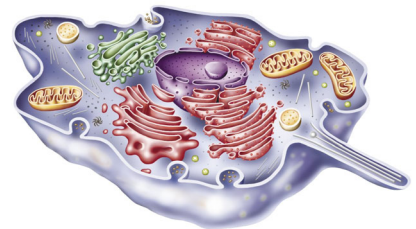


There is an incredible amount of information stored in each and every cell in our bodies. Information is needed to control energy production, waste disposal, chemical storage and processing. This information is stored in our DNA. The picture on the left illustrates its structure. It has been estimated that there is enough information in a single human cell to fill the Encyclopaedia Britannica, all 30 volumes of it, three or four times over.

It is unreasonable to think that the Encyclopaedia Britannica was written without intelligence. It is just as unreasonable to believe that the information in our DNA was produced without intelligence.

Where did life come from?

Throughout nature we see not only complexity, but also levels of complexity where living organisms are completely dependent on each other. Because of this inter-dependency, one partner cannot survive without the other. We



see parts of animals, collections of cells, or proteins that work together and yet are useless by themselves. They would have had to have evolved simultaneously. In fact, gradual evolution is not possible in such cases.

Here is an indication that a creator put the workings of life and nature into place

The universe “seemed to know we were coming”

Well-known writer Professor Paul Davies wrote in his book “*The Goldilocks Enigma*”:

If almost any of the basic features of the universe, from the properties of atoms to the distribution of the galaxies, were different, life would very probably be impossible. ... a biofriendly universe looks like a fix - or ‘a put-up job’, to use the pithy description of the late British cosmologist Fred Hoyle. It appeared to Hoyle as if a super-intellect had been ‘monkeying’ with the laws of physics. He was right in his impression.

There are a large number of features about planet earth that are “just right” to support life. These critical things include:

- distance from the sun
- stability of the sun
- size of the sun and earth
- angle of axis tilt
- speed of rotation
- proportion of land and sea
- composition of the atmosphere



It looks as though the universe and our earth have been “arranged” to support life.

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The laws of physics

The laws of physics are very precise. The pendulum on a clock depends on the law that says a pendulum of a particular length always takes exactly the same time to swing from one side to the other. The existence of these exact laws implies a “lawgiver”.



Moral law



Throughout history every culture has had some form of law. Murder, lying and stealing are almost universally rejected. Everyone has a sense of morality, but there are widely differing opinions about what is right and wrong.

Where did this sense of right and wrong come from, if not from a God?

The Bible

In the Bible there is much evidence of a God that we can't see. The Bible claims to be a message from that God. We will look at some of the evidence in more detail in later presentations, but we will take a brief look at the evidence now so that we can see how many different types of evidence there are.

Accurate predictions

We can sometimes make predictions based on what we have seen in the past. Weather forecasters, market researchers and sales forecasters all try to predict what will happen, with varying degrees of success.

Over 2,000 years ago, the God of the Bible made many accurate predictions about various cities and nations.

These predictions are:

- Clear and direct
- Known to have been written before the event
- Written by people who had no influence to make them come true
- Fulfilled by people who were not aware they were doing so



There are many predictions about the Jews. They said that the Jews would be generally disliked and have a history unlike any other nation. These predictions could not be guesses based on the history of other nations because they are totally different from what we would expect. Yet they have all proved to be accurate.

There are also predictions about other nations and cities. These predictions are clear and different for each city and nation. The Bible prophets remarkably chose the right prediction for each one.

When we think about it, these predictions are very powerful evidence of an invisible Power greater than ourselves. We will look at some of these remarkable predictions in later presentations.

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A law ahead of its time



The Bible contains scientifically advanced community health practice and a morally advanced civil law that was thousands of years ahead of its time.

Compared with the practices of other nations, the Bible's advice on community health was remarkable. It wasn't until the nineteenth century that most European countries discovered and adopted the ideas found in this 3000 year old law.

If we had taken the Bible's advice on sewage disposal and hygiene, many lives would have been saved. In some respects we have not caught up with this law yet!

As with "accurate predictions", we will look at the evidence in more detail in later sessions.

The variety of people who wrote the Bible

The Bible is made up of 66 individual books. They were written down by people of many occupations spread over a time period of hundreds of years.

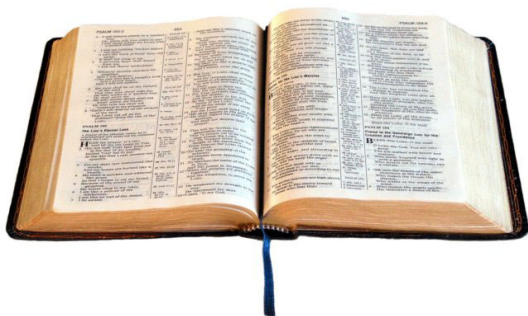
The table below shows the large variety of backgrounds, cultures and time periods from which the writers of the books of the Bible came.

Backgrounds	Locations	Situations	Date
Slave	Egypt	Single	1450 BC
Temple servant	Israel	Married	to
Priest	Babylon	Marital problems	AD 96
Captive in foreign land	Persia		
Shepherd	Rome		
King	Greece		
Musician	Turkey		
Royal descent			
Herdsmen			
Customs officer			
Doctor			
Prisoner			
High-ranking Jew			
Fisherman			

There is *no other book in the world* written by so many different authors spread over a period of 1,500 years that has one consistent message.

Some of the Bible writers suffered terribly or even died for giving their message. People don't give their lives for a message they have made up. The Bible writers had good reasons to believe that their message was true.

The “ring of truth” found in the Bible



The Bible is unique among the world's history books – it is brutally honest about the great men it describes. It gives a balanced picture. It tells us what to admire in them and, with equal openness, it tells us where each one fell down. Most historians' records of ancient kings are noticeably silent about their misdeeds – they usually concentrate on how great and mighty they were. The media in our day often expose facts about leaders that those leaders would rather hide. No leader wants his bad points to be public knowledge, and great efforts are sometimes made to conceal them. It is a natural reaction to want to hide our weaknesses.

The Bible gives an unusually balanced view:

- Abraham, one of the greatest characters in the Old Testament, betrayed his wife to save his own life
- King David, another famous Old Testament character, murdered to try and cover up the fact that he had slept with another man's wife
- The men who founded the first-century church are all shown initially as being selfish in wanting to be “number one”
- In his early days, the great New Testament preacher Paul condemned many people to death because he disagreed with what they believed

The Bible is *unlike any other record of history*.

Bible “echoes”

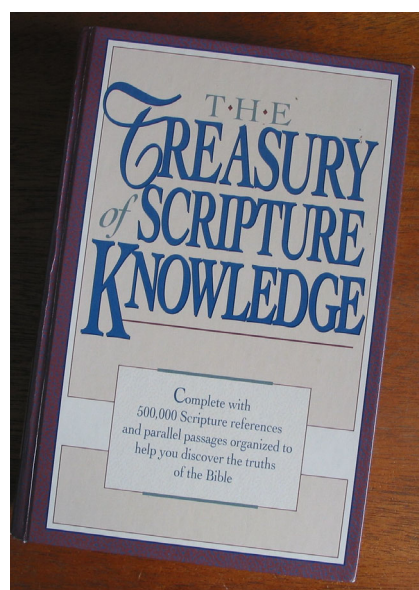
“Echoes” are another unique feature of the Bible.

These are themes and ideas which keep appearing through the Bible. Just as sound sometimes produces echoes that come back to us, so the Bible has themes and ideas that keep coming back.

They show that all the Bible fits together as a single unit.

The book *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge* contains no less than half a million Bible links. It is a very useful book to help us find these echoes.

Some computer packages contain *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*.



The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge,
Hendrickson, 1982

Why should I believe in a God I can't see?

Both in our world and in the Bible we have seen a wide variety of evidence of a God we can't see.

We hope you will want to look at the evidence in more detail and also find out more about the message from this God.