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*Reasonable
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Reasonable Faith

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Suggested readings.

- Lesson 1: Bone of Contention: Chapters 1-3. Scientific Creationism: Chapters 3-4.
Lesson 2: Bone of Contention: Chapters 4-5. Scientific Creationism: Chapters 7.
Lesson 3: Scientific Creationism: Chapters 5-6.
Lesson 4: Evidence that Demands a Verdict: Chapter 4 Part 2. Know Why You Believe: Chapter 7.
Lesson 8: Evidence that Demands a Verdict: Chapter 4 Part 1. Know Why You Believe: Chapter 8 .
Lesson 10: Evidence that Demands a Verdict: Selections from Chapter 11: Forward; Tyre; Sidon; Babylon.

Notes to the English translation.

1. Items in square brackets [] are supplied in the English translation to help the reader.
2. English Bible quotes are from the New American Standard Bible.
3. Chinese Bible quotes are from the Union Version, which is universally used in China.
4. The text uses Yahweh where English Bibles have LORD. The Chinese text transliterates the Hebrew word YHWH according to the sound of the word Jehovah. Jehovah was not used in these materials both because Yahweh is more accurate, and also in order to avoid any appearance of association with or approval of the group of false Christians, unbelievers, who call themselves “Jehovah’s Witnesses.”
5. “Philosophical materialism” (in Chinese literally just “materialism”) roughly means atheism.
6. In the Chinese language, the same term is used for both Christianity in general and Protestant Christianity, the word “Christ Religion”. Sometimes, however, Chinese unfamiliar with Christianity will regard Protestantism (literally “Christ Religion”) and Roman Catholicism (literally “Heavenly Lord Religion”) as two different religions rather than two denominations. In most of these materials, the term Christianity (“Christ Religion”) is used as the general term for the religion of Jesus Christ, just as it is in English. At the end of Lesson 15, a distinction is drawn when discussing church history.

理性信仰

梁求真

阅读建议:

- 第1课: 《进化论质疑》: 第1章“进化论产生的背景”; 第2章“化石能证实什么?”、第3章“遗传学与上帝的自然选择”。《科学创造论》: 第4章“偶然呢? 还是计划?”; 第3章“上坡呢? 还是下坡?”
- 第2课: 讨论此课之前请阅读: 《圣经》: 创世记 1章至3章。《进化论质疑》: 第4章“地球是年轻的吗?”; 第5章“人类真实的历史”。《科学创造论》: 第7章“猿呢? 还是人?”。
- 第3课: 《科学创造论》: 第5章“古今一致说呢? 还是大天灾说?”; 第6章“年老呢? 还是年轻?”。
- 第4课: 《铁证待判》: 第4章“圣经的可靠性”第2部分“考古文献印证圣经的可靠性”(96-105页)。《你为何要信》: 第7章“考古学有帮助吗?”。
- 第8课: 《铁证待判》: 第4章“圣经的可靠性”, 第1部分“历史文献印证圣经的可靠性”(57-95页)。《你为何要信?》: 第8章“圣经文献可靠吗?”
- 第10课: 《铁证待判》: 第11章“历史上所应验的预言”的选择部分: 引言 362-371; 推罗 372-382; 西顿 382-388; 巴比伦 419-431。

Lesson 1: The Existence of God

Before discussing this lesson, please read: Bible: Genesis Chapter 1; Psalms 19:1-6; Romans 1:16-32.

Believing in Christianity is not accepting a baseless “Idealism” or blindly seeking an emotional support. Christianity is true. Because it is true, it has evidence in the physical world of human beings. The following three-step proof demonstrates the truth of Christianity:

1. Nature demonstrates the existence, power, and supernatural Nature of God.
2. History and archeology demonstrate that the Bible records are historically accurate.
3. Fulfilled biblical prophecies demonstrate that the Bible is a revelation from God.

Through this three-step proof, we can reach a logical conclusion: Christianity is true.

Perhaps you will reply, “Forget about Christianity, I don’t even believe in any so-called ‘God’!” Quite right! This question is the first step in our study. The goal of this first lesson is to give you a brief introduction about why belief in the true God is the only logical, objective, scientific conclusion. Please note: we are not saying one should accept idol worship, legendary mythologies and the like! We want a logical, true belief. We believe truth is logical, and reasonable; therefore we expect, if Christianity is true, it too will be reasonable.

First we will look at two verses from the Bible, then we will examine whether the scientific evidence is in accord with the Christian Bible.

In the collection of books known as the Bible, there is a place that says the existence of God can be seen from nature. The writer uses a metaphor, saying that nature is silently speaking to humanity, telling us the glory of its Creator:

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse [sky] is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard. Their line [sound] has gone out through all the earth, And their utterances to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun (Psalms 19:1-4)

Another place in the Bible asserts even more directly that if humans do not acknowledge the existence of God, or if they worship idols, it is irrational and inexcusable:

Because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the [God’s] creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (Romans 1:19-20)

This verse tells us that nature evidences three of God’s characteristics:

1. A Creator exists.
2. He has supernatural power (“*eternal power*” in the verse above).
3. His nature is not material, much less ‘psychological’ or ‘a concept in human thought’. His nature is a supernatural ‘spirit’ (“*divine nature*” in the verse above).

Is this viewpoint reasonable? Is it scientific? Perhaps a believer in Christianity and a non-believer once had a conversation like the following:

“I heard you have come to believe in religion.”

“Right, I believe in Christianity and the Bible.”

“That amazes me! You’re a college student, you’re educated. How can you believe that kind of ancient mythology?”

“It seems to mean, reasonably speaking, we have to admit that God exists.”

“Really? How can you say a ‘god’ exists? Who has seen God? That is purely subjective Idealism.”

“Hold on a minute! ‘Can’t be seen’ and ‘purely subjective’ are two different things. Of course we can’t see God. Everything you can see is a physical object. If there is a God, He must be immaterial, otherwise He wouldn’t be God! I absolutely reject every form of idol worshipping superstition. God is not material, but He exists. There are at least two ways to confirm the existence of an entity. One is direct observation. Another is to observe the effects or influence of the entity, and thus know its existence. As for God, what we can observe are the results of His actions. The result of His actions is nature, especially biological life. Like the Bible says:

Because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since [God’s] creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (Romans 1:19-20)

1 课：上帝的存在

讨论此课之前请阅读：《圣经》：创世记第 1 章；诗篇 19:1-6；罗马书 1:16-32。

相信基督教不是接受一种无根据的唯心论或盲目地找精神寄托。基督教是真实的。因为是真实的，所以有证据在我们人类的物质世界上。验证基督教的真理有以下的三步证明：

1. 大自然证明上帝的存在、大能、超自然性
2. 历史学和考古学证明圣经记载有历史真实性
3. 圣经里已经应验了的预言证明圣经是被上帝启示的

按照这三步证明，就可以确认一个逻辑的结论，就是基督教是真理。

或许您会回答，“别说基督教呢，连所谓「上帝」的存在我都不能相信。”没错！这个问题就是我们研究的第一步。这门课的目标是给您简单地介绍为什么相信真正的「上帝」是唯一的逻辑、客观、科学的结论。读者请注意：我们并不是说要接受偶像崇拜以及传说神话之类的！我们要得到的是有理性、有真理的信仰。我们相信真理是符合逻辑、符合理性的，因此我们认为，若基督教是真理，她也会符合理性。

首先我们看两句「圣经」里的话，然后检验科学的证据与基督教的「圣经」是否一致。

「圣经」这本书籍里面有一句话说，上帝的存在从大自然就能看得出来。作者打比方说，大自然无声地对人类说话，告诉我们它的创造者的荣耀：

诸天述说上帝的荣耀，穹苍 [天空] 传扬他的手段。这日到那日发出言语，这夜到那夜传出知识。无言无语，也无声音可听。他的量带 [声音] 通遍天下，他的言语传到地极。（诗篇 19:1-4）

圣经的另一个地方更直接地断言，若人们不承认上帝的存在，或者去拜偶像，这都是没有道理的，人也没有借口：

上帝的事情，人所能知道的，原显明在人心里，因为上帝已经给他们显明。自从 [上帝] 造天地以来，他的永能和神性是明明可知的，虽是眼不能见，但藉着所造之物就可以晓得，叫人无可推诿。（罗马书 1:19-20）

这句话告诉我们，关于上帝，大自然证明他的三个特点：

1. 有一位创造者存在。
2. 他有超自然的能力（以上的“永能”）。
3. 他的属性不是物质的，更不是「精神」或「人类思想的概念」。他的属性是一位超自然的「灵」（以上的“神性”）。

这个观点有没有道理？合不合科学？也许一位信基督教的人跟一位不信的曾经有以下类似的对话：

“听说你信了教。是真的吗？”

“是的，我相信基督教与圣经。”

“真使我惊奇！你是大学生，受过教育，怎么能相信那样的古代神话？”

“我认为，按道理，我们不得不承认上帝的存在”

“是吗？怎么能说有「上帝」存在？谁看见过上帝？这是不客观的唯心主义！”

“等一下吧！「看不见」与「不客观」是两回事。当然我们看不见上帝。所有的看得见的是物质的东西。假如有个上帝，他必须是非物质的，要不然就算不得是上帝！我绝对拒绝每一种拜偶像之类的迷信。上帝不是物质的，但是还是存在的。要确认一个实体的存在最少有两个方法，一个是直接地观察，另一个是观察那个实体所引起的结果或影响，从而看到它的存在。关于上帝，我们所能观察到的，是他行动的结果。这行动的结果是：大自然，特别是生物。正如圣经所说：

上帝的事情，人所能知道的，原显明在人心里，因为上帝已经给他们显明。自从 [上帝] 造天地以来，他的永能和神性是明明可知的，虽是眼不能见，但藉着所造之物就可以晓得，叫人无可推诿。（罗马书 1:19-20）

What we can observe are the results of God's creation of the heavens and the earth."

"I can't believe that! Nature was produced by natural processes. Life emerged from lifeless matter by evolution, gradually developed, and became animals and people. This is scientific fact. Because they did not have scientific knowledge, ancient people invented myths to explain natural phenomena. But now we know that all natural phenomena come from natural causes."

"Yes, of course I agree that modern science has explained many things ancient people could not understand. But at the same time, the most up-to-date science also shows natural processes cannot produce life from non-living matter, and they also cannot change a comparatively simple organism into a more complex one."

"So you don't believe in the theory of evolution?"

"I don't believe in macroevolution – bacteria gradually becoming apes, apes developing into people – it's not factual. I only believe in microevolution or speciation – one species of bird separating into two subspecies with different beaks – because this is an objective fact."

"That's only because of your religious beliefs!"

"On the contrary, because I know from a scientific standpoint that life cannot have been produced by natural processes, therefore I cannot but believe there is a Creator, a God! If you want a logical explanation for the origin of life forms, you have to admit a supernatural cause."

"No scientists think that way!"

"Wrong. Although in China we rarely hear about it, in the West more and more scientists are doubting or rejecting the theory of evolution, including some scientists who do not believe in God."

"They're just a few crackpots!"

"Although they are in the minority, science should not be 'majority rules' but rather 'seek the truth.' Are you willing to research this question from a scientific standpoint?"

"What kind of 'science'?"

"Chemistry, microbiology, and statistical probability."

"If that's what you mean, then I'm willing!"

"O.K.! Let's start studying..."

The Inadequacies of the Theory of Evolution

The goal of the first several lessons in this set of materials is to liberate you from some commonly seen mistaken ideas and myths, and to show you the true God who created you and loves you. The first and most basic mistake is to think that humans are just a 'highly developed animal' produced by blind, uncaring chance processes. We have read this kind of thing countless times in high school or college textbooks. Are these theories true?

(In order to make the following discussion appropriate to the average person's understanding of evolution, it has been purposely simplified. If the reader is a biologist, biochemist, or scholar of some other natural science, it would be better to read [Darwin's Black Box](#), [Darwin on Trial](#), or the booklet [What Scientists Say about Evolution](#).)

We have heard it said, "When the environment changes, organisms change to adapt to their environment. Those that cannot change go extinct." Is this true? A change in the environment might be able to cause the extinction of a life form; but can it cause the change of a life form? If you were to move today to a place in Africa near the equator and live there, you would not become a black person, nor would your children be black! In the same way, if you moved to Europe your children and grandchildren would still belong to the yellow race. The modern science of genetics tells us that it is a change in the genes which causes change in a life form. A change in environment cannot change you or the children you produce because a change in the environment does not change your genes.

In Darwin's time this was not known because genes had not yet been discovered. Many scientists, especially Lamarck, thought that small changes in your body could be passed on to the next generation. Thus they thought that if you moved to Africa and your skin darkened a little, your offspring would be even darker! Lamarck said that the long neck of the giraffe came from constantly stretching its neck to eat leaves in tall trees: each generation stretched the neck a little longer, and gradually it became a long neck. In the past, this idea was very popular in the Soviet Union, and from there it spread to China. But it is completely wrong: neither environment nor activity can change your genes, so they cannot cause any so-called evolution. In fact, believers in the theory of evolution quite a long time ago fabricated a new myth to replace that old myth. Now they say that mutations, genetic mistakes, cause evolution. We will analyze this idea below.

If genetic mutations in the giraffe really produced "long neck" genes, and long necks were an advantage to survival which was preserved, then why didn't short-necked leaf eating animals go extinct? There are vast numbers of short-necked animals – why didn't they change? Or go extinct? And they live in the same place as the giraffes! Giraffes absolutely do not provide any evidence for so-called 'evolution.' Giraffes have a long neck, designed by God; and you have a comparatively short neck, also designed by God!

我们能观察到的是上帝创造天地的结果。”

“这我不能相信！大自然是按照自然规律而产生的。生物通过进化从无生命的物质自然产生，渐渐发展，变成动物和人，这是科学。古人因为没有科学知识，所以编造了神话来解释自然现象。但是如今我们知道所有的自然现象都是由于自然原因而产生的。”

“是的，我当然同意现代科学已经解释了很多古人不明白的事情。但是同时最现代的科学也证明，自然过程不能使无生命的物质产生生命，也不能把一种比较简单的机体变为另一种更复杂的机体。”

“所以你不相信进化论？”

“我不相信宏观或种外进化论——细菌渐渐变成猿猴，猿猴发展到人类——是不客观的。我只相信微观或种内进化——一种鸟分为两个有不同嘴的亚种——因为这是客观的。”

“这只不过是说你信教！”

“应该说，因为我知道，按科学来看，生物不可能是从自然过程产生的，所以我不得不相信有一位创造者，一位上帝！关于生物机体出现的原因，如果要得到一个合逻辑的解释，必须承认超自然的缘故。”

“没有科学家这样认为！”

“不是吧。虽然在国内我们很少听到，在西方越来越多的科学家怀疑或拒绝进化论，他们之中也包括一些不信上帝的。”

“他们只能算一些异端派系！”

“虽然他们还是少数，可是科学不应该「多数表决」，而是要「实事求是」。你愿意不愿意从科学观点来研究这个问题？”

“什么「科学」？”

“化学、微生物学和概率数学。”

“如果这样来看，我愿意！”

“好的！我们来研究……。”

进化论的科学缺陷

这份材料头几课的目标是帮助你从一些常见的错误概念和神话中解放出来，并且指出那位创造你、爱你的真神上帝。第一个、最基本上的错误是认为人只不过是一种“高级动物”，由盲目而无情的偶然过程产生的。我们曾经屡次在中学或大学课本里读到类似的概念。这些学说是否真实？

（为了适应一般人对进化论的了解，以下的讨论是故意简化了。若读者是一位生物学、生物化学或其它自然科学的学者，更好是直接看《达尔文的黑匣子》，《审判达尔文》，或小册子《科学家如何谈论进化论》。）

我们听说过“环境一变化，生物就会随着变化以适应它们的环境；那些不能变化的就绝种”，这个说法是真实的吗？环境的改变肯定能引起生物的绝种；可是环境的变化能不能引起生物的变化？如果你今天搬到靠近赤道的非洲居住，你不会变成一个黑人；你所生的孩子也不会是黑人！搬到欧洲去，你的孩子和孙子同样还会属于黄种人。现代科学基因学告诉我们，是基因的改变引起一个生物的改变。环境的变化不会改变你或你所生的孩子，因为环境的变化并不改变你的基因。

达尔文时期还不知道这点，因为还没发现基因。很多科学家，特别是拉马克，以为你身体上的小变化会遗传给下一代。所以他们想，如果你搬到非洲，皮肤会变黑一点，你的后代会变得更黑！拉马克说长颈鹿的颈这么长，是因为不断地伸展它的颈去吃高树的叶子，每一代的颈都伸长了一点，逐渐地形成了长颈。过去这种概念在苏联很流行，后来从苏联流传到中国。但是这是完全错的：环境、行为都无法改变你的基因，所以无法引起所谓的进化。其实，相信进化论者早已编造了一个新的神话代替那个旧的神话。现在他们说是突变，即基因的错误，引起进化。以下我们分析这个想法。

如果真的是由于长颈鹿的基因突变产生了“长颈”基因，“长颈”是为了适应生存而保留的优点，为什么那些短颈的食叶动物没有绝种？有那么多短颈的动物——它们为什么没有改变？或者绝种？而它们和长颈鹿生活在同一个地方！长颈鹿根本不给所谓的“进化”任何证据。长颈鹿有个很长的颈，就是上帝所设计的；而你有一个相当短的颈，也是上帝的计划！

In school, we have heard some teachers say that the development of a child into an adult is an example of 'evolution.' This is ridiculous! The entire process of the body of a child growing up and becoming an adult goes according to a detailed genetic plan. From the moment you are born, most of your adult appearance is already determined. Your development proceeds according to the plan in your genes. There is no novel 'evolution.'

Overall, the theory of evolution has three great inadequacies which preclude its being regarded as a scientific theory:

1. It cannot explain the origin of life.
2. It cannot explain the many different types of forms and functional structures in different organisms.
3. It is contradicted by the fossil record.

In fact, the term 'theory of evolution' is often used very carelessly and has become a hazy concept. Because of that, we must first distinguish two completely different concepts within the theory of evolution: macroevolution and microevolution. These two are frequently confused. In fact there is a large difference between them.

Microevolution

Microevolution refers to minute changes **within** a certain type of life form. In fact it should not be called 'evolution' because there is no evolving, only minute change. Different sub-species of dog can serve as an example. Through human breeding, already existing genetic variation can be expressed, producing 'new' sub-species. But at the same time, there is no new genetic information added, so it cannot be considered evolution. The different kinds of beaks on sparrows that Darwin observed on the Galapagos Islands in the Pacific are an example of this kind of variation. Human selection and natural selection cannot add any new genetic information. The new sub-groups produced **lack** part of the genetic information originally possessed by the entire group. The so-called 'new' sub-species have **lost** some genetic information.

Another kind of so-called 'microevolution' are changes caused by mutations. If you want to understand the effects of mutations, please consider a few commonly seen examples. Mongoloid retardation is caused by a mutation occurring in the womb in which the cells of the child carry an extra chromosome. The result is mental retardation, short stature, and a shortened lifespan. Another well-known mutation is hemophilia. The blood of hemophiliacs is not able to produce proper blood clots. The result is that blood flowing from wounds is not quickly clotted, but flows for a long time. Before modern medical treatments were discovered, it was very difficult for hemophiliacs to survive. This disease can be inherited through the mother, but its earliest origin was due to a mutation in human genes. Today, a normal mother and father will occasionally produce a hemophiliac child due to mutation.

Other mutations of many kinds cause spontaneous abortion. Moreover, most kinds of cancer are caused by mutational damage to the DNA in a cell.

Behold the power of mutations! Believing that mutations can cause macroevolution is completely unreasonable and has no objective evidence. Concerning mutations, please note:

1. Most mutations are harmful, so they should not be preserved by natural selection. Occasionally, harmful mutations are preserved in a group. This can be considered 'de-evolution,' not evolution!
2. For a small portion of mutations, neither harm nor benefit can be found, so there is no reason why they should be preserved by natural selection. Moreover, these cannot be considered evolution, but only change. This kind of change is the only area where so-called microevolution by mutation can actually be observed.
3. No indisputable example of a beneficial mutation has ever been actually observed.
4. No example of a mutation adding to the genetic information of an organism has ever been actually observed.
5. Still more certainly, even if a tiny beneficial mutation existed, the production of a new structure or organ by mutation has absolutely never been observed.

Macroevolution

Point 5 above is so-called macroevolution. Different kinds of organisms can be classified into different orders, genera, families, etc. according to their different functional structures. For example, mammals all have lungs and fish all have gills. Macroevolutionary theory says that these extremely complex structures can be produced by chance. Macroevolution asks us to believe that the most complex organs were produced little by little via mutations, and that the organs and systems so produced led to new kinds of organisms. This is a theoretical concept; no such phenomenon has ever been observed. From the standpoint of probability analysis, it has no real possibility. This is discussed in detail below.

The Theory of Evolution Cannot Explain the Origin of Life

When we studied biology in high school, we learned that all living things are composed of cells. Every cell has chromosomes, and chromosomes contain the DNA of genes. To grow or reproduce, chromosomes must split open and reduplicate themselves. This amazing process is completely automated, carried out according to

在学校里，我们曾经听过一些老师说儿童发育到成人是“进化”的一个例子。这是可笑的！儿童的身体长大成为成人的整个过程是按照一个很详细的基因计划。从你一出生，你成人时的样子大部分已经决定了。你的发育是按照你基因的计划进行的。没有什么新的“进化”。

总的来说，进化论有三个巨大的缺陷使它不能算是一个科学的理论：

1. 不能解释生命的起源
2. 不能解释不同生物各种各样的形态与机能结构
3. 与化石记录互相矛盾

其实“进化论”这个词经常被乱用，变成一个很模糊的概念。因此，首先我们要分清楚两种完全不同的进化论概念：宏观进化论（也称种外进化论）和微观进化论（也称种内进化论）。这两种常常被人混同了。实际上有很大的区别。

微观进化论

微观进化论是指某一个生物种类之内的微小改变。其实不应该把它称为“进化”，因为没有进化，只有微小的变化。不同亚种的狗可以当作例子。通过人工配种，已经存在的基因变异可以表现出来，产生「新」的亚种。但是同时却没有增加什么新的基因信息，所以不能算进化。达尔文在太平洋的加拉帕戈斯群岛所观察的鸣雀不同的嘴就是这种变异的一个例子。人造的或自然的选择不能增加什么新的基因信息。所产生的不同分支**缺少**一部分原来全种类具有的基因信息。那些所谓「新」的亚种已经**失去**了一些原有的基因信息。

另一种所谓「微观进化论」是指由突变造成的改变。想了解突变的作用，请看一些常见的例子。先天愚型是由一个在胚胎发生的突变导致的，孩子的细胞带有一个额外的染色体，结果是弱智、个子矮、预期寿命短。另一个著名的突变是血友病。血友病患者的血不能制造正常的凝血块。结果是伤口的血不能很快凝结、长时间流血不止。现代医学发现治疗方法之前，血友病患者很难生存。这种病会通过母亲遗传，可是最早是由于人类基因突变而导致的。现在正常父母所生的胎儿有时也会患血友病，也是因为突变。

很多其它的突变导致了自然流产。并且大部分的癌症是由于细胞的 DNA 受损、发生突变而产生的。

请看突变客观的能力！相信突变能导致宏观进化是完全不合理的，并没有任何客观的根据。关于突变，请注意：

1. 大部分的突变有害，所以不应该被自然选择生存。有时候有害处的突变还是存在某一个分支里。这算是「退化」，不会是进化！
2. 小部分的突变看不出来益处或坏处，所以没有原因使它们被自然选择生存，并不能当作进化，只算变化。这样的变化是唯一观察到的所谓突变引起的微观进化。
3. 从来没有在经验上观察过一例确信无疑有益处的突变。
4. 从来没有在经验上观察过一例突变增加机体的基因信息。
5. 更清楚地，即使有微小带益处的突变存在的话，也绝对没有观察过突变产生一个新的结构或机能系统。

宏观进化论

以上第 5 指出的，就是所谓宏观进化论。不同的生物能分成不同的属、科、目等种类是按照它们不同的机能结构，例如哺乳动物都有肺，鱼都有鳃。宏观进化论说这些很复杂的结构能偶然产生。宏观进化论要我们相信最复杂的器官是通过偶然的突变渐渐产生的，并由此产生新的器官和系统，进而产生新种类的机体。这是个理论上的概念，从来没有观察到任何类似的现象。按概率分析来看，没什么现实的可能性。下边详细讨论。

进化论不能解释生命的起源

读中学生物学时，我们学习到一切生物都以细胞为基础。每个细胞都有染色体，染色体包含基因的 DNA。为了生长或繁殖，染色体先要解开而复制自己。这奇妙的过程是完全自动地、按照基因里

DNA and RNA molecules are even more complex than proteins. Just recently, it has been discovered that the DNA molecule – the gene that codes for only one of the many proteins involved in blood clotting, has 186,000 links (these links are called nucleotides) in its chain. If only *one* of those 186,000 nucleotides is wrong, the body cannot manufacture that blood-clotting factor, and the person suffers from hemophilia.

Moreover, a living cell is not just a bag of protein, DNA, RNA, and other kinds of molecules. A living cell has membranes, energy factories, protein factories, a reproductive information center, and much more, and all of this has to function in just a certain way. Evolution teaches that this would all have to happen by chance.

...[atheist] Sir Fred Hoyle is one of the world’s most famous astronomers. ... A few years ago, he and a friend of his, Professor Chandra Wickramasinghe, also a well-known astronomer, and an evolutionist who was also an atheist, became interested in the problem of the origin of life. Assuming the earth was five billion years old, they calculated the probability of life evolving on the earth sometime during that five billion years. The probability turned out to be one chance out of the number *one* followed by 40,000 zeros. Of course, that meant that there was no possibility at all, so they turned to outer space, and conjectured that there are possibly 100 billion galaxies in the universe, and perhaps 100 billion stars in each galaxy. They made the assumption that every star in the universe had a planet like earth, and that the universe is 20 billion years old, and *THEN* calculated the probability that life evolved somewhere.

For evolutionists, the answer was grim. The chances were so low that, for all practical purposes, there was no probability that life had evolved anywhere in the entire universe. Sir Fred Hoyle said that the probability of evolution is equal to the probability that a tornado, sweeping through a junkyard, would assemble a Boeing 747! ...

The idea that life evolved is false. People believe it only because they *don't want* to believe that God created life. But today, on the basis of science alone, the only explanation for the origin of life is still, “In the beginning, God created....” (The Amazing Story of Creation pp.31-35)

The Theory of Evolution Cannot Explain the Many Different Types of Forms and Functional Structures in Different Organisms

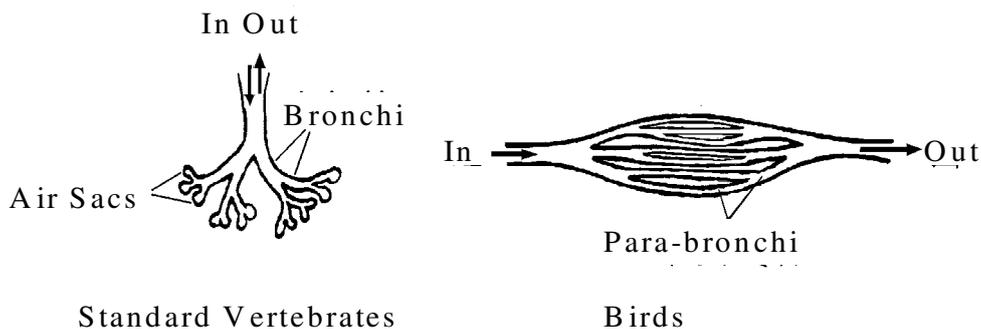
Even given life existing, there is no natural way for single-celled animals to change into more complex forms, much less is there any way to produce from scratch the different organs and systems of different organisms. This is the inadequacy of macroevolutionary theory. Concerning macroevolution, please note:

1. No macroevolution has ever actually been observed.
2. Since the production of an organ is controlled by many different genes, the probability of randomly producing it is so small as to be negligible.
3. Because of this, evolutionists hypothesize most organs began as very simple, supposedly ‘primitive,’ ‘incipient organs.’ Afterwards, these imaginary ‘incipient organs’ step by step gradually ‘evolved,’ becoming the organs observed today. This fabricated idea cannot solve the probability problem:
 - A. Every step in the evolution would have to have a concrete function and advantage, otherwise it would not be selected and preserved. But the simplest functioning organ is already very complex and could not be produced by chance.
 - B. If a very simple ‘incipient’ organ, which did not yet have actual function and advantage, really were produced by chance, it would not only be worthless but also harmful. It might interfere with the organism’s function, or at the least it would waste the organism’s energy.

To give a specific example, we quote from What Scientists Say about Evolution:

Let's go back to the evolutionist scenario of reptiles (which are vertebrates) becoming birds, and consider the change which would have had to occur in their lungs. Here is Dr. Denton's discussion of this:

“The evolution of birds is far more complex than the above discussion implies. In addition to the problem of the origin of the feather and flight, birds possess other unique adaptations which also seem to defy plausible evolutionary explanations. One such adaptation is the avian lung and respiratory system.



DNA 和 RNA 分子比蛋白质更加复杂，就在最近，发现 DNA 分子——为与血液凝结有关的许多蛋白质之一进行编码的基因——的链中有 186,000 个结（这些结被称为核苷酸）。如果这 186,000 个结中的一个出了错，人体内就不能产生凝血因子，这个人就会得血友病。

另外，一个活着的细胞不仅仅是一个装着蛋白质、DNA、RNA 和其它各种分子的口袋。活的细胞有细胞膜、能量工厂、蛋白质制造工厂、一个信息复制中心和许多其它的部分，而且，所有这些都必须按一定的方式工作。进化论却认为这一切都是偶然发生的！

。。。[无神论者]Fred Hoyle 爵士是世界最著名的天文学家之一。。。几年前，他和一个朋友——著名的天文学家，Chandra Wickramasinghe 教授，一位进化论学家和无神论者，开始对生物起源的问题发生了兴趣。假定地球的年龄是 50 亿年，他们计算在这 50 亿年中的某一段时间内在地球上进化出生命的可能性。结果是 1 后面 40000 个零分之一。当然这意味着根本不可能。于是他们转向外层空间，推测在宇宙中可能有 1000 亿个星系，每个星系中可能有 1000 亿个恒星。他们假设宇宙中每个恒星都有一个像地球这样的行星，而且宇宙有 200 亿岁，然后计算在某个地方进化出生命的概率。

对于进化论者来说，答案是无情的。这一概率是那样微乎其微，无论如何，不论你怎么努力，在宇宙间任何地方都不会有生命产生。Fred Hoyle 爵士说，进化的可能性等于一场巨风刮过一个垃圾场后组装成一架波音 747 飞机的概率！。。。。

生物是进化而来的想法是错误的。人们相信进化论仅仅是因为他们不愿意相信神创造了生命。但是今天，若以科学作为基础，唯一的解释是不变的，“起初，神造……”（创造论的奇妙故事 31-35 页）

进化论不能解释不同生物各种各样的形式与机能结构

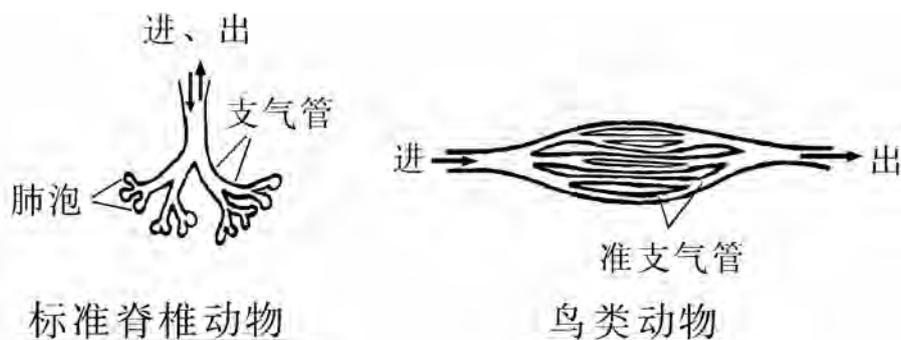
即使有生物存在，也没有自然方法把单细胞机体变为更复杂的形态，更没有方法重新产生不同生物的不同器官和系统。这是宏观进化论的缺陷。关于宏观进化论，要注意：

1. 从来没有在经验上观察过任何宏观进化
2. 因为一个器官由很多不同的基因控制产生，偶然产生的概率小到可以忽略不计
3. 因此，进化论学者就推测说大部分的器官是从很简单、所谓“很原始”的「初期器官」开始，后来这些想像的「初期器官」一步一步逐渐“演化”，形成现在客观的器官。这个虚构的说法解决不了概率问题：
 - A. 每一步的进化必须有具体的功能和益处，要不然它就不会被选择和生存。但是最简单有功效的器官已经很复杂，不可能偶然产生。
 - B. 假如很简单、还没有实际功效和益处的「初期」器官真的偶然产生，它不但没有用而且有害，会妨碍机体的功能，或至少浪费机体的能量。绝对不会被选择或生存。

举一个具体的例子，我们引用科学家如何谈进化论：

让我们回到进化论学家关于爬行类动物（脊椎动物）变成鸟的剧情中。考虑它们肺中可能发生的变化，但顿博士（Michael Denton）[他不是基督徒、不相信《圣经》]在这里讨论如下：

“鸟的进化远比以上讨论所隐含的复杂。除了羽毛和翅膀起源的问题以外，鸟拥有其它独特的适应性，而这些否定了似乎有理的进化论解释。其中一个适应性是鸟类的肺和呼吸系统。



“In all other vertebrates the air is drawn into the lungs through a system of branching tubes which finally terminate in tiny air sacs, or alveoli, so that during respiration the air is moved in and out through the same passage. In the case of birds, however the major bronchi break down into tiny tubes which permeate the lung tissue. These so-called parabronchi eventually join up together again, forming a true circulatory system so that air flows in one direction through the lungs. ... Just how such an utterly different respiratory system could have evolved gradually from the standard vertebrate design is fantastically difficult to envisage, especially bearing in mind that the maintenance of respiratory function is absolutely vital to the life of an organism to the extent that the slightest malfunction leads to death within minutes. Just as the feather cannot function as an organ of flight until the hooks and barbules are coadapted to fit together perfectly, so the avian lung cannot function as an organ of respiration until the parabronchi system which permeates it and the air sac system which guarantees the parabronchi their air supply are both highly developed and able to function together in a perfectly integrated manner.”

Can natural selection or mutations explain the thousands (millions) of genetic changes that would have to take place exactly at the same time for a reptile to become a bird? Does this hypothesized change in lungs (and feathers, etc.) even agree with what we know is true about the nature of mutations? Evolutionist Dr. Pierre-Paul Grasse', former president of the French Academie des Sciences and the scientist who held the Chair of Evolution at the Sorbonne in Paris for twenty years has clearly stated the problem:

“The opportune appearance of mutation permitting animals and plants to meet their needs seems hard to believe. Yet the Darwinian theory is even more demanding: a single plant, a single animal would require thousands and thousands of lucky, appropriate events. Thus, miracles would become the rule: events with a infinitesimal probability could not fail to occur. ...There is no law against day dreaming, but science must not indulge in it.” (excerpted from What Scientists Say about Evolution)

Thus the theory of macroevolution wants us to believe extremely complicated organs whose production is controlled by many genes were produced in the twinkling of an eye. This amounts to saying, although one is an atheist, a philosophical materialist, one still believes in miracles! Really, the only explanation with logical possibility is a belief in a Creator who designed and created living things. Macroevolution is a myth.

The Theory of Evolution Contradicts the Fossil Record

According to the basic principles of macroevolution, countless intermediary form organisms should have existed. Therefore the fossil record should be filled with fossils of intermediate organisms, filling in the gaps between different living things. In Darwin's day these had not been found, but he predicted they would be later. 150 years have passed, and they still have not been found, to the point where even many paleontologist who believe in evolution admit that the hoped for intermediary fossils do not exist. The fossil record is the same as modern biological taxonomy: everywhere there are systematic gaps between different kinds of organisms, to the point that some people say not even a single intermediary fossil exists.

This observed fact is directly contradictory to the predictions of the theory of evolution. But it is completely in accordance with the biblical record:

*And God made the beasts of the earth **after their kind**, and the cattle **after their kind**, and everything that creeps on the ground **after its kind**; and God saw that it was good. (Genesis 1:25)*

God's principle, “*after its kind*,” applies both in the present and the past, and it is the reason for and foundation of biological taxonomy. The Bible's “*kind*” is probably equivalent to modern taxonomy's ‘family.’ (If the reader desires a more detailed understanding, please consult Scientific Creationism Chapter 4 or Bone of Contention Chapter 2.)

Regarding the stratigraphic arrangement in the fossil record, and the equivalence of ‘species’ and ‘genus,’ please see Lesson 3.

Now we have seen that natural science demonstrates that life could not have been produced by blind natural forces. Let us listen again to the discussion between the two friends:

“O.K., now I understand why you believe God exists. But I still have a question: If the evidence proving God is so obvious, why are there so many atheists?”

“The Bible has already answered your question. Let's look at Romans chapter 1 again:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since [God's] creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. (Romans 1:18-23)

Mankind's earliest ancestors all knew that the true God is ‘spirit,’ not ‘material.’ However, because they did not want to be constrained by God's moral rules, they fabricated false ‘gods’ in place of the true God. Because humans have logical thought, we always want to explain the phenomena around us. If you are not willing to acknowledge God, you have to fabricate another explanation. Thus the historical process:

“在所有其它脊椎动物中，空气通过支气管被吸进肺部，最后到达细小的气泡或肺泡。在呼吸过程中空气经过同样的通道双向流动，然而在鸟的体内，主要的支气管分成渗透在肺组织中的细管，这些所谓的准支气管，逐渐地再次合并在一起，形成一真正的循环系统，这样，空气向一个方向流动。对于这样一个完全不同的呼吸系统，它怎样能逐渐演化到脊椎动物的标准是令人极其难以想象的。尤其得记住，呼吸功能的维持对于器官的生命来说，生死悠关到这样的程度，以至于一点微小的变化失误就会在几分钟内导致死亡。正如羽毛只有等到钩和须完全协同进化，彼此配合完美，才能发挥飞翔的功能，鸟类的肺也只有到能保证给支气管供气的，渗透在肺中的准支气管系统及气泡系统高度发达了，能够在完美集成的形式下共同发挥功能了，才能正常工作。”

自然选择或基因突变，能解释在爬行动物转变到鸟的时期可能发生的成千（上百万）的基因变化吗？这一假想的肺变化是否符合我们确知的基因突变的特性呢？前法国科学院院长，在巴黎，索波涅担任进化学主席二十年的进化论学家 Pierre-Paul Grasse' 博士曾清清楚楚地陈述了这一问题：

“似乎难以相信基因突变的碰巧出现能满足动物和植物的需要，然而达尔文理论要求的更高，单一的植物，单一动物需要成千上万这样幸运和恰巧的事件，这样神迹成了规则：具有无穷巧合的事件不可能不出现……没有法律的禁止梦想，但科学不能沉迷于其中。”（摘自《科学家如何探论进化论》）

因此，宏观进化论实际上要我们相信非常复杂、被很多基因控制产生的器官是瞬间产生的。这只不过是说，虽然作为无神论者、唯物主义者，还要相信奇迹！按道理，只有相信创造者设计与创造生物才有逻辑可能性。宏观进化论是神话。

进化论与化石记录互相矛盾

按照宏观进化论的基本原则，应该有无数的中间型机体存在。因此，化石记录应该充满中间型化石，充填所有的不同生物之间的缺口。在达尔文时代还没找到，但是他预料将来会找得到。现在已经过了 150 年了，还是找不到，甚至连不少的相信进化论的古生物学者也承认所期待的中间型化石不存在。化石记录就象近代生物分类学一样：到处都有生物种类之间的系统性缺口，甚至有人说连一个中间型化石也没有。

这经验事实与进化论的预料直接矛盾。可是完全符合圣经所记载：

上帝造出野兽，各从其类；牲畜，各从其类；地上一切昆虫，各从其类。（创世记 1:25）

上帝的原则“各从其类”古代近代都有效，是生物分类学的基础和缘由。圣经的「类」大概等于现代生物分类学的「科」。（若读者想要了解更多细节，请参考科学创造论第 4 章或进化论质疑第 2 章。）

关于化石记录的地层安排、「类」与「科」的相等，请看第 3 课。

现在我们已经看到，自然科学证明生命不可能藉着盲目的自然力产生。我们再一次听那两位朋友商量：

“好的，现在我明白你为什么相信上帝的存在。可是我还有一个问题，如果证明上帝的根据那么明显，为什么无神论者那么多？”

“你的问题，圣经已经给我们回答了。我们要再一次看罗马书第一章：

原来，上帝的忿怒，从天上显明在一切不虔不义的人身上，就是那些行不义阻挡真理的人。上帝的事情，人所能知道的，原显明在人心里，因为上帝已经给他们显明。自从[上帝]造天地以来，他的永能和神性是明明可知的，虽是眼不能见，但藉着所造之物就可以晓得，叫人无可推诿。因为，他们虽然知道上帝，却不当作上帝荣耀他，也不感谢他。他们的思念变为虚妄，无知的心就昏暗了。自称为聪明，反成了愚拙；将不能朽坏之上帝的荣耀变为偶像，仿佛必朽坏的人和飞禽、走兽、昆虫的样式。（罗马书 1:18-23）

人类最早的祖先都知道那位真的上帝是属于「灵」，不属于「物质」。可是，因为他们不想被上帝的道德规定约束，所以他们编造了假的「神」代替上帝。因为人有逻辑思维，所以我们总是要解释周围的现象。不愿意承认上帝，就不得不编造出另外一个解释。因此，历史上的过程：

IS NOT: Ignorance→Religion→Science→Knowledge→Atheism

BUT RATHER: Knowledge→Rejection→Conjecture→Error→Idol Worship and Atheism”

“How can you lump idol worship and atheism together?”

“Because they are the same type of thing. Idol worship and atheism can be regarded as ‘twin sisters.’ ”

“How can that be? One is superstition, saying that a physical object contains a ‘god,’ while the other says there is no such thing as a ‘god’ existing. They are completely opposite!”

“Their external appearance is opposite, but their logical essence is the same. The two both have a ‘cause and effect’ problem. They both posit a cause which cannot produce the effect.”

“I don’t understand what you mean.”

“O.K., we’ll use two questions to make it clear. First, idols. Can a block of wood or stone create life?”

“Of course it can’t!”

“So we can see the logical defect in every kind of idol worship: the imagined cause (idols) is insufficient to bring about the observed effect (organisms).

“Right, that’s obvious.”

“Now I want to ask you another question: Can mindless, blind ‘chance’ produce life?”

“Well, uh, I...”

“Has it ever been observed?”

“No.”

“Can organisms be produced by chance?”

“Reasonably speaking, they can’t.”

“So atheism and idol worship both posit a cause insufficient for the effect. Both are illogical and unscientific. Note that atheism is not something new, a result of modern science. As early as the time of David, king of ancient Israel (about 1000 BC) there were already atheists. King David’s writing is recorded in the Bible:

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." (Psalm 14:1)

You see, if at that time there were no atheists, the writer would not have been criticizing them. That was 3,000 years ago! Atheism is an ancient, flawed worldview.”

“O.K., I understand. But isn’t your so-called ‘God’ just another abstract concept you are using to replace ‘idols’ or ‘chance?’ Your ‘God’ is just another psychological concept!”

“That’s not what I mean. God is not a psychological or ideological concept, and He’s not material either; He is a ‘spirit.’ Philosophical materialism is wrong. In addition to matter and so-called psychology, there is another kind of entity, the spiritual.”

“That is hard to understand.”

“Yes, a little. But you see, because matter is not able to produce life, and human thinking cannot, so some other kind of thing must exist, that is a spiritual entity. There is also biblical prophecy concerning many things which people could not know in advance, prophecy which could not have come from human thinking. You remember the three-step proof of Christianity:

1. Nature demonstrates the existence, power, and supernatural Nature of God.
2. History and archaeology demonstrate that the biblical records are historically accurate.
3. Fulfilled biblical prophecies demonstrate that the Bible is a revelation from God.”

“How do you know the prophecies weren’t written after the events happened?”

“That’s just the question we will research in the next section: the historical veracity of the Bible. Are you willing to continue studying?”

“I’m willing!”

不是：无知⇒宗教⇒科学⇒知识⇒无神论
乃是：知识⇒拒绝⇒猜想⇒错误⇒偶像崇拜及无神论

“怎么能把无神论和偶像崇拜算在一起呢？”

“因为它们是一类。拜偶像和无神论可算是「孪生姐妹」。”

“怎么回事？一种是迷信的，说物质的东西含一个「神」，另一种说「神」那个概念不存在。它们是完全相反的！”

“表面上是相反的，但是逻辑的本质相同。两个都有「原因和效应」的问题。它们都设想一个不足产生效应的原因。”

“我不明白你的意思。”

“好，我们用两个问题表示。先说偶像。一块木头或石头能不能创造生物？”

“当然不能！”

“所以我们可以看到各种偶像崇拜的逻辑缺陷：它们设想的原因（偶像）不足引起所观察的效应（生物）。这只不过是迷信。”

“是的，很明显。”

“我还要问你另一个问题：没有理智、盲目的「偶然」能不能创造生命？”

“那，啊，我……”

“有人曾经观察到没有？”

“没有。”

“生物能不能偶然产生？”

“按道理，不能。”

“所以，无神论和偶像崇拜都是设想出不足产生效应的原因。两种都是反逻辑、反科学的。要注意，无神论不是新来的、现代科学产生的结果。早在以色列古代王国的大卫王时代（约公元前 1000 年）已经存在。大卫王所写的记在圣经里：

愚顽人心里说：“没有上帝。”（诗篇 14:1）

你看，若不是那时有无神论者，作者就不会批评他们。这是 3000 年前！无神论是古老的、有缺陷的世界观。”

“好的，我明白。可是，你所说的「上帝」是不是只不过是你对「偶像」或「偶然」替换的另一个抽象的概念？你的「上帝」又是精神的！”

“这不是我的意思。上帝不是属于精神或思想，也不是属于物质，是属于「灵」。唯物主义是错的。除了物质与所谓精神以外，还有另一种的存在，是属灵的。”

“这很难理解。”

“是的，有点。但是，你看，因为物质不能产生生物，而且人的思想也不能，所以一定存在另一种，就是属灵实体。还有圣经里面的预言，很多关于人不能预知的事情，不会是从人的思想来的。你记得基督教的三步证明：

1. 大自然证明上帝的存在、大能、超自然性
2. 历史学和考古学证明圣经记载有历史真实性
3. 圣经里已经应验了的预言证明圣经是被上帝启示的”

“怎么知道预言不是事件以后才写的？”

“这就是我们下一部分研究的题目：圣经的历史真实性。你愿意继续研究吗？”

“愿意！”

Lesson 2: Adam and Eve

Before discussing this lesson, please read: Bible: Genesis Chapters 1-3.

Where did humanity come from? Are you really the product of a blind, random process? Or did a Creator who loves you, who has unlimited intelligence and power, create you? If you really are just a 'high level animal,' then all of your feelings, thoughts and actions are meaningless. After a little while, you will die; a little while after that, everyone will have forgotten you. How vain! The reason that these thoughts pain our hearts is that we in fact are God's creation and are loved by God. God has given us an eternal soul. The difference between you and animals is absolute: They have no souls.

In Lesson 1 we have already seen that so-called 'evolution' is impossible. In Lesson 2, we will continue to raise evidence opposing evolution, and will also learn the true origin of humanity.

First let's review. We believe in Christianity because we believe it is true, and not for any other reason. We have given a three-step proof of Christianity:

1. Nature demonstrates the existence, power, and supernatural Nature of God.
2. History and archeology demonstrate that the Bible records are historically accurate.
3. Fulfilled biblical prophecies demonstrate that the Bible is a revelation from God.

In Lesson 1 we have seen that the existence of God is undeniable. That is the conclusion from science. However, we still must ask this question: Is the Christian Bible a revelation from God? If it is God's revelation, its historical records should be without error and have concrete evidence.

Now we will examine whether or not the Bible is historically accurate. Because this lesson and the next lesson are concerned with humanity's earliest history, and extant records of this period outside the Bible are very few, we cannot obtain archaeological confirmation for this part of the Bible. But we can contrast the biblical view of humanity's origin with that of atheism and evolution, and see which one is reasonable. Starting with Lesson 4, there are more concrete archaeological remains and historical records.

After creating outer space, the earth, land, and animals, God specially created humans:

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food"; and it was so. And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. (Genesis 1:26-31)

Then Yahweh God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (Genesis 2:7)

Ape-Men? Or Men and Apes?

The passage above tells us that at a specific time God created humans out of non-living matter. They were human from the moment they were created, just like modern humans. An absolute difference exists between humans and animals. Humans and animals belong to two completely different categories. We did not come from apes. Then why are there so-called 'ape-men fossils'?

In fact, the various types of so-called 'ape-men' all belong to two categories: real apes and real humans! The famous 'Peking Man' was in fact just an ape. Below we report the facts.

The first thing we need to know is, in the same cave where 'Peking Man' was discovered, many remains of actual human beings were discovered, including:

- Several skeletons of true humans, exactly the same as modern humans.
- Many highly developed stone tools.
- Several piles of human-worked stone chips, the by-product of making stone tools. The piles were about a half a meter deep.
- A six to seven meter deep ash pit, with the surrounding soil melted and fused by the high heat.

Obviously the cave was inhabited by ancient humans. It was the work site of true 'Homo Sapiens' (the scientific name anthropologists give to humanity). It seems to have been a large scale stone quarry. Given the ash pits, perhaps they were producing lime. Later the cave collapsed, burying the entire site. It needs to be kept in mind that these remains of human activity were unearthed at the same site as the so-called 'Peking Men.' Since 'Peking Man' existed in the same place at the same time as 'Homo Sapiens', how can it be considered an "ancestor" of humans or a "link" fossil between apes and humans?

2 课：亚当和夏娃

人类是从何而来的？你真的是盲目的偶然过程的产物吗？还是有一位爱你、有无限智慧和能力的创造者创造了人类？若你真的只不过是一只“高级动物”的话，那么你一切的感情、思想、行动都是没有意义的。过不久你就要死；再过一段时间，大家都已经忘记了你。多么空虚！这个想法使你内心很痛苦，是因为你确实是上帝所创造的、上帝所爱的。上帝赐给你一个永恒的灵魂。你与动物的区别是绝对的：它们没有灵魂。

在第 1 课我们已经看到所谓的“进化”是不可能的。在第 2 课，我们继续举出反对进化论的证据，并了解人类真实的来源。

先复习一下。我们相信基督教，这是因为我们相信她是真理，没有别的缘故。我们提出的基督教的三步证明：

1. 大自然证明上帝的存在、大能、超自然性
2. 历史学和考古学证明圣经记载有历史真实性
3. 圣经里已经应验了的预言证明圣经是被上帝启示的

在第 1 课我们已经看到上帝的存在是不可否认的，这是科学的证明。但是还要问：基督教的「圣经」是不是上帝所启示的？如果是上帝启示的，里面所记载的历史应该没有错误、并且有具体的根据。

现在我们要研究圣经有没有历史真实性。因为这一课和下一课是有关最早期人类的历史，而除圣经之外那个时代还存在的历史材料很少，所以无法得到考古学的准确考证。可是我们还能对比圣经和无神论以及进化论对于人类来源的观点，看哪个有道理。从第 4 课起，就有更具体的考古学与历史学遗迹与记录。

上帝创造了宇宙空间、地球、陆地和生物以后，他就特意创造了人：

上帝说：“我们要照我们的形像，按着我们的样式造人，使他们管理海里的鱼、空中的鸟、地上的牲畜和全地，并地上所爬的一切昆虫。”上帝就照着自己的形像造人，乃是照着他的形像造男造女。上帝就赐福给他们，又对他们说：“要生养众多，遍满地面，治理这地；也要管理海里的鱼、空中的鸟，和地上各样行动的活物。”上帝说：“看哪，我将遍地上一切树上所结有核的果子，全赐给你们作食物。至于地上的走兽和空中的飞鸟，并各样爬在地上有生命的物，我将青草赐给它们作食物。”事就这样成了。上帝看着一切所造的都甚好，有晚上，有早晨，是第六日。
(创世记 1:26-31)

耶和華上帝用地上的尘土造人，将生气吹在他的鼻孔里，他就成了有灵的活人。(创世记 2:7)

猿人呢？还是既有人，又有猿猴？

以上的那段话告诉我们，在某一个具体的时间，上帝直接地从没有生命的物质造出人类。从被创造时开始，他们就是人，就像现代的人一样。人和动物之间存在一个绝对的区别，人和动物属于两种绝对不同的类别。我们不是猴子变成的。那么，为什么有所谓的「猿人化石」呢？

实际上，那几种所谓的「猿人」都是属于两个种类：真实的猿猴和真实的人！著名的「北京猿人」原来只不过是猴子，以下报告事实。

首先要知道的是，在发现「北京猿人」的同一个洞穴里，也发现了很多实在的人的遗迹，包括：

- 几具真实的人的骨骼，与现代人一模一样
- 很多高级的石制工具
- 几堆碎石片，是人工制作的，是制造石制工具的副产品，那些碎石片堆有半米左右高
- 一个六到七米深的灰烬坑，周围的土壤因高温而陶化了

很明显，那洞穴里本来居住着古代的人，是真实的「智人」（就是人类学家称呼人类的学名）的工场。似乎有个大型采石场。看那些灰烬坑，也许是在生产石灰。后来那个洞穴崩塌了，掩埋了整个场所。要注意的是，这些人类活动的遗迹与所谓的「北京猿人」是在同一个场所挖掘出来的。既然「北京猿人」与「智人」生存在同一个地方、同一个时间，它怎么能算是人类的“祖先”或人和猴子之间的“连结环”化石？

In addition, all of the 'Peking Man' fossils discovered had the following strange characteristics:

- The vast majority were only skulls.
- The heads had all been cut off and separated from the rest of the body.
- All of the skulls had been smashed in at the back.

Why did all the fossils discovered have these strange characteristics? The smashing in of the backs of all the skulls was obviously done in order to remove and eat the brains. Even the anthropologists who originally excavated the 'Peking Man' fossils admitted this. This phenomenon is like what people in Guangdong province and other areas of Southeast Asia who eat monkey brain still do today. There is no animal that would do this: first separate the head from the body, then smash in the back of the skull and remove the brain. Very possibly the workmen of that time caught monkeys, cut off their heads, and removed and ate the brains. Then they threw the empty skulls into the cave. Later the cave collapsed.

In the 1930s anthropologists excavated the cave. With only fragmented skulls as a basis they "reconstructed" the appearance of the animals. Because they were all enthusiastic adherents to the theory of evolution, they chose to remold the fragmented skulls into an imaginary 'ape-man.' Then the newspapers enthusiastically reported that a new 'ape-man' had been found in China, while the human skeletons and tools found at the same time were not widely reported. After the Japanese invasion of China, the fossils disappeared.

We have all studied so-called 'Peking Man' in our textbooks. Why didn't our textbooks tell us that only skulls were discovered, and that they were smashed in at the back? Furthermore, the textbooks did not mention that skeletons, tools and remains of industry of modern humans were found at the same site. If you read the original reports of the scientists who excavated the site, you can confirm this information (the original reports are referenced in Evolution: The Fossils Still Say No pp. 285-296; In the Minds of Men pp. 234-241). The pictures 'Peking Man' we see now in textbooks are all drawn according to the guesswork reconstruction of skull fragments done by an anthropologist in the 1930s – with a whole lot of human imagination added in! In fact, the so-called 'Peking Man' is nothing more than 'Peking Monkey,' eaten by the people who lived in the Peking area at that time!

Just like ordinary people, it is very hard for scientists to avoid preconceived biases. From 1912 to 1954, Piltown Man was regarded as one of the most important 'link fossils' between humans and apes. Only a skull was "discovered." Because it was regarded as so valuable, it was locked in the safe of the British Museum and zealously protected from "unfriendly" investigation for 40 years. It appeared in hundreds of books and articles, being regarded as a great 'evidence' proving Darwin was right. Finally, on more careful examination of the skull, it was discovered that it was a fake – composed of the cranium of a human, the jaw of an orangutan, and teeth from a chimpanzee! It was a deliberate fake.

Why were so many scientists fooled for such a long time? Probably because their education biased them. They already unquestioningly believe in the theory of evolution, so they easily accept any explanation which supports or fits with evolutionary theory. Now in our textbooks, it seems we cannot find the Piltown Man affair, because the editors do not want us to know that scientists have biases, are capable of making huge mistakes, and are not necessarily seeking for truth.

In 1886 Neanderthal Man was discovered. From the time of its discovery until World War II, it was regarded as a crude, "low-level" human. Scientists in the second half of the 20th century finally admitted that Neanderthal Man was just an ancient ethnicity of humanity, the same as modern humans, completely 'Homo Sapiens.' They had religion and art, and gave long-term care to the injured.

In 1922 a tooth was discovered in Nebraska in the U.S.A. The tooth was shown to a **first rank American fossil expert, Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, a professor at Columbia University. Osborn and other American scientists were very excited about this tooth. They claimed that they could see special characteristics of a species intermediary between humans and apes in the tooth. Thereupon this animal was regarded as an 'Ape Man,' taken as "evidence" that apes evolved into humans! The head of the American Museum of Natural History loudly proclaimed that the 'missing link' between apes and humans had been found. In 1922, the **London Daily News published a picture of 'Nebraska Man' and his mate, as well as the tools they used – all of this based on a single tooth! In 1928, in the area where the tooth had been discovered, the rest of the skeleton was found. They discovered it was a kind of pig! (See The Amazing Story of Creation p.80) In 1972 in Peru in South America, the same kind of pig was discovered to be still living. Are we descended from Peruvian pigs?

How many fossils which are presently regarded as "iron-clad" 'proof' of evolution will be rejected a short while from now? Africa's 'Australopithecus?' Now even many believers in evolution doubt whether it was an ancestor of ape-men. In fact, it is nothing but a monkey. 'Homo Erectus?' There are still some who say 'Peking Man' is a kind of 'Homo Erectus,' but it is a monkey. Some 'Homo Erectus' fossils discovered in Europe are merely the skeletons of ancient humans.

并且，所发现的「北京猿人」化石有以下的奇怪特点：

- 绝大部分只有头骨
- 这些头颅原来被砍了下来，与身体其它部分分开了
- 所有的头骨的后部都破碎了

为什么所发现的那些化石都有这奇怪的特点呢？所有的这些头骨的后部都破碎了，这很明显是为了取出大脑来吃，这是连原来挖掘出「北京猿人」化石的人类学家也承认的。这个现象就像现在广东省以及东南亚吃猴脑的人所做的。没有任何动物会这样作：先把头和身体分开，然后打碎头颅的后部、取出大脑。很可能就是当时工人抓了猴子，砍下它们的头，拿出猴脑来吃，然后把空的头骨扔在洞穴里面。后来那个洞穴坍塌了。

20 世纪的 30 年代，人类学家挖掘那个洞穴。他们只有破破碎碎的头骨作为根据，“复原”出那些动物的样子。因为他们都热衷于进化论，所以他们有选择地把破碎的头骨改造成假想的「猿人」。于是报纸上热烈报导在中国发现的新「猿人」，而同时发现的人的骨骼和工具却没有被广泛地报导。日本侵略中国之后，那些化石都失踪了。

我们都在课本里学到那些所谓的「北京猿人」，可是我们的课本为什么不告诉我们只是发现了头骨、而且它们的后部都破碎了？并且课本也没有提到在同一个场所也发现了现代人的骨骼、工具及手工业的遗迹？看当年挖掘那场所的科学家所写的原版报告，就可以确认这些事实（原版报告引证在《Evolution: The Fossils Still Say No》285-296 页；《In the Minds of Men》234-241 页）。现在我们在课本里所看到的「北京猿人」的图画都是根据 30 年代一位人类学家所改造的一个破碎的头骨猜想出来的——并且加上了很多人的想像！实际上，所谓的「北京猿人」只不过是当时北京地区的人所吃的「北京猴子」而已！

就像普通人一样，科学家难免有预先假定的偏见。1912 年至 1954 年，皮尔当人就被认为是那些最重要的人和猿猴之间的「连结化石」。当年只“发现”了一个头骨，因为认为它是那么宝贵，就把它锁在英国博物馆的宝箱里，拒绝了“不友善”的检验，热切地保护了 40 年。于是它出现在几百本与进化论有关的书和文章里，被当作一个伟大的「证据」证明达尔文是对的。终于，当稍微详细地检查那个头骨时，发现它是假的——一块现代人的头骨、一块猩猩的颞骨和一只黑猩猩的牙齿组成的！原来是有人故意伪造的。

为什么有那么多科学家那么长时间地被欺骗了？大概是因为他们所受的教育使他们产生了偏见。他们都已经武断地相信进化论，所以他们很容易接受任何支持或符合进化论的解释。在我们的课本里，现在已经几乎找不到那件皮尔当人的事情，因为编书的人不想让我们知道科学家有偏见，会犯很大的错误，并且不一定是在追求真理。

1886 年发现了尼安德特人。从它被发现时直到第二次世界大战之后，它都被认为是粗野的“低级的”人类。20 世纪下半页的科学家终于承认尼安德特人原来只是一个古代人类的民族，像现代人一样，完全属于「智人」种。他们有宗教和艺术，并且长期地照顾受伤的人。

1922 年在美国的内布拉斯加州发现一颗牙齿，这颗牙齿被展示给美国一位一流的化石专家，Henry Fairfield Osborn 博士，哥伦比亚大学的一位教授。Osborn 和其它美国科学家对这颗牙齿的出现感到非常激动，他们声称，在这颗牙齿上，可以看到介于猿和人类之间过渡种类的显著特征。于是该生物被认为是一种「猿人」，作为猿进化到人的“证据”！美国自然历史博物馆的主任大声宣布已经发现猿猴和人之间的‘连接环’。

1922 年，《伦敦新闻杂志》发表了一幅“内布拉斯加人”和它妻子的图画，还有他们使用的工具——这一切都建立在一颗牙齿的基础之上！1928 年在发现这颗牙齿的地方，找到了属于那颗牙齿的其它骨头，发现它原来是一种猪！（参考《创造论的奇妙故事》80 页）1972 年在南美洲的巴拉圭发现还生存着同一种猪。我们是巴拉圭猪的后代吗？

有多少的化石，目前还被认为是“铁证”的进化论的「证据」，再过一段时间就会被否认？非洲的「南方古猿」(Australopithecus) 呢？现在连不少的进化论者都怀疑它算不算猿人的祖先。事实上，它只不过是一种猴子。「直立人」(Homo Erectus) 呢？还有人说「北京猿人」属于「直立人」，可是它是猴子。某些在欧洲发现的「直立人」的化石只不过是古代人的骨头。

We often hear people say, because of evolution, modern humans are more intelligent than ancient ones. This is false. In the several thousand years of recorded history, human brains and intellect have not changed at all. Scientists find no significant difference at all between modern humans and the bodies and mummies excavated by archaeologists. Two thousand years ago, the ancient Greeks already knew that the earth was round. More than 4,000 years ago, astronomers had already accurately mapped the movements of the stars and planets. Ancient mathematicians discovered geometry, algebra, square roots and cube roots.

Humans did not come from apes. God directly created the first man and the first woman. The difference between animal and us is absolute. Below we will discuss the special characteristics of humans.

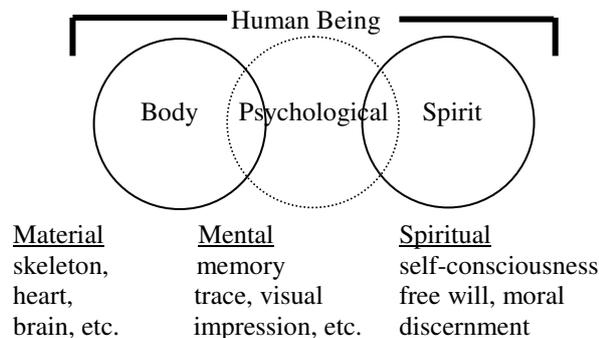
The Nature of Humans: Spirit, Mind, Body

“Then Yahweh God formed man of dust from the ground” refers to our bodies. The Bible says our bodies are made of ordinary matter, and when we die that matter disintegrates and returns to soil. Thus the Bible long ago told us what modern science only confirmed a little over a hundred years ago: living and non-living things have the same material basis and are subject to the same set of natural laws.

However, in addition to a body, humans also have a spirit. After a person’s body dies, his or her spirit still exists.

“God created man in His own image” does not refer to the body of humans, but to people’s non-material ‘spirit.’ This is like God: His essence is ‘spirit.’ He is not material, nor is He psychological. Rather, He is the sole Creator of both matter and mind. Therefore humans, on the one hand, are like God, having a ‘spirit;’ and on the other hand, we are like animal, having a body. It is the ‘spirit’ that makes human beings absolutely different from animals.

We can use three overlapping circles to represent the nature of humans:



Human bodies are **material**. The body of humans and all other living things are uniquely, amazingly designed, and could never ever come about by a random process.

The material body’s brain produces one part of our thoughts, which can be called **mental**. The mental includes, for example, a visual impression, or the memory trace of a word you just heard spoken, or other similar information in your brain. Although these impressions in our brains arise from material phenomena, they themselves are not material. One can say that they are neural states, or something like abstract information systems. The information stored in a computer is also like this, but the human brain is far more complex than any computer! In the area of brain information, animals and humans are basically the same, however that of humans is more complex than animals.

There is, however, a huge difference between the thought of humans and that of animals: humans have self-consciousness. This self-consciousness comes from our **spirit**.

The Unique Characteristics of Human Beings: Self-consciousness, Free Will, Moral Responsibility and Ruling Authority

If your neighbor’s dog, even though he eats well every day, still steals a piece of meat from your kitchen, you will say: “He’s a bad dog!” If your neighbor, even though he has no financial lack, still steals money from your bedroom, you will say “He’s a bad man!” Although both are “bad,” you will still distinguish between them two different kinds of “bad.”

A dog is “bad” because he has not received good training. We will not regard the dog as disobedient to morality; we will not give him a lecture on morality! If we see his master saying to him, “How could you do such a thing? That was immoral! Shameful! You need to learn how to act properly...” we will feel it is ridiculous! A dog is completely controlled by his instincts and his environment. He does not have free will, and because of that, he does not have moral responsibility.

But people are different. No matter what kind of influences a person had when he was young, we will still feel he has moral responsibility. Even if the environment he grew up in was very evil, he still has the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. This includes people who from childhood have “learned to do bad things.” If a thief’s shoes are stolen, he too will complain that this is wrong! This demonstrates that even thieves know morality.

我们常常听到人说，现代人比古代人聪明，就是因为进化了。这句是假的。在几千年有记载的历史中，人类的大脑和智力没有什么改变。检查考古学家所挖掘的尸体和木乃伊，科学家找不到任何与现代人的重要区别。2500年前，古代希腊人已经知道地球是圆形的。4000多年前的科学家早已很正确地计算过恒星和行星的运转。古代数学家发明了几何、代数、平方根和立方根。

人类不是猴子变成的了。上帝直接地创造了第一位男人和第一位女人。我们和动物的区别是绝对的。以下讨论人类的特性。

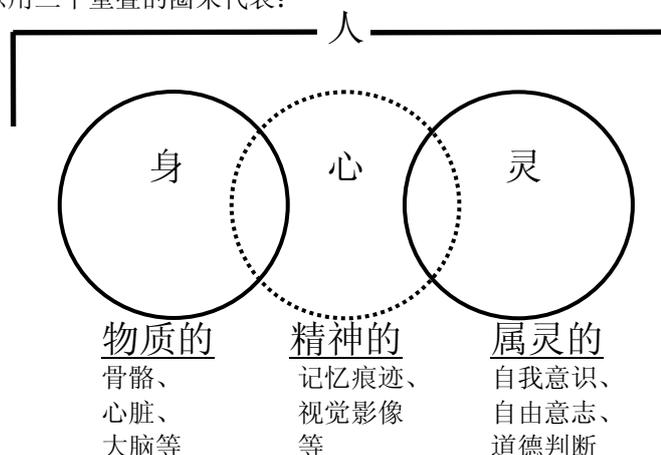
人类的属性：灵、心、身

“耶和華上帝用地上的尘土造人”这句话是指我们的身体。圣经说我们的身体是由普通的物质构成的，而且人死了以后那些物质分子就分解、回归土壤。这表明圣经早已告诉我们现代科学最近一百多年才确认的道理：有生命的、无生命的物体有同样的物质基础、受同一套自然规律的支配。

可是人除了物质的身体以外，还有一个灵。人的身体死了之后人的灵还存在。

“上帝就照着自己的形像造人”不是指人类身体的样子，是指人有非物质的「灵」。这就像上帝一样，他本身是「灵」，他不是物质的，更不是精神的，乃是物质和精神的独立创造者。因此，人一方面像上帝一样，有「灵」；另一方面，就像动物一样，有身体。是「灵」那方面使人 and 动物有绝对的区别。

关于人的属性，可以用三个重叠的圈来代表：



人的身体是**物质的**。人和所有的生物的身体都是很独特、很奇妙的设计，永永远远不能通过偶然的过程产生。

物质身体的大脑产生我们思想的一部分，可以称为**精神**。精神包括例如一个视觉影像，或一个刚才听过的一句话的记忆痕迹等类似的大脑信息。这样的大脑里的影像，虽然是由物质现象引起的，它本身不是物质的，可以说是神经细胞状态或抽象信息系统之类的。电脑所储存的信息也是如此，可是人类的大脑比任何电脑还复杂得多！在大脑信息方面，动物和人基本上一样，只不过人比动物复杂。

但是人的思想和动物的思想之间有一个非常大的差别：人有自我意识（自觉）。这种自我意识属于我们的**灵**。

人类的特性：自我意识、自由意志、道德责任、治理权力

如果你邻居的狗，尽管天天吃得饱，却从你的厨房里偷了一块肉，你会说：“这是一只不好的狗！”如果你的邻居，尽管没有什么物质上的缺乏，却从你的卧房偷了一笔钱，你会说：“他是一个不好的人！”虽然两个都“不好”，但是在他们之中你还是会区别两种不同的“不好”。

一只狗“不好”是由于没有受到好的训练。我们不会认为那只狗是违背道德，不会和它讲道理！如果我们看见它的主人对他的狗说“你怎么能这样作！这是不道德的！太可耻了！你要学会怎么作狗……”我们会觉得很可笑！一只狗是完全被它的本能和环境控制的，它没有自由意志，因此没有道德责任。

但是人就是另一回事了。无论人小的时候受到什么样的影响，我们还是认为他有道德责任。即使他成长的环境很罪恶，他还是有辨别是非的能力，包括那些从小“学坏了”的人。如果一个小偷的鞋子被抢走的话，他也会埋怨这是不道德的！这表明连小偷也懂道德。

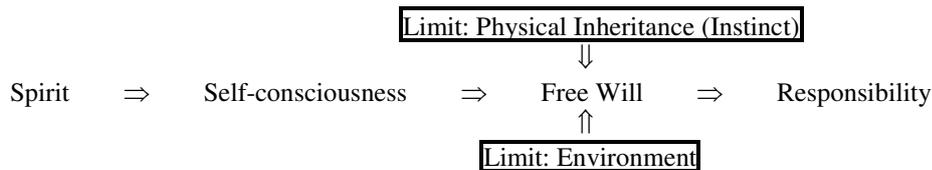
Why is it that even criminals can pass judgment on other criminals? It is because we all know that people have free will. People can choose to sin or to do good, therefore everyone is responsible for his or her own choices. Although people cannot avoid being **influenced** by their environment and instincts, nonetheless they are not **controlled** by their environment and instincts.

This free will is born of human beings' self-consciousness. If we were not aware of our own existence, like plants, how could we have free will? Without self-consciousness, without knowledge of our own existence, we would per force be controlled by our instincts and environment, like a worm. But humans do have self-consciousness. The Bible tells us that self-consciousness comes from our spirit:

The spirit of man is the lamp of Yahweh, Searching all the innermost parts of his being. (Proverbs 20:27)

For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. (1 Corinthians 2:11)

Through our spirits, like God, we know ourselves – unlike any other organism.



“God created man in His own image.” Human beings' self-consciousness is one part of the image of God. Animals do not have it. Self-consciousness belongs to our spirit, it does not belong to our physical brain. No scientist or philosopher has ever demonstrated how a physical object, no matter how complex, could give rise to self-consciousness. Even at the most abstract, theoretical level they have no idea how it could happen. “Matter produces consciousness” is the baseless faith of atheistic Materialism, just like “Chance produces life” is the baseless faith of the theory of evolution.

At this point, Christianity and Materialism are very different. According to Materialism, human beings are merely composed of their body's material structure plus the influences of their social environment. Neither of these two elements (heredity and environment) are under our personal control, but rather control every person. Thus the logical conclusion of Materialism is ‘Determinism,’ or in other words, ‘Fate.’ On the contrary, since our spirits are not controlled by matter or our environment, we have true free will.

Because humans have free will, we also have another aspect of the image of God, that is moral responsibility. Therefore, after a person grows up and knows to distinguish right and wrong, he or she is responsible to choose morally right actions. God Himself has moral responsibility. In fact, it is His own character which defines what is ‘moral.’ He has never offended against morality.

“Subdue [the earth]; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” Because humans have the abilities noted above, God entrusted to them authority to rule over the earth. This is very obvious: all of the earth's places, animals and elements are increasingly coming under the control of humanity.

Humanity's Sinful Nature and Death

This world is both an extremely beautiful and an extremely wretched place. Utilizing our amazing thought and intellect, humanity can do beautiful, virtuous things, and also the most despicable, cruel deeds. Although we all have a conscience, even the most moral person frequently does things he should not do, or fails to do what he clearly knows he should do. Why does our heart so often rebel against morality?

Furthermore, everyone, no matter high or low, will die. Really thinking about death makes us feel empty inside. After a little while, we will certainly die; a little longer, and no one will remember us. Human life seems meaningless. Death is a universal phenomenon, but we usually pay no attention to it. We are not willing to face it. In the end, we cannot escape it.

These two concrete problems – human evil and human death – where do they come from? If we say they are ‘natural,’ that is merely to say that they ‘exist.’ It is not an answer. Why are things like this? And further, how can we control the bad things in our heart? How can we face death? The Bible explains the origin of these two human problems.

Then Yahweh God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. And Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die. "

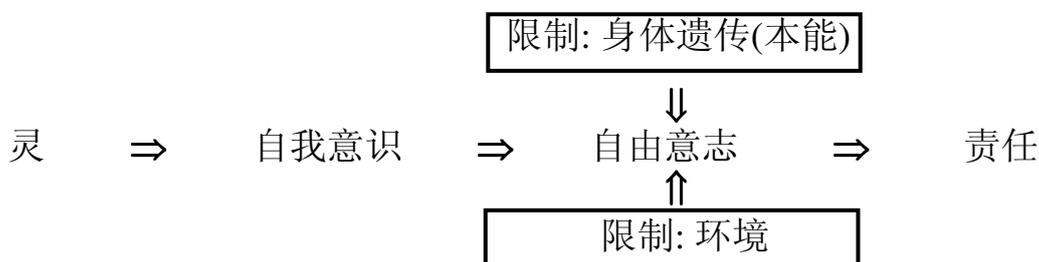
为什么连罪犯也能够定其他罪犯的罪呢？这是因为我们都知道人有自由意志、人能选择犯罪或行善，因此人对于自己的选择要负责任。虽然人不能避免受到环境和本能的影响，可是人不是被环境和本能控制的。因为人有选择自由，所以人也有道德责任。

这个自由意志是我们人类的自我意识产生的。如果不知道自己的存在，像植物一样，怎么能有自由意志？没有自我意识、不知道自己的存在，就必然被本能和环境控制，就像一条虫子。但是人有自我意识。圣经告诉我们，自我意识是属于我们的灵：

人的灵是耶和华的灯，鉴察人的心腹。（箴言 20:27）

除了在人里头的灵，谁知道人的事？像这样，除了神的灵，也没有人知道神的事。（哥林多前书 2:11）

通过我们的灵，我们认识自己，象上帝一样，而与任何其他生物不同。



“上帝就照着自己的形像造人。”人类的自我意识是上帝形像的一部分，动物却没有。自我意识属于我们的灵，不属于我们物质的大脑。从来没有科学家或哲学家论证一种物质的东西，无论多么复杂，怎么能产生自我意识——在最抽象的理论上，一点的概念都没有。「物质产生意识」是唯物主义无根据的信仰，象「偶然产生生命」是进化论无根据的信仰一样。

在此，基督教与唯物主义很不同。按照唯物主义，人只不过是由身体的物质结构和环境的社会影响组成的。这两个因素（遗传与环境）都不是在个人的控制之下，而是控制着每一个人。所以，唯物主义的逻辑结论是「决定论」，换一句话，就是「命运」。相反，因为我们的灵不是被物质或环境控制的，所以我们有真正的自由意志。

因为有自由意志，人也具有另一部分上帝的形像，就是道德责任。有自由意志的人能选择善良行动。所以，当人长大、知道道德辨别之后，就负有责任，要选择善良的行动。上帝自己有道德责任，实际上就是他自己的品德给「道德」下定义，并且，他从来没有违反道德。

“要…治理这地；也要管理海里的鱼、空中的鸟，和地上各样行动的活物。”因为人有以上的能力，上帝就交托给人类治理世界的权力。这很明显：全世界的地方、生物、元素越来越多处在人类的控制之下。

人类的罪性与死亡

这个世界是一个既非常美丽、又非常糟糕的地方。人类，利用我们的奇妙思想和智慧，能作很美丽、善良的事，也能作最丑恶、残酷的事。虽然我们都有良心，都能辨别是非，但是连最有道德的人也常常作不应该作的事，或者不作自己明明知道应该作的事。我们的心为什么常常反抗道德？

并且所有的人，不分贵贱，都要死亡。的确思考死亡使我们感到很空虚。过一段时间，我们一定要死亡；再过一段时间，谁都不再记得我们。人生好象没有意义。死亡是普遍性的现象，但是我们平时不理它，不愿意面对它。最后却逃避不了。

这两个具体的问题——人的罪恶和人的死亡——到底是从何而来的？说是「自然的」只不过是说它们是「存在的」，不能算是回答。为什么情况如此？而且，我们怎样才能控制自己心里的坏东西？怎样才能面对死亡？圣经解释了人生这两个问题的来源。

耶和華上帝將那人安置在伊甸園，使他修理看守。耶和華上帝吩咐他說：“園中各樣樹上的果子，你可以隨意吃，只是分別善惡樹上的果子，你不可吃，因為你吃的日子必定死。”

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which Yahweh God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.'" And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

And they heard the sound of Yahweh God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Yahweh God among the trees of the garden. Then Yahweh God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of Thee in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" And the man said, "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate." Then Yahweh God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

And Yahweh God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly shall you go, And dust shall you eat All the days of your life; And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel." To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you shall bring forth children; Yet your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you." Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. 'Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you shall eat the plants of the field; By the sweat of your face You shall eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.'"

Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living. And Yahweh God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.

Then Yahweh God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"--therefore Yahweh God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim, and the flaming sword which turned every direction, to guard the way to the tree of life. (Genesis 2:15-16, 3:1-24)

The 'serpent' is Satan, a spiritual being, using the appearance of a snake to talk with Eve.

In the beginning, God put humans in a perfect place. Humans had immortal bodies and could communicate with God directly and without fear. It is possible that, in order to facilitate His interaction with human beings, God would temporarily take on the appearance of a physical body: "*Yahweh God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.*" The earliest humans had no inclination to commit sin, and there was no social influence to tempt them. They did not understand most moral issues. But there was one moral rule that they knew: "*but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.*" They were very clear about that rule; they were also clear about the consequences of disobeying it. Perhaps God gave them this rule so they would have an opportunity to show thankful hearts of love to God.

Satan, making use of the body of an animal or perhaps taking on the appearance of one, denied God's warning and tempted Eve. First Eve and then Adam freely chose to disobey God's commandment. They chose to believe the serpent, and coveted being "*like God.*" Thus they chose to sin. The problem was not that they desired knowledge, the ability to distinguish good and evil. The problem was that, in order to obtain what they desired, they were willing to commit sin.

The Results of Human Sin and God's Curse

God had warned Adam and Eve: "*but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.*" That warning included two kinds of death: physical and spiritual.

Physical death is when a human body stops working and loses its function. The result is a person's spirit and body are separated. Adam's and Eve's bodies did not die until many years after they sinned, but the process of decay in their bodily functions began on the day they were cursed by God. The functions of the human body include serving as the physical expression of the spirit. After a person dies, the matter of which his body is composed continues to exist, of course, but it has lost its function.

耶和華上帝所造的，惟有蛇比田野一切的活物更狡猾。蛇对女人说：“上帝岂是真说不许你们吃园中所有树上的果子吗？”女人对蛇说：“园中树上的果子，我们可以吃；惟有在园当中那棵树上的果子，上帝曾说：‘你们不可吃，也不可摸，免得你们死。’”蛇对女人说：“你们不一定死，因为上帝知道，你们吃的日子眼睛就明亮了，你们便如上帝能知道善恶。”

于是，女人见那棵树的果子好作食物，也悦人的眼目，且是可喜爱的，能使人有智慧，就摘下果子来吃了；又给她丈夫，她丈夫也吃了。他们二人的眼睛就明亮了，才知道自己是赤身露体，便拿无花果树的叶子，为自己编作裙子。

天起了凉风，耶和華上帝在园中行走。那人和他妻子听见上帝的声音，就藏在园里的树木中，躲避耶和華上帝的面。耶和華上帝呼唤那人，对他说：“你在哪里？”他说：“我在园中听见你的声音，我就害怕，因为我赤身露体，我便藏了。”耶和華说：“谁告诉你赤身露体呢？莫非你吃了我吩咐你不可吃的那树上的果子吗？”那人说：“你所赐给我、与我同居的女人，她把那树上的果子给我，我就吃了。”耶和華上帝对女人说：“你作的是什么事呢？”女人说：“那蛇引诱我，我就吃了。”

耶和華上帝对蛇说：“你既作了这事，就必受咒诅，比一切的牲畜野兽更甚。你必用肚子行走，终身吃土。我又要叫你和你女人彼此为仇；你的后裔和女人的后裔也彼此为仇。女人的后裔要伤你的头，你要伤他的脚跟。”又对女人说：“我必多多加增你怀孕的苦楚，你生产儿女必多受苦楚。你必恋慕你丈夫，你丈夫必管辖你。”又对亚当说：“你既听从妻子的话，吃了我吩咐你不可吃的那树上的果子，地必为你的缘故受咒诅。你必终身劳苦，才能从地里得吃的。地必给你长出荆棘和蒺藜来，你也要吃田间的菜蔬。你必汗流满面才得糊口，直到你归了土；因为你是从土而出的。你本是尘土，仍要归于尘土。”

亚当给他妻子起名叫夏娃，因为她是众生之母。耶和華上帝为亚当和她妻子用皮子作衣服给他们穿。

耶和華上帝说：“那人已经与我们相似，能知道善恶。现在恐怕他伸手又摘生命树的果子吃，就永远活着。”耶和華上帝便打发他出伊甸园去，耕种他所自出之土。于是把他赶出去了。又在伊甸园的东边安设基路伯，和四面转动发火焰的剑，要把守生命树的道路。（创世记 2:15-17, 3:1-24）

那个「蛇」是撒旦，一个属灵的实体，利用蛇的形像跟夏娃说话。

原来，上帝把人类安置在一个完美的地方，并且人类有永生的身体，他们能够很坦然、直接地和上帝来往。可能是，为了方便跟人类的沟通，上帝暂时以一个物质身体的样子显现：“天起了凉风，耶和華上帝在园中行走。”最初人类没有任何犯罪的倾向，也没有任何社会影响诱惑他们。他们不懂得大部分的道德事情。可是有一条道德规定是他们知道的：“只是分别善恶树上的果子，你不可吃，因为你吃的日子必定死。”他们对那条规定很清楚；对违背它的后果也很清楚。上帝下这个命令也许是为了给他们一个机会表达对上帝感恩的爱心。

撒旦，利用一种动物的身体或者装成它的样子，否认上帝的警告、引诱夏娃。先是夏娃后是亚当自由地选择了违背上帝的命令，他们选择相信那条蛇，并且贪婪“便如上帝”，所以选择了犯罪。问题不是他们想有智慧、能知道善恶，而是他们为了得到所渴望的而愿意犯罪。

人的罪、神的咒诅所带来的后果

原来上帝警告亚当和夏娃：“只是分别善恶树上的果子，你不可吃，因为你吃的日子必定死。”那句警告包括两种死亡：肉身的死亡和属灵的死亡。

肉身的死亡就是人的身体停止工作、失去它的功能，结果人的灵与人的身体隔绝。亚当和夏娃的身体死亡是他们犯罪很多年之后才发生的，可是身体功能衰退的过程就是从受到上帝诅咒的那一天开始的。人的身体的作用也包括作为人的灵的物质表现。人死了，构成身体的物质作为尸体当然还存在，可是却失去了功能和作用。

Spiritual death refers to the severing of their relations with God. This death occurred immediately when Adam and Eve sinned. As soon as they sinned, they were afraid of God and wanted to hide themselves, to escape from God. They felt their own shame and sin. They could no longer regard God as a loving Father. To say that their spirits were dead is not to say that their spirits did not exist. Although their spirits continued to exist, they had lost the purpose or function for which they originally existed. The reason humans were given a spirit was so we could have a loving relationship with God. Because their relationship with God was severed, they lost this most basic purpose. This is probably what God meant when He said, “*for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.*” As soon as they sinned, their relationship with God was immediately cut off.

The physical consequences of sin and the curse. After humans sinned, God cursed the entire universe, causing all living things to have to die sooner or later. Perhaps this curse caused a change in the fundamental natural laws. The universe we see now is not exactly the same as it was right after God created it. There has been a change at a fundamental level.

The curse was the beginning of mutations. Mutations are mistakes in genes, causing many kinds of ugly, crippling, even fatal congenital deformities. Mutations are also probably the origin of most or all contagious diseases. Originally, all viruses and bacteria were harmless. Even today, most of them are harmless or helpful to humans and animals. But after God’s curse, viruses and bacteria began to mutate, with the result that a small proportion became disease causing. Animal behavior also changed. At some point after God cursed the universe, perhaps after Noah’s flood, some animals began to eat meat, and a small portion became exclusive meat eaters. The earth’s climate was also affected by the curse and began to have natural disasters.

The end result of these processes which God’s curse initiated was that eventually every living thing must die.

The psychological results of the curse. An evident psychological result of the curse is insanity, both that resulting from malformation of or injury to the brain, and that caused by traumatic experiences. These did not exist before sin and the curse.

A more severe and widespread result of sin is that everyone has a ‘sin nature’ from birth, inherited from Adam and Eve. At a minimum this means that we all very naturally tend to sin. We often feel that it is very easy to do what we should not do, and very hard to choose to do what we should. Humans are this way from childhood. We do not need anyone to teach us how to take someone else’s toys, hit someone, or lie. Little children do this by themselves from very early on – beginning from less than two years old! Moreover, as soon as people hear a rule or restriction, our hearts immediately rebel and we want to resist.

Our nature tends toward sin, and moreover we choose to sin. The result is that humanity frequently chooses to hate, lie, steal, oppress, cheat, murder, and invade. These phenomena are seen at the level of human relations and international relations. Some people say, “If there is a good, loving God, then why is human society so evil?” But the overwhelming majority of these problems are created by human beings’ choices to sin. The sinful nature is inherited from Adam and Eve, but committing sin is an individual’s choice.

Under these circumstances, the human heart frequently has an empty feeling. All around is a wretched state, and above is no one who cares or can help us – human life seems to have no point, no hope. And over everything, like an enveloping cloud, is death, which we fear but cannot escape.

The spiritual results of sin and the curse. Because of our sin, we are cut off from God. On the one hand, we ourselves naturally detest Him. In our inner hearts we know we have not attained to His moral standard. We resent His “excessively high” demands, and we resent that He wants to control our lives. We reject Him, and would rather worship idols – the “gods” fabricated by humans, or (what amounts to the same thing) choose to be atheists and regard blind chance processes as our “creator.”

On the other hand, God is cut off from us. Although He has created us, He does not acknowledge us as His children and is not willing to hear our prayers. He lets us go our own way toward self-destruction and death.

The most frightening thing is that, in the end our spirits will be thrown into hell. There we will suffer the punishment we ought to receive for our sins – a ceaseless, eternal punishment. This is the final result of spiritual death.

It seems that the human condition is a sheet of blackness. But in the Bible passage above, God gave humanity a point of hope. God predicted that one of Eve’s descendants would “*bruise your [Satan’s] head.*” This refers to Jesus Christ, who would come to save humanity and allow all those believe in Him escape the control of sin. Through Jesus, now we are able to recover a relationship with God and be His children. In the future, we will not need to go to hell, and our bodies will be resurrected. We can be in heaven, forever together with the God who loves us.

属灵的死亡是指他们与上帝的关系隔绝了。亚当和夏娃一犯罪这种死亡立刻就发生了，他们一犯罪就害怕上帝，想隐藏自己、逃避上帝。他们感到自己的羞耻和罪恶。再也无法看上帝为慈爱的父亲。说他们的灵是死的，并不是说他们的灵不存在，而是说尽管他们的灵仍然存在，可是却失去了灵本来存在的目的或功能。人被赋予灵的原因就是为了与上帝有爱的关系。因为与上帝隔绝了关系，这个最基本的目的已经失去了。上帝说“*因为你吃的日子必定死*”大概就是这个意思，他们一犯罪，与上帝的关系立刻就会隔绝。

罪与诅咒的物质后果。人犯罪之后，上帝就诅咒了整个宇宙，使所有的生物最终都必须死亡。可能这个诅咒引起了基本自然规则的变化。我们现在见到的宇宙已经和原来上帝刚创造时的状态不完全一样。在最基本的方面已经有很大的改变。

咒诅就是突变的开始。突变是基因里的错误，引起很多不同的丑恶的、使人残废、甚至致命的先天残疾。突变大概也是大部分或所有的传染疾病的来源。原来，所有的病毒和细菌是无害的，直到现在它们大部分是无害的，或者对于人和动物有益。可是在上帝咒诅之后，病毒和细菌开始有突变，结果是一小部分变成能致病的。动物的行为也改变了，在上帝咒诅宇宙某一段时间之后，也许是挪亚洪水之后，有些动物开始吃肉，一小部分变成专门吃肉的食肉动物。地球的气候也受到诅咒的影响，开始有自然灾害。

上帝的咒诅所引起的这些过程的结果是：每一个生物早晚必然死亡。

罪与诅咒的精神后果。诅咒的一个很明显的精神结果是疯狂，包括那些由于大脑本来不正常或受伤引起的，也包括因为经过很痛苦的情况引起的。在犯罪和诅咒之前这些都没有。

罪的一种更深刻和广泛的结果是人从一出生已经有「罪性」，就是从亚当和夏娃继承下来的。这至少等于说我们都有一个很自然的倾向会犯罪。我们常常感觉到作不应该的事很容易，选择作应该作的事却很难。人从小就是这样，不需要人教导我们怎样夺取别人的玩具、打人、撒谎。小孩子很早就自动地这样作——从两岁以下开始！并且人一听到规定或约束，马上就有逆反心理、想抗拒。

我们的本性倾向犯罪，而且我们选择犯罪。结果是人类经常选择仇恨、撒谎、偷窃、剥削、欺负穷人、谋杀、侵略。这些现象既出现在人际关系中，又出现在国际关系中。有人说：“如果有一位善良、慈爱的上帝存在，为什么人类社会这么丑恶？”可是这些问题绝大部分是因为人类选择犯罪造成的。罪性是从亚当和夏娃继承的，但是犯罪是来自个人的选择。

在这样的情况下，人类心里经常会有一种空虚的感觉。周围的情况很糟糕，上面没有谁关心或帮助我们——人生好像没有目标、没有希望。在所有一切的上面，好像笼罩着一片阴影，还有令人害怕却无法逃避的死亡。

罪与咒诅的属灵后果。因为我们的罪，我们与上帝隔绝了。一方面，我们自己自然地厌恶他。我们内心确实知道我们的行为没有达到他的道德标准。我们恼恨他“过分高”的要求，而且恼恨他要管理我们的生活。我们拒绝他，宁可拜偶像——那些人类所虚构的“神”，或者(其实等于同样的)选择作无神论者，以盲目的偶然过程为我们的“创造者”。

在另一方面，上帝与我们隔绝。虽然他创造了我们，可是他不承认我们为他的儿女，也不愿意听我们的祷告，他任凭我们走自己的路、往自我毁灭和死亡走去。

最可怕的是，最终我们的灵会被扔在永恒的地狱里，在那里我们会因我们自己的罪受到该得的惩罚——永无止境的惩罚。这是属灵死亡最后的结果。

好像人类的情况是一片黑暗。可是在圣经的以上一段，上帝也赐给人类一点希望。上帝预言夏娃的一个后代要“*伤你[撒旦]的头*”。这句话是指耶稣基督要来拯救人类，让所有相信他的人脱离罪恶的控制。通过耶稣，现在我们可以恢复与上帝的关系，作他的儿女，将来我们不用下地狱而身体会复活，在天堂和爱我们的上帝永远在一起。

Lesson 3: Noah's Flood

Before discussing this lesson, please read: Bible: Genesis Chapters 6-8.

We have said that Christianity is true – which is to say that the Bible is true. This is demonstrated by three kinds of evidence:

1. Nature exhibits the existence, power, and supernatural Nature of God.
2. History and archeology demonstrate that the Bible records are historically accurate.
3. Fulfilled biblical prophecies demonstrate that the Bible is a revelation from God.

Although Nature cannot prove the historical accuracy of the Bible, an objective study of natural history shows that Biblical history is not in error. The fossil record thoroughly refutes macroevolutionary theory – there are no connecting link fossils, only gaps between fossils! Another evidence for biblical history is the geological sedimentary rock layers. The sedimentary layers of geology demonstrate the global flood recorded in the Bible. Please read Genesis 6:1-9:19. The following discussion of Noah's flood will be divided into two topics: the lessons taught by the flood, and a scientific analysis of the flood.

The Lessons Taught by Noah's Flood

The Flood Shows God's Righteousness and Compassion

Then Yahweh said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

Then Yahweh saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And Yahweh was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. And Yahweh said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them."

Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth. (Genesis 6:3, 5-7, 11-13)

In the human world, dishonest, unfair and even cruel acts are frequently seen. Seeing these things can make us very frustrated, because in the heart of every person there is a moral conscience and a feeling for justice. The conscience of human beings was given to us by God and reflects God's own righteous character. The most important lesson we should learn from Noah's flood is God's attitude toward sin. God hates all sin, and will certainly judge every sin ever committed by every person. Noah's flood is a concrete example telling us that God's future judgment – eternal hell – will be extremely severe.

God putting humanity to death in this way was not at all unfair. The two verses "*the wickedness of man was great, and...every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*" and "*Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence*" indicate that humans were constantly murdering, oppressing, raping, exploiting, and invading. They deserved death for their sins. Furthermore, God has unique authority to end the life of a person or group of people whenever He sees fit. Ever since Adam and Eve first sinned, humans must die sooner or later. God is certainly not cheating us, as though He was obligated to give everyone a certain number of decades of life, otherwise He will be "offending against" us!

As for the little children who died in the flood, perhaps this was merciful to them. If they had grown up in such an extremely corrupt, sinful environment, they themselves probably would have chosen sin and rejected God, finally ending up in hell. The most fearful thing in human existence is not leaving this earth a little early, but falling under the judgment of God!

In fact, Noah's flood tells us God pities humanity and is willing to forgive our sin. Noah and his family were also sinners, but God saved them. Why? Because they believed God. God told them what they had to do in order to be saved, and they believed, obeyed, and built the ark. Reasonably speaking, not only Noah and his family could have escaped the flood. The verse "*My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years*" probably does not mean that human lifespans was limited to 120 years, because there were several generations of people after Noah's flood who lived to be more than 200 years old (see Genesis 11:10-32). The probable meaning of "*his days shall be one hundred and twenty years*" is that God warned humanity 120 years in advance that the flood was coming. Although we cannot absolutely determine how long God waited, this interpretation certainly fits with 1 Peter 3:20: "*who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.*" The waiting period gave anyone who was willing to repent and believe God a chance. That only eight people were saved is because the others were not willing to repent, with the result that the flood came suddenly and destroyed them. The situation today is about the same: Most people who hear God's truth still refuse to repent, but as soon as a person dies, he or she must face God's judgment. May the reader escape God's judgment!

3 课：挪亚洪水

讨论此课之前请阅读：《圣经》：创世记 6 章至 8 章。

我们曾经说过，基督教的真实——就是说圣经的真实——由三种根据来证明：

1. 大自然证明上帝的存在、大能、超自然性
2. 历史学和考古学证明圣经记载有历史真实性
3. 圣经里已经应验了的预言证明圣经是被上帝启示的

虽然大自然不能证明圣经历史的真实性，但是客观地分析自然历史表明圣经的历史没有错误。化石记录很彻底的驳斥宏观进化论——没有化石联结环节，只有化石之间的缺口！地质层积岩是圣经历史的另一个自然历史证据，地质层积岩证明了圣经所记载的全球性洪水。请看创世记 6:1-9:19。

以下关于挪亚洪水的讨论分为两个题目：洪水的教训以及关于洪水的科学分析。

挪亚洪水的教训

洪水显示上帝的正义和怜悯

耶和華说：“人既属乎血气，我的灵就不永远住在他里面，然而他的日子还可到一百二十年。”

耶和華见人在地上罪恶很大，终日所思想的尽都是恶，耶和華就后悔造人在地上，心中忧伤。耶和華说：“我要将所造的人和走兽并昆虫，以及空中的飞鸟，都从地上除灭，因为我造他们后悔了。”

世界在神面前败坏，地上满了强暴。神观看世界，见是败坏了，凡有血气的人，在地上都败坏了行为。神就对挪亚说：“凡有血气的人，他的尽头已经来到我面前，因为地上满了他们的强暴，我要把他们和地一并毁灭。（创世记 6:3, 5-7, 11-13）

在人类世界，不诚实、不公平、甚至残忍的事情是常见的。看到这些会使人很烦恼，因为每一个人内心上都刻上了良心和公义的感觉。人类的良心是上帝赐给我们的，它反映了上帝自己公义的品德。我们要从挪亚洪水得到的最主要的教训是上帝对于罪恶的态度。上帝憎恨所有的罪，并且一定要审判每一个人每一次犯的罪。挪亚的洪水是一个具体的例子，告诉我们上帝将来的审判——永恒的地狱——会多么厉害。

上帝这样处死人类一点都不算不公平。“人在地上罪恶很大，终日所思想的尽都是恶”，“世界在神面前败坏，地上满了强暴”这两句话指出人类经常谋杀、压迫、强奸、剥削、侵略等。他们所犯的罪使他们应该被处死。并且上帝有独特的权利可以随意结束任何一个人或一群人的生命。从亚当和夏娃首先犯罪之后，人类早晚都要死亡。上帝绝对不是亏负我们、必须给予每个人几十年的寿命、否则就“对不起”我们！

对于那些在洪水里死去的婴孩来说，也许这算是一种怜悯。如果他们原来在一个那么腐败、罪恶的环境中长大，很可能他们自己也会选择罪恶、拒绝上帝，最后就下地狱。人生最可怕的事情不是早一点离开这个世界，而是落在上帝的审判之下！

其实挪亚洪水也告诉我们上帝怜悯人并愿意赦免我们的罪。挪亚和他家庭也是犯过罪的人，但是上帝拯救他们。为什么呢？因为他们相信上帝。上帝告诉他们怎样才能得救，他们就相信、听从、制造了方舟。按道理应该不仅是挪亚和他一家人能逃避洪水。“人既属乎血气，我的灵就不永远住在他里面，然而他的日子还可到一百二十年”这句话大概不是指人类的寿命会被限制于一百二十年，因为挪亚洪水之后有好几代人的寿命超过两百年（参考创世记 11:10-32）。“他的日子还可到一百二十年”的意思大概就是说，上帝提前一百二十年警告人类洪水要来临。尽管不能完全确认上帝等待的时期有多长，这个解释也很符合彼得前书 3:20 所记载“就是那从前在挪亚预备方舟，神容忍等待的时候不信从的人。当时进入方舟，藉着水得救的不多，只有八个人”。这段延期给任何愿意悔改、相信上帝的人一个机会。只有八口人得救是因为其他人都不愿意悔改，结果洪水突然来临、毁灭了他们。现在的情形也差不多：大多数人听到上帝的真理却拒绝悔改，可是人一死就要面对上帝的审判。但愿读者逃避上帝的审判！

The Covenant and New Order Established by God after Noah's Flood

And Yahweh...said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

"And I [Yahweh] establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth." And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations; I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. "And it shall come about, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. "When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." (Genesis 8:21-22, 9:11-16)

After the flood receded, God made a promise that He would never again use a flood to destroy all life on land. The present natural laws will continue until the last day. Please note that the phrase "*while the earth remains*" indirectly warns us that one day God will put an end to the material universe existing now; this is the final judgment day spoken of in the Bible.

Before Noah's flood, the earth's climate was different from what it is now. It seems that it had never rained: "*...Yahweh God had not yet sent rain upon the earth.... But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground*" (Genesis 2:5-6). Since it never rained, there were no rainbows. After the flood, every time it rained people might fear that another global flood would come and destroy humanity. Perhaps it was to prevent such a misunderstanding that God told them in advance there would be rainbows, and established them as a sign.

"And the fear of you and the terror of you shall be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given. "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant. "Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. (Genesis 9:2-4)

After the flood, God permitted humans to eat meat. This change may have been due to changes in climate after the flood which made life more difficult for humans. Fossils unearthed near the north and south poles prove that these presently frozen regions once had temperate climates, even climates like today's tropics. Very possibly the entire earth had a warm or tropical climate before the flood. Climate change probably made life very difficult for many animals that came off the ark, causing them to quickly go extinct.

"And surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man. "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man. (Genesis 9:5-6)

Authority for human government was established by God. The most basic responsibility of government is the protection of human life and the punishment of murder. Because "*in the image of God He made man,*" murder is a crime which must be punished. Slaughtering an animal and eating its meat is not the same. It is not a crime, because animals do not have a spirit and do not possess the image of God.

Noah's Offering of Sacrifices

Then Noah built an altar to Yahweh, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. (Genesis 8:20)

Genesis does not tell us the reason or significance of Noah's animal sacrifices. However, other books in the Old Testament of the Bible tell us that in the Old Testament period there were several ceremonies that required animal sacrifice. In the most important of these ceremonies, the animal took the place of the offerer. Slaughtering an animal and burning its body symbolized the judgment of God falling on the animal. The ceremony said: "God, I pray that You would forgive my sin and let the death of this animal take the place of the punishment which I should receive." In fact, the death of an animal cannot take the place of a person's judgment. These kinds of ceremonies prefigured Jesus Christ, who was to come later. On the cross He sacrificed Himself to save people. He took the place of humanity and suffered God's judgment.

Flood Legends of Other Peoples

Because all of the world's people are descendants of Noah's sons, the earliest history of various peoples should have some traces of a record of a worldwide flood. Not surprisingly, we find stories of a worldwide flood which destroyed all of humanity in the legends of many different peoples. If other cultures had no record of a matter as vast as Noah's flood, we would feel that it was odd to the point that we might even question its veracity. In fact, virtually all the ancient cultures in the world have a flood legend. These legends provide an indirect evidence for the Bible's historical records. These legends come from people living in six of the world's continents and from Pacific islands, including Native Americans, Greeks, Egyptians, Indians, and ancient Chinese.

挪亚洪水之后上帝设立的约和新安排

耶和華…就心里说：“我不再因人的缘故咒诅地——人从小时心里怀著恶念——也不再按著我才行的，灭各种的活物了。地还存留的时候，稼穡、寒暑、冬夏、昼夜，就永不停息了。”

我 [耶和華] 与你们立约，凡有血肉的，不再被洪水灭绝，也不再洪水毁坏地了。”上帝说：“我与你们并你们这里的各样活物所立的永约，是有记号的：我把虹放在云彩中，这就可作我与地立约的记号了。我使云彩盖地的时候，必有虹现在云彩中，我便纪念我与你们和各样有血肉的活物所立的约；水就再不泛滥，毁坏一切有血肉的物了。虹必现在云彩中，我看见，就要纪念我与地上各样有血肉的活物所立的永约。”（创世记 8:21-22, 9:11-16）

洪水退了以后，上帝就许诺说他不会再用水灾毁灭整个地球陆地上的生物。现在的自然规律会维持到末日。请注意，“地还存留的时候”间接地警告我们，有一天上帝还要结束现在所存在的物质宇宙；这是圣经所讲的末日审判。

挪亚洪水前，地球的气候跟现在不一样。原来好像没有下过雨：“…耶和華神还没有降雨在地上…但有雾气从地上腾，滋润遍地。”（创世记 2:5-6）。因为没有下雨，所以也没有彩虹。洪水之后，每一次下雨人都会害怕，或者会有再一次全球洪水毁灭人类。可能是为了避免他们误解，上帝就提前告诉他们会有彩虹，并设立它为记号。

凡地上的走兽和空中的飞鸟，都必惊恐惧怕你们，连地上一切的昆虫并海里一切鱼，都交付你们的手。凡活著的动物都可以作你们的食物，这一切我都赐给你们，如同菜蔬一样。惟独肉带著血，那就是它的生命，你们不可吃。（创世记 9:2-4）

洪水之后，上帝开始允许人吃肉。这个改变也许是因为洪水之后的气候改变了，使人类的生活变得相当困难。在接近北极和南极的地区挖掘出来的化石确定了那些现在冰冻的地区原来有温和气候，甚至象现在的热带气候。洪水前很可能全球有温和或热带气候，气候的改变大概使不少从方舟下来的动物很难生活，使它们很快就灭绝了。

流你们血，害你们命的，无论是兽是人，我必讨他的罪，就是向各人的弟兄，也是如此；凡流人血的，他的血也必被人所流，因为神造人，是照自己的形象造的。（创世记 9:5-6）

人类的政权是上帝所建立的。政治最基本的责任是保护人的生命并惩罚谋杀。因为“神造人，是照自己的形象造的”，谋杀是一种必须受到惩罚的罪恶。宰杀一只动物、吃它的肉是不一样的，不算是犯罪，因为动物没有灵，不具有上帝的形象。

挪亚献祭物

挪亚为耶和華筑了一座坛，拿各类洁净的牲畜、飞鸟，献在坛上为燔祭。（创世记 8:20）

关于挪亚所奉献的动物牺牲，创世记没有说它的缘由和意义，可是，旧约圣经其它书卷告诉我们，在旧约时代，几种礼仪要牺牲动物，其中最主要的礼仪，是动物当作奉献的人的替身。宰杀动物并焚烧它的身体代表上帝的审判已经落在那只动物的身上。这个礼仪是说：“上帝，求您赦免我的罪，让这个动物的死亡代替我应该受的惩罚。”实际上，动物的死亡不能代替人受审判。这样的礼仪预示耶稣基督要到来，在十字架上舍身救人，代替人类受上帝的审判。

其他民族的洪水传统

因为全世界的人是挪亚儿子们的后代，不同民族的最早历史应该包括一些全世界洪水记录的痕迹。难怪，我们在好多不同民族的传说中找到毁灭全人类、全球性水灾的故事。挪亚洪水是那么重大的一件事情，如果别的文化中没有任何记载，我们会觉得奇怪，甚至会令我们怀疑它的真实性。其实世界上不同的古代文化中几乎都有洪水的传说，这些传说为圣经的历史记载提供了一些间接证据。这些传说来自世界的六个大洲以及太平洋的岛屿，包括美洲印第安人、希腊人、埃及人、印度人、和古代中国。

All humanity are Noah's descendants. Early humans all knew and passed on this history, but the biblical record is very special. Only the Bible preserves the accurate history. The ark was about 140 meters long, with a length to width ratio of about 6 : 1. This is very reasonable, unlike the Greek legend which records a length of 900 meters and ratio of 2.5 : 1, or the Babylonian legend of a cube-shaped ark (see the scientific analysis below). The length of the flood is also reasonable, about a year, unlike the seven days or 52 years in the other legends. Although those legends do not have the historical accuracy of the Biblical record, the great majority of them have the following basic details:

- there was a huge flood which destroyed the world
- except for several people who were forewarned, all humanity died
- escape by the construction of a large boat is frequently included

Other frequently seen details include:

- the flood was caused by God or some 'gods'
- it was because of the sin of humanity
- the ark carried animals
- the ark stopped on top of a high mountain
- sacrifice was offered after coming off the ark

Please note: legends about a global flood are completely unique. Scholars studying folklore report that over 100 different cultures have global flood traditions. No other type of disaster legend can compare, such as global drought, famine, plague, or volcanic eruption. Among ancient human cultures, the only universally recorded global disaster is a global flood. These different legends of a global flood come from distantly separated places, from different cultures and languages, and are very ancient. This shows that they all have the same origin: a global flood which actually occurred in history.

A Scientific Analysis of Noah's Flood

The Feasibility of the Ark Carrying the Animals

The Bible says Noah carried "*by twos of all flesh in which was the breath of life*" on the ark, each "*after its kind*" (Genesis 7:15; 6:20). Could the ark have carried so many animals? To answer this question, we must first analyze four issues:

1. What level of our modern biological taxonomy does "*after its kind*" indicate?
2. How many land dwelling animals of that level are there, including extinct ones?
3. What is their average size?
4. How much space was there on the ark?

The most complete analysis is Woodmoreappe's Noah's Ark: A Feasibility Study. The word 'kind' ("min" in the original language) in the Biblical phrase "*after its kind*" is probably equivalent to the 'family' level of modern biological taxonomy. The great majority of animal 'genera' and 'species' can probably arise via so-called microevolution from the 'family' level. This is not evolution, but only the expression of already existing genetic variation. It does not produce new functions or organs. There are about 1,000 different 'families' of land dwelling, air breathing animals. A pair from each family would equal 2,000 animals. If the relevant taxonomic level is not 'family' but 'genus,' the total number still would not exceed 8,000 genera, which would be 16,000 animals. The average weight is not very large, about 100 grams. The comparatively large animals are few. Juveniles of the very largest animals could have been taken on the ark. The space in the ark was equivalent to railroad cars (about 39,000 cubic meters). This vastly exceeds the space needed to carry 2,000 land animals and their food, and would even be enough for the 16,000 'genus' level animals. (Readers interested in knowing more may consult John Woodmoreappe, Noah's Ark: A Feasibility Study, 1996).

The Age of the Earth

Although the age of the earth is not directly related to Noah's flood, because fossils are usually considered relevant to the age of the earth, we will raise a few important points about them.

Erosion rate. Geologists estimate the continents are 3.5 billion years old, but such a long period does not agree with erosion rates objectively observable in the present. Based on actual observation, the present average erosion rate is about 3 to 6 centimeters every 1,000 years. According to this actual rate, if the earth's present continents had been in existence for 3.5 billion years, they should have been completely eroded away and washed into the sea 170 to 340 times already.

全人类都是挪亚的后代。早期人类都知道、流传下来这段历史。可是圣经的记载还是很特别，只有圣经保存了准确的历史。方舟约有 140 米长、长和宽的比例约 6 : 1 都是合理的，不象希腊传说的 900 多米长和 2.5 : 1，或巴比伦传说的立方形方舟(参考以下的科学分析)。洪水的时期也是合理的，约一年，不象其它传说的七天或 52 年。那些传说虽然没有圣经所记载的准确历史性，但是大多数还含有基本的细节：

- 曾经有一场大水灾毁灭了全世界
- 除了几个受到预告的人以外，全人类都死了
- 常常也包括通过制造大船来逃避洪水

其它常见的细节包括：

- 洪水是上帝或一些‘神’引起的
- 是因为人类的罪恶
- 方舟上运载动物
- 方舟停在高山上
- 下方舟以后献祭物

请注意：全球性大洪水的传说是独一无二的。研究民间传说的学者报告说超过 100 种不同的文化中有全球性大洪水的传说。没有任何其它灾难传说可以相比较，例如全球性的旱灾、饥荒、瘟疫、火山爆发等。在人类的古代文化中普遍记载的全球性大灾难只有全球洪水。这些不同的全球性洪水的传说来自相距那么遥远的地方、不同的文化和语言，并且那么古老，说明它们有同一个来源：历史上真实发生过的全球性洪水。

关于挪亚洪水的科学分析

方舟运载动物的可能性

圣经说，挪亚在方舟里装载了“凡有血肉、有气息的活物，都一对一对”，“各从其类”（创世记 7:15;6:20）。方舟可不可能装那么多动物？回答这个问题，先要分析四件事：

1. “各从其类”指我们现代生物分类学的哪一层次的分支？
2. 这个层次的分支中一共有多少是居住陆地的，包括已经绝种的生物？
3. 它们平均的大小有多大？
4. 方舟里的空间有多大？

最完全的分析是 Woodmoreappe 所写的挪亚方舟：可行性研究。圣经里“各从其类”的「类」这个词（原文：min）大概与现代生物分类学的「科」相等。大多数生物的「属」和「种」，通过所谓微观进化，大概都能从「科」那个层次产生出来。这不算是进化，只不过是使已经存在的基因变化显现出来，没有产生新的功能或器官。居住在陆地、呼吸空气的不同的「科」，包括已经绝种的，大约有 1000 科，每科一对，这就等于 2000 只动物。假如主要层次不是「科」而是「属」，总数也还不超过 8000 属，就算 16000 只动物。平均的重量很小，约 100 克；比较大的动物不多；最大的动物，方舟可以只带幼年的。方舟里面的空间等于 522 节火车车厢(约 39000 立方米)，这远远超过了装 2000 只陆地动物及它们的食物所需要的空间，甚至足够装「属」那个层次的 16000 只动物。（更感兴趣的读者请参考 Woodmoreappe 写的《挪亚方舟：可行性研究》(John Woodmorappe, 《Noah's Ark: A Feasibility Study》，1996)）。

地球的年龄

虽然地球的年龄与挪亚洪水没有直接的关系，但是因为通常认为地球年龄与化石有关，我们只提几个重点。

冲刷速率。地质学家估计大陆有三十五亿年的年龄，可是这么长的年分不符合现在客观的冲刷平均速率。按照具体观察，现在的冲刷速率平均是每千年 3 至 6 厘米。按照这个实在的速率，若地球现在的大陆已经存在了三十五亿年的话，应该已经完全被冲刷、流到海里 170 至 340 次。

Since this fact is very obvious, some geologists have unconvincingly proposed that the present continents still exist because new rock layers are constantly emerging from below in a periodic process. But if that were really the case, after the old continents had been completely eroded into the sea one time and new rock layers had emerged, there would be no old fossils remaining on the continents. But from the highest mountains to the lowest valleys there are fossils. According to the present, objectively observable erosion rate, the oldest fossils should not be more than 20 million years old, because after 20 million years all of the continents should have already been eroded away. But paleontologist claim there are fossils a billion, two billion, even three billion years old.

How can we explain this contradiction? It is simply that the fossils are not that old. The objective erosion rates are too fast; the unobjective conjectures of great age apparently are false.

The filling in of the ocean basins. In the same way, after 3.5 billion years, the current, objectively observable erosion rates should have filled the oceans 19 times. But the ocean floor is not filled with sediment. Some geologists have conjectured that the ocean floor sediments are repeatedly absorbed into the bottom of the continents, then repeatedly rise up on the continents. However, the rock layers at the bottom of the continents are composed of different materials than the ocean floor sediments.

Living fossils. So-called 'living fossils' are organisms which were once thought to have gone extinct long ago, but have been discovered to be still living today. Their fossils are only found in certain specific, very "old" layers of the geological column. Later it was discovered that those animals were still in existence. This phenomenon leads us to doubt: why is it that these animals have been existing for several million years, or even several hundred million years, yet in such a long time period of the "geological column" they did not leave behind a single trace? Why do they have an abundant fossil record for a certain period of time, then afterwards for tens of millions of years they have none? Can it be things are really that way? Or is it that the age of the rock layers in fact is not so great? We quote from Harold G. Coffin and Robert H. Brown, Origin by Design, 1983:

...[An] interesting category of organisms [is] known as the so-called "living fossils," plants and animals [which were once] thought to be extinct for at least several millions of years. It is difficult to understand how such an animal could have left no trace of itself in the rocks since, for example, the Devonian period. Also we observe little evidence of evolutionary change between the Devonian specimens and the recent ones. The creationist considers the origin of living creatures and the Flood that produced fossils to have occurred recently. He does not think much time has passed since the burial of the Devonian animals.

Most zoology textbooks describe the Tuatara as a relic of the past. Although it looks like a lizard, several anatomical and physiological characteristics distinguish it as the only survivor of the order Rhynchocephalia, or beak-headed reptiles. Living specimens currently live only on islands off New Zealand, where they dwell in holes on sandy hills by the shore.

Scientists have done much work on *Sphenodon* [the name of the genus to which Tuatara belongs]...with the hope that the answer to its longevity as a distinct kind will also reveal the cause of the extinction of the giant reptiles of past ages. The last fossil evidence for it appears in the early Cretaceous, which supposedly leaves a time gap of 135 million years. The skeletons of these reptiles found in Jurassic deposits of Europe closely resemble living tuatara. Such similarity should suggest that only a short time has elapsed, insufficient for [hypothetical, so-called] evolution to change the morphology of the tuatara. It is much easier, and in accord with the evidence, to believe that the species has actually survived just a few thousand years since the Flood.

Scientists were amazed when, in 1938, fishermen caught a coelacanth alive east of London, Cape Province, South Africa. According to the paleontological record the last coelacanths lived approximately 70 million years ago. Fourteen years later a second specimen appeared not far from the island of Anjouan in the Comoro group near Madagascar. More have since showed up in that same area. [Two more groups of coelacanths have been discovered, one near Indonesia in 1997 and one near South Africa in 2000. –Editor]

A large fish (up to five feet long and 150 pounds in weight), it has overlapping scales that give the body an armor of three layers of scales, a skull consisting of two nearly separate parts, teeth clusters on the upper jaw, a small tail and fin extending beyond the main caudal fin, hollow spines (hence the name *coelacanth*), and fins located on limblike extensions from the body. [One scientist has said] "One of the remarkable characteristics of the coelacanth is that they have changed very little during the time that they have lived. The bony structures of our modern coelacanths are almost exactly the same as those left by coelacanths of a 100 millions of years ago."

Probably even more unusual than the discovery of living coelacanths is the finding of a deep-sea mollusk (*Neopilina*) that paleontologists [used to] claim became extinct...during the Devonian period [400 million years ago]. [Living] specimens have turned up in nets dredging the deep water off the coasts of Central and South America. One of the main characteristics of the phylum Mollusca is nonsegmentation, but these small univalves suggest segmentation – they have five or six pairs of gills. "[Three hundred sixty million years] is a long time, and one cannot help but wonder about its reality. Fossils of this class of mollusk were apparently plentiful in the early Paleozoic strata [assumed to be about 550-360 million years ago] and it is amazing that none has been found in the marine strata of the Mesozoic or Tertiary, if indeed these actually represent the hundreds of millions of years following the Paleozoic that they are supposed to."

因这事实很明显，有些地质学家无说服力地推测，现在的大陆仍然存在，是因为新来的岩层不断地从地下升起，这是周期性的过程。可是如果真是这样的话，当旧大陆完全被冲刷到海里一次，并有新岩层升起，就没有任何旧化石还会留在大陆上。但是从高山到低谷都有化石。按照现在客观观察的冲刷速率，最古老的化石不应该超越两千万年的年龄，因为过了两千万年所有的大陆应该已经冲刷光了。但是古生物学家推测化石有十亿，二十亿，甚至三十亿年的年龄。

怎么解决这个矛盾呢？只不过是化石没有那么古老而已。客观的冲刷速率太快；不客观的古老年龄推测应该是错的。

海底的填满。同样，过了三十五亿年，现在客观的冲刷速率应该已经把海洋填满了19次，可是海底并没有充满了沉积物。一些地质学家推测海底的沉积物是屡次陷入大陆底下，又反复地突起升到大陆上，但是大陆底下的岩层和海底的沉积物有不同的结构。

活化石。所谓的「活化石」是指某些本来以为是早已绝种、现在被发现还活着的生物。那些生物的化石只是在某些特定的、很“古老”的地质年代排列的岩层中被发现，后来发现那些生物还存在。这个现象使我们产生疑问：为什么这些生物几百万、甚至几亿年来一直存在，而在这么长时间的“地质年代排列层”中却没有留下任何痕迹？为什么有一段时间它有很丰富的化石记录，后来几千万年之间却没有？难道情况真是这样吗？或者是地层的年代本来根本没有那么长？我们引用《有意设计的起源》(Harold G. Coffin and Robert H. Brown, 《Origin by Design》, 1983):

…[一种]有趣的生物体类别[是]那些所谓“活化石”，即[曾经]被认为至少在几百万年前已经绝种的植物和动物。很难理解这样一种动物怎样自从例如泥盆纪(Devonian)时期[假定是距今三亿五千万年]以来，能够在岩层中不留下自己的痕迹。我们也观察到少量在泥盆纪时期的标本和近代标本之间的进化的变化证据。创造论者把生物的起源和使化石产生的大洪水看作是在比较近期发生的。他们认为自从泥盆纪时期的动物被埋没以来并不是过去了很长时间。

大部分动物学教科书把 Tuatara 作为过去的遗迹来描述。虽然它看似蜥蜴，但是有几个解剖学上和生理上的特征使它被看为是 Rhynchocephalia，即‘鸟嘴头’爬行动物，中的唯一存活者。现今存活的标本只生活在新西兰的与大陆隔离的岛上，它们栖息在岸边的沙丘洞里。

科学家们对[属于 Tuatara 的‘属’的动物]作了大量研究…。它在白垩纪(Cretaceous)时期的早期出现的最后的化石证据，是被假设为距今一亿三千五百万年的时间。欧洲的侏罗纪(Jurassic)时期[假定是早于一亿四千万年前]沉积物中找到的这些爬行动物的骨架与活生生的 Tuatara 很相似。如此的相似性应当表明仅有一段较短时间过去了，并不足够发生改变 Tuatara 形态的[假定的、所谓的]进化。使人更容易相信，而与证据一致的，是说这物种实际上是在大洪水后存活了仅仅几千年。

1938年，在南非好望角省的伦敦城东面，渔夫们活捉了一只腔棘鱼(Coelacanth)，使科学家们大为惊讶。根据古生物学记载最后的腔棘鱼生存在大约七千万年前。十四年后第二个标本出现在靠近马达加斯加岛的 Comoro 群岛中 Anjouan 岛不远处。此后，有越来越多[的标本]出现在同一地区。[1997年在印度尼西亚附近、2000年在南非洲附近也发现了另外两群腔棘鱼。—编辑]

一条大鱼(超过五英尺长、150多磅)，它有相互重叠的鱼鳞使身体有了三层鱼鳞的护甲；它的颅骨包括两个几乎分离的部分，上腭的牙齿行，一条小尾巴和向主尾部鳍外延伸的鳍，空心脊骨(所以名叫腔棘鱼)，和从身体延伸的像肢的鳍。[有一位科学家曾经说]“腔棘鱼的一个显著特征是它们在生存的时代很少改变。我们现代腔棘鱼的骨骼结构几乎和几亿年前遗留的一模一样。”

可能比发现活的腔棘鱼更不寻常的是一种深海软体动物(Neopilina)的发现，而古生物学家们宣称它已于[四亿年前]的泥盆纪(Devonian)时期绝种。[活的]标本是在中、南美洲的海岸外的深海挖掘时的网里发现的。属于 Mollusca ‘门’的其中一个主要特征是没有分节，但这些小单壳软体动物(univalves)表现了分节——它们有五或六对鳃。[三亿六千万]年是段很长的时间，而且不得不对它的实在性感到疑惑。属于这种深海软体动物的化石好像大量存在于古生代(Paleozoic)时期早期的地层[假定是约五亿五千万年前至约三亿六千万年前]。可是在[假定是从约二亿五千万年前至今的]中生代(Mesozoic)和第三纪(Tertiary)的海生物沉积物中没有发现任何它的化石。如果按理这些岩层实际上真的表明古生代时期后的几亿年的话，[没有任何 Neopilina 种类的化石]是很神奇！”

One of the basic premises of historical geology is that the absence of fossils of a certain group of organisms from sediments of a supposed geological age suggests that it did not exist when the sediments were laid down. The present day survival of organisms absent from the fossil record for supposedly long periods of geologic time weakens or even disproves the assumption. *Neopilina* occurs as fossils in rocks dated [400 million] years old. We obviously cannot take its absence from the intervening layers to mean it did not exist then. Since the lack of fossils of *Neopilina* proves nothing, we cannot use the absence of any other group of organisms at any period of geological history to support geological ages or evolutionary development.

Two living plant fossils are *Gingko* and *Metasequoia*. The latter has been found living in China since the turn of the century. Both genera are abundant in the fossil record. [The *Metasequoia* was originally thought to have been extinct for 20 million years.]

Difficult to believe, especially for those who think in terms of many millions of years, are the reports of living fossil bacteria. Salt beds of Mesozoic, Paleozoic, and even Precambrian ages possess them. Scientists have successfully cultured fossil bacteria in both North America and Europe. Most scientists suspect contamination by modern bacteria. Several factors, besides meticulous care, argue against contamination. (1) The organisms are not typical contaminants, (2) efforts to pick them up in deliberately exposed cultures are not successful, and (3) their metabolic and biochemical capacities are greater than their modern living counterparts. According to the usual time reckoning, late Precambrian bacteria would be 650 million or more years old. The uniformitarian geologist finds such longevity incredible. Even the creationist, who thinks in terms of thousands of years since the Genesis flood, is amazed. However, bacteria existing alive for five thousand years is certainly much more possible than for them to live 650 million years.

All these "living fossils" appear in so-called ancient rocks, but not in more recent beds. Does that mean they lived for millions of years but past a certain point left no records of themselves? That seems unlikely and unreasonable. I feel that a better explanation would be that the activities of the Genesis flood buried many animals in lower sediments, but a few survived to continue the species to modern times. Both by the unchanged nature of their forms and their continued living presence on the earth they testify that evolution has not happened and that little time has transpired since a catastrophic flood entombed their relatives. (Origin by Design pp. 337-340; material in brackets [] added or changed by the editor to make the article's meaning more clear).

Radioactive method.

Radioactive dating methods are not highly reliable. They frequently yield internally contradictory results. For example, certain volcanic rocks in Hawaii known to be less than 200 years old yielded radiometric dates of millions to tens of millions of years old. Similar mistakes are frequently seen, as are contradictions among the results of different kinds of radioactive dating performed on the same piece of rock.

To tell the truth, radioactive dating remains a problem for which scientific creationism still does not have a complete solution. Although the method is not reliable at a detailed level, it would seem to indicate that rock layers have a rough ordering from old to young. On the surface, these methods seem to support the theory that holds the earth has a history of several billion years. However, radioactive dating methods cannot solve the defects in the theory of evolution, especially the problem of the absence of 'links' intermediate between types of fossils. Radioactive dating methods absolutely cannot prove that the theory of evolution is right.

A few people who call themselves "creationists" who say that, given that the earth is so old, and naturalistic evolution is impossible, perhaps God caused some animal evolution, or perhaps He created new types of animals many times across several hundred million years. These theories, however, do not fit with the Bible.

True creation scientists are currently researching radioactive dating methods. The most recent research is reported in Larry Vardiman, Andrew A. Snelling and Eugene F. Chaffin, editors, Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth, published in 2000.

For a more detailed discussion of the age of the earth, please see Scientific Creationism chapter 6: "Old? Or Young?"

Noah's Flood and Geology

Since there has been a great flood, we ought to be able to see signs of it in the earth's geology. In fact, most of the so-called 'geological column' is the remains of Noah's flood. Geologists who believe in macroevolution believe the rock layers were slowly accumulated during billions of years. According to a Biblical analysis, most of the sedimentary layers were probably the result of Noah's flood and subsequent sedimentation.

The 'geological column' is an abstract, theoretical concept, not a phenomenon that appears concretely in the earth's layers. There is no place where one can see the entire 'column.' There are many rock layers, and their arrangement shows a rough ordering, but the depositing deposition of each layer had to be relatively fast, and the subsequent layers had to be laid down one after another relatively quickly.

历史地质学的一个基本前提是如果一个特定生物体组群的化石不存在于假设的地质学时期的沉积物中，则表明此化石在沉积物沉淀时并不存在。现今仍存活的生物体却不存在于所假设的很长的地质年代的化石记录中，将上述假设的前提削弱了甚至否定了。Neopilina 的化石存在在日期定为[四亿]年之久的岩石中。我们明显不能把它在中间地岩层的不存在当作它在那时不存在。由于缺乏 Neopilina 的化石证明不了什么，因此我们不能用任何其它的生物体组群不存在于某一个地质历史时期，作为地质年代时期或者进化发展的证据。

两种植物的活化石是银杏树(Ginkgo)和水杉(Metasequoia)。后者自十九世纪末被发现存活在中国。两者所属的‘属’在化石记录中有大量的例子。[水杉(Metasequoia)本来被认为已经在两千万年前绝种了。]

特别对于那些认为生物已经存在了好几百万年来的人来说，细菌的活化石的报导难以置信。中生代年代、古生代年代，甚至是前寒武纪(Precambrian)年代的矿床中发现了它们。在北美和欧洲的科学家们已经成功地培植了细菌化石。大多数科学家怀疑这些细菌化石是由于感染了现代细菌而产生的。[检验表明]除了很仔细的护理培植过程以外，还有几个因素否定了这是被现代细菌感染的结果：(1)细菌活化石并非常见的典型的感染体；(2)无法从故意感染现代细菌的培养基中培植出它们；而且(3)它们的新陈代谢和生物化学的能力比它们现今活着的同类更强。根据通常的时间推算，晚期的前寒武纪细菌应该存活了六亿五千万年或者更长的时间。‘古今一致论’的地质学家发觉如此长的寿命是难以置信的。甚至认为从创世纪大洪水后至今有几千年来的创造论者也觉得惊讶。然而，现存活了五千年的细菌肯定是比它们活了六亿五千万年更有可能。

所有这些“活化石”出现于所谓的古代岩层中，却不在比较晚期的地层里。那是否意味着它们活了好几百万年但却在经过某个时间段没有留下自己的记录呢？那看起来是不太可能也没有道理的。我觉得一个更好的解释是创世纪大洪水的活动把许多动物埋在了较低层的沉积物中，但有少数幸存的将其种延续到现代。通过它们形态上不变的本性和它们在地球上的继续存活，证明了进化并没有发生，而且自从灾难性大洪水掩埋了它们的同类后只是经过了不长时间。(《有意设计的起源》337-340 页；[]里的部分是编者所加上或改动的，为的是使文章的意思更清楚。)

放射性测法。

放射性测年代法并非很可靠，常常产生自相矛盾的结果。例如有些夏威夷火山的石头，确认存在年份不到 200 年，用放射性方法却得出几百万到几十亿年的年龄。类似的错误，以及用不同放射性方法测量同一块石头的结果之间的矛盾是常见的。

说实在话，对于科学创造论来说，放射性测年法算是一件还没完全解决的问题。虽然不是很详细地可靠，可是好像是指出岩层有一种粗略的从古老到年轻的排列顺序。从表面上看，这些方法好像是支持那种认为地球有几亿年历史的学说。但是，放射性测法也解决不了进化论的缺陷，特别是那个没有中间性的“连结”化石的问题。放射性测年法根本无法证明进化论是对的。

有某些自称“创造论者”说，既然地球的年龄很长，而自然的进化是不可能的，他们说可能是神促使某些物种进化，或者神在几亿年之中屡次创造了新的物种。可是这些说法都不符合圣经。

真正的创造论科学家正在研究放射性测年代法。最近的研究报告在 2000 年出版的《放射性同位素与地球的年龄》(Larry Vardiman, Andrew A. Snelling and Eugene F. Chaffin, 编辑, 《Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth》, 2000)。

如果要详细讨论地球年龄，请参考《科学创造论》第 6 章：“年老呢？还是年轻？”

挪亚洪水与地质学

因为曾经有巨大的洪水，我们应该能在地球的地质上看到它的痕迹。事实上，所谓的「地质年代排列层」大部分就是挪亚洪水的遗迹。相信宏观进化论的地质学家认为岩层是在几十亿年的过程中逐渐堆积而成的。根据圣经分析，大部分的层积岩大概是挪亚洪水及后来沉积的结果。

「地质年代排列层」是一个抽象的、理论上的概念，不是具体出现在地层中的现象。没有一个地方你能看到全部的「排列层」。岩层有很多层，并且它们的排列有一个粗略的顺序，可是每一个岩层的沉积是相当快的，并且是相当快地一层一层连续地沉积。

Today, most geologists, including those who believe in macroevolution, agree that most rock layers were formed by relatively rapid deposition. The same phenomenon can frequently be seen during a flood. This viewpoint represents a major theoretical change across the past few decades and may be very different from what the reader studied in school. Most geologists still believe, however, that a great deal of time passed between the deposition of rock layers. This assertion is wrong; every layer was deposited soon after the layer below was deposited. There are two great evidences for this. The first is polystrate fossils. We quote from Bone of Contention:

Large fossils (of animals and plants, especially tree trunks) can be found which extend through several strata, often six meters or more in thickness. These fossils must have been buried quickly because their top parts are just as well preserved as those lower down. Vast amounts of sediment must have thus been deposited in a very short time. The existence of these fossils is impossible to explain if one assumes, as evolutionists do, that the different strata were laid down at different times over millions of years. Uniformitarianism, then, cannot explain the existence of fossils in such vast numbers; a worldwide flood can. ...

At certain places in America, large reptiles were buried and fossilized in this way. If the sedimentary layers in which these animals were found were accumulated at present rates, it would have taken 5,000 years to cover them. Near Edinburgh, a fossilized tree trunk about 14 meters long was discovered which crossed ten to twelve bedding planes. The homogenous state of the fossil shows that it was buried rapidly. (Bone of Contention; first paragraph, second English edition, p. 12; second paragraph back translated from the Chinese)

The second important evidence showing that rock layers were deposited one layer after another relatively quickly are the so-called para-conformity stratification planes. A 'para-conformity' occurs when, at a certain local, the fossils in a rock layer and those in the layer immediately above it indicate that, according to traditional geological column, millions or ten million years should have passed between the depositing of the lower and upper layers. But there are no marks of erosion or deposition between the layers, or the two layers' sediments are even mixed together, with the sedimentary material gradually changing from the lower type into the upper type. This 'para-conformity' phenomenon is frequently seen, and evidences that no great amount of time passed between the deposition of the lower layer and the upper layer. The conclusion is that the entire 'geological column' was deposited in the same time period. We quote from Scientific Creationism:

1. Each stratum must have been formed rapidly, since it represents a constant set of hydraulic factors which cannot remain constant very long.
2. Each succeeding stratum in a formation must have followed rapidly after its preceding stratum, since its surface irregularities have not been truncated by erosion.
3. Therefore the entire formation must have been formed continuously and rapidly. This is further confirmed by the fact that its rock type required rapid formation and its fossil contents required rapid and permanent burial.
4. Although the formation may be capped by an unconformity, there is no worldwide unconformity, so that if it is traced out laterally far enough, it will eventually grade imperceptibly into another formation, which therefore succeeds it continuously and rapidly without a time break at that point.
5. The same reasoning will show that the strata of the second formation were also formed rapidly and continuously, and so on to a third formation somewhere succeeding that one.
6. Thus stratum-by-stratum and formation-by-formation, one may proceed through the entire geological column, proving the whole column to have been formed rapidly and continuously.
7. The merging of one formation into another is further indicated by the well-recognized fact that there is rarely ever a clear physical boundary between formations. More commonly the rock zones tend to merge and mingle with each other over a zone of considerable thickness. (Scientific Creationism p. 115-16)

This phenomenon contradicts traditional macroevolutionary theory, but is predicted by the theory of Noah's flood.

Other Phenomena Congruent with a Global Flood

Other phenomena congruent with a global flood include:

1. About 50% of worldwide continental sedimentary rock, including that in high mountains, contain marine fossils. This fact is very congruent with a global flood. Traditional geologists interpret this as arising from many different oceanic floods. This conjecture, however, forces us to posit far too many unnecessary circumstances.

大部分的地质学家，包括相信宏观进化论的，现在已经认同大部分的岩层是相当快地沉积形成的，通常在发生洪水时，也能看到类似的现象。这种看法表示几十年来理论有很大的改变，可能与读者在学校里所学的相反。但是，大部分的地质学家还是认为岩层沉积之间过了很长的时间。这种断言是错的，每一个岩层是在它下一层沉积之后很快又沉积而成的，这里有两个大证据。一个是多层化石体。我们引用《进化论质疑》：

大量的动物、植物，特别是树干的化石延伸过好几个岩层，常常是六米或者更长。它们显然是很迅速被埋葬的，因为其顶部与下部的贮存状况完全一样，这必然是数层的层积岩在很短的时间内被浸泡才能形成的。进化论者宣称，不同的岩层是几百万年时间里一层一层地逐步沉积形成的。如此说来，这些化石的存在又作何解释呢？同样，古今一致论也不能解释如此巨大数量的化石的存在，只有世界大洪水的学说才能解释。

在美国的一些地方，巨大的爬行动物就是这样被埋葬而成化石的。如果这些动物层积物按现有速度淤积，要覆盖它们足足要花五千年时间。在艾丁伯哈(Edinburgh)附近发现的一棵树干化石，约二十四米长，横断在十至十二层河床里，其同一的化石状况表明，它是被急剧地埋藏的。（《进化论质疑》23, 76页）

第二个主要根据证明岩层是比较快地、一层一层沉积的是所谓的「不相合的岩层交界面」(para-conformity stratification plane)。「不相合」现象是说，按照传统的地质年代排列表，某一个地方的层积岩的下一层所含的化石和上一层的化石之间应该有几百万或一千万年。可是那两个岩层之间没有什么被冲刷或沉积的迹象，甚至那两个岩层的成份混合在一起，沉积物从下一种渐渐地变成上一种。这「不相合」现象是常见的，证明下层和上层的沉积之间没有经过很长的时间。结论是，全部「地质年代排列层」是在一段时间之内沉积的。我们引用《科学创造论》：

1. 每一岩层的形成一定是急速性的，因为每层的形成是由于某一类型的水力作用，而这每一种水力作用都不是长久持续不变的。
2. 紧接于上的岩层亦必然是急速形成的，因为底层的表面看不出有长久暴露于外面而损去一块的腐蚀现象。
3. 由于上述两点，由岩层重叠而成的大岩层亦必然是急速形成的。从岩石的型态判断，它们也必然是急速形成的；从大岩层所含的化石遗迹，更证明了它是急速形成的，因为化石必须被快速埋葬及经久不加移动才能形成。
4. 虽然某两个大岩层之间会发现「不相合」现象，但它不是全球性的，只要追踪这种大岩层的痕迹，最后必然可以发现此岩层与另一岩层完全密合，在该处岩层的形成是连续而无时间间隔的。
5. 同理可推，紧接于上的大岩层亦是急速而连续形成的，再上一层之大岩层亦然。
6. 由是观之，由岩层至岩层，由大岩层至大岩层，以至整个地质年代排列层，都是急速形成的。
7. 大家所公认的事实——当一个大岩层与另一大岩层相会合时，很难找到外形上显著的界线——也支持上述的说法。通常不同的岩层相互混杂交错的区域也相当厚（《科学创造论》102页）

这个现象与传统宏观进化论相矛盾，却是挪亚洪水理论所预报的。

其它很符合全球性洪水的地质现象

其它很符合全球性洪水的地质现象包括：

1. 全世界大陆上约百分之五十的沉积岩层，包括在最高的山上的，含有来自海洋的化石。这个事实非常符合全球性洪水。传统的地质学家以发生过很多来自不同地方的海洋的洪水为解释，但是这样的推测要我们设想的未必有的情况太多了。

2. Huge, unique sedimentary layers - To cite an example, in the southwestern United States there is the Shinarump formation. It covers 250,000 square kilometers, but most of it is less than 30 meters thick. Although the layer is so thin, it is unbroken throughout, and moreover is extremely flat both above and below. It was deposited under water, but possesses land fossils, including trees. Obviously, the only thing that could have caused it is a huge, rapid flood. Today we cannot see any process that could produce a formation of comparable size. And the Shinarump formation is just one example. All the continents of the world have many such examples. Unless there has been a vast flood, it is very hard to explain how such a huge, flat sedimentary layer was formed.

Noah's Flood and the Order of Fossils

The order of fossils is also predicted by Noah's flood creationism. We quote from Scientific Creationism:

The immediate point under discussion, however, is what it would imply with respect to the order of the fossils in the geologic column. A little consideration will quickly yield the following obvious predictions.

1. As a rule, there would be many more marine invertebrate animals trapped and buried in the sediments than other types, since there are many more of them and, being relatively immobile, they would usually be unable to escape.
2. Animals caught and buried would normally be buried with others living in the same region. In other words, fossil assemblages would tend to represent ecological communities of the pre-cataclysmic world.
3. In general, animals living at the lowest elevations would tend to be buried at the lowest elevations, and so on, with elevations in the strata thus representing relative elevations of habitat or ecological zones.
4. Marine invertebrates would normally be found in the bottom rocks of any local geologic column, since they live on the sea bottom.
5. Marine vertebrates (fishes) would be found in higher rocks than the bottom-dwelling invertebrates. They live at higher elevations and also could escape burial longer.
6. Amphibians and reptiles would tend to be found at still higher elevations, in the commingled sediments at the interface between land and water.
7. There would be few if any terrestrial sediments or land plants or animals in the lower strata of the column.
8. The first evidence of land plants in the column would be essentially the same as that for amphibians and reptiles, when the rafts of lowland vegetation were brought down to the seashore by the swollen rivers.
9. In the marine strata, where invertebrates were fossilized, these would tend locally to be sorted hydro dynamically into assemblages of similar size and shape. Furthermore, as the turbulently upwelling waters and sediments settled back down, the simpler animals, more nearly spherical or streamlined in shape, would tend to settle out first because of lower hydraulic drag. Thus each kind of marine invertebrate would tend to appear in its simplest form at the lowest elevation, and so on.
10. Mammals and birds would be found in general at higher elevations than reptiles and amphibians, both because of their habitat and because of their greater mobility. However, few birds would be found at all, only occasional exhausted birds being trapped and buried in sediments.
11. Because of the instinctive tendency of the higher animals to congregate in herds, particularly in times of danger, fossils of these animals would often be found in large numbers if found at all.
12. Similarly these higher animals (land vertebrates) would tend to be found segregated vertically in the column in order of size and complexity, because of the greater ability of the large, more diversified animals to escape burial for longer periods of time.
13. Very few human fossils or artifacts would be found at all. Men would escape burial for the most part and, after the waters receded, their bodies would lie on the ground until decomposed. The same would apply to their lighter structures and implements, whereas heavier metallic objects would sink to the bottom and be buried so deeply in the sediments they would probably never be discovered.

All the above predictions would be expected statistically but, because of the cataclysmic nature of the phenomena, would also admit of many exceptions in every case. In other words, the cataclysmic model predicts the general order and character of the deposits but also allows for occasional exceptions. (Scientific Creationism pp. 104-105)

So we can see that creationist geology, with the Biblical record of Noah's flood as its basis, predicts and explains the order of fossils in the sedimentary rock layers, the wide distribution of marine fossils, and polystrate fossils. One absolutely cannot say that the Biblical record is unscientific or anti-scientific.

2. 巨大独特的沉（层）积岩。举个例子，美国西南区有 Shinarump 沉积岩，有 250000 平方公里，但大部份只有 30 米以下的厚度。尽管岩层那么薄，到处都连绵，而且上下都非常平坦。它是在水里沉积的，但是含有来自大陆的化石，包括树木。很明显，唯一能导致类似现象的是巨大、快速的洪水。今天我们看不到任何过程能生产大小可比的沉积岩。而 Shinarump 积层岩只不过是一个例子而已，全世界的陆地都有不少类似的例子。除非有广大洪水，很难解释这样又大又平的沉积岩是怎么形成的。

挪亚洪水和化石排列

层积岩化石的排列也是被挪亚洪水创造论预报的。我们引用《科学创造论》：

1. 水生无脊椎动物由于繁殖多，而且活动力较弱，遇灾难时不易幸免；因此可以断言，较多的水生无脊椎动物的遗体会深陷并埋葬在沉淀物中。
2. 群居的动物，其遗体通常应该被埋在一处。换言之，不同组合的化石群代表了大天灾之前各种各样的生态环境。
3. 一般而言，住在最低处的动物会被埋在最低处，较高者次之。因此地层的高度就代表了各种动物栖息及生态环境之相对高度。
4. 水生无脊椎动物通常是在地质年代排列层的最低层被发现，因为它们原来栖息在海底。
5. 水生脊椎动物（鱼类）所在的岩层比居于海底的无脊椎动物要高，因为它们栖息在较高处，而且在遇难逃生时，得以存活较久。
6. 两栖类和爬虫类所在的岩层更高，它们被发现在水陆交界的沉淀物中。
7. 内陆动植物及陆地上的沉积，很少发现它们被埋葬在地质年代排列层的底层。
8. 地质年代排列层中，陆上植物最初被发现的地方应该和两栖类及爬虫类的化石同在一处，就是较低处的植物被泛滥的河水冲激到海岸边时形成的。
9. 在水生动物地层中，形状、体积相似的无脊椎动物受水力的作用，易聚一处，形成化石。当汹涌翻腾的水流及沉淀物趋于和缓时，构造较简单的动物，圆形或流线型的，在水中的滞力较小，会先沉淀下来，因而构造最简单的水生无脊椎动物出现在最底层，较复杂者次之。
10. 一般说来，哺乳类和鸟类，由于栖息高处且活动迅速，因此，其化石所在地层会高于两栖类和爬虫类。鸟类很难被发现，因为只是偶尔会有体力不继的鸟会陷入且葬身于沉积岩中。
11. 由于高等动物有群居之本能，在遭遇危险时，更是如此，因此高等动物的化石，通常都是成群的出现。
12. 同样的，高等动物（陆生脊椎动物）亦按着身体构成的繁简及体积的大小分布在地质年代排列层中，愈复杂者愈处上层，因为这些动物活动力强，能逃避灾害的时期较长。
13. 人类化石或所持器械很难被发现。人类逃生期长，当洪水退后，陈尸于地面，渐渐分解腐化。身体软质部分及所用器皿也同样地分解腐化，较重金属物品则沉入水底，深藏于沉积岩中，恐将永不见天日。

以上所预测的诸事乃根据统计(整体发生机率)的原则，但由于大天灾现象在本质上的特殊，所以每一件事都必定会有一些例外发生。换言之，大天灾模式仅能推测沉淀物的一般特性与先后次序，但也能容许偶发的例外事件。（《科学创造论》104-105 页）

所以我们可以看到，创造论的地质学，以圣经所记载的挪亚洪水为基础，预报和解释了层积岩的化石排列，快速堆积，海洋性化石的广泛分配，多层化石等。绝对不能说圣经记录是不科学或反科学！

Lesson 4: Abraham

Before discussing this lesson, please read: Bible: Genesis 11:1-9, 26-32; Chap. 12-15; Chap. 18-19.

Genesis 11:1-9: The Tower of Babel

Please review Genesis 11:1-9.

Noah's ark "*rested upon the mountains of Ararat,*" which is probably in the southeast part of modern Turkey. His descendants came down from the mountains and moved to the plain of "*Shinar,*" that is, southeastern Mesopotamia, in modern Iraq. Modern archaeological research has discovered that the earliest human culture developed in that area, which is in accordance with the biblical historical record. Modern scientific archaeology is the best helper of biblical historical study!

Humanity quickly forgot the lesson of Noah's flood and rejected the true God. Like Eve, they wanted to be god themselves: "*Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into the heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name....*" They were arrogant, worshipping human scientific and technological ability, worshipping themselves. In addition to this, it seems that they were also disobeying God's commandment recorded in Genesis 9:1, "*And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.'*" It seems that they were unwilling to "*fill the earth*" because they were afraid of being "*scattered abroad over the face of the earth.*" God foiled their arrogant plan. He confused their language, changing it into several different languages. The result was that they could not but had to separate from one another according to their different languages and were scattered to different places on the earth.

All humans are Noah's descendants. Originally they all had the same language. The different languages which exist today all arose from the events at the Tower of Babel. Modern linguistic research shows that in ancient times there were several different, basic languages which were the origin of the various language families of the world. These original mother tongues were all unique; no relationship can be found among them. For example, Chinese belongs to the Sino-Tibetan family and English belongs to the Indo-European family. There is no relationship between their original mother languages. The historical facts recorded in the Bible are completely in accordance with the objectively observable phenomena of the present: originally, there were several completely different languages in existence. Because of the geographical separation of humans, through processes of linguistic change these several original languages developed into many different local languages, such as China's countless different dialects.

An Outline Biography of Abraham

c. 2170	Abraham is born in Ur	c. 2080	Ishmael is born
c. ?	Move to Haran	c. 2065	Sodom is destroyed
c. 2090	Move to Canaan	c. 2065	Isaac is born
c. ?	Lot and Abraham separate	c. 1990	Abraham dies

(All dates are BC. The dates above are estimates; actual dates could be as much as 200 years later.)

Please review Genesis 11:27-32.

Abraham was specially chosen and called by God to found the Jewish people and Judaism. He is:

- The first Jew, the ancestor of all Jews.
- The first person explicitly described as "justified by faith."
- Became the spiritual ancestor of all who believe in the true God, Yahweh, including Christians, regardless of whether or not they are Jews by blood.

Confirmable biblical history begins with Abraham. In order to understand his history, we must first understand some ancient Middle Eastern geographical and cultural background. Abraham did not leap down from fairyland in the misty past; he came from a specific, famous city in a specific time period.

Time period: Although historical studies cannot yet exactly specify Abraham's dates, we have already confirmed that he was born in the period 2200-2000 BC. This was the period of the third dynasty of the city-state of Ur (see **Geography** below). At that time, the wealth of Mesopotamian cities and the development of their technology perhaps exceeded that of any other place in the world. This is not strange, since after Noah's flood human culture began anew from the Middle East. The same period in Chinese history is termed the Xia dynasty, but at present archaeologists have not found any dynastic remains, and it seems there were no cities in China as developed as Ur. Chinese remains from the period belong to the Neolithic.

4 课：亚伯拉罕

讨论此课之前请阅读：《圣经》：创世记 11:1-9，26-32；12 章至 15 章；18 章至 19 章。

创世记 11:1-9：巴别塔

请复习创世记 11:1-9。挪亚的方舟“停在亚拉腊山上”，大概是现代土耳其的东南部。他的后代从山区下去，搬到“示拿地”的平原，指米所波大米（又称两河流域）的东南，在现代伊拉克境内。现代考古学研究发现最早期的人类文化就是在那个地区发展的，正如圣经所记载的。现代科学性考古学是圣经历史学最好的助手！

人类很快就忘记挪亚洪水的教训，拒绝真神上帝，象夏娃一样想要把自己当作神：“我们要建造一座城和一座塔，塔顶通天，为要传扬我们的名”。他们自高自大，崇拜人的科学技术能力，崇拜自己。除此以外，好像他们也是违背上帝在创世记 9:7 记载的命令，“上帝赐福给挪亚和他的儿子，对他们说：“你们要生养众多，遍满了地”。他们好像不愿意“遍满了地”因为怕被“分散在全地上”。上帝挫败了他们狂傲的计划、使他们的语言混乱了，变成几种不同的语言，结果他们不得不按照语言的不同彼此分开、分散到世界上不同的地方。

人类都是挪亚的后代。本来他们都只有同一种语言。现存的不同的语言就是来源于巴别塔的事变。现代语言学研究证明古时候存在几种不同的、基本的语言，它们就是世界不同的语系的根源。这几种原始母语都是独特的，找不到它们之间的关系。例如中文是属于汉藏语系，英语是属于印欧语系，它们的原始母语之间没有任何关系。圣经所记载的历史事实完全符合现代客观的现象：本来有几种完全不同的语言存在。因为人类的地理分离、通过语言演变的过程，这几种原始母语就发展成很多不同的地方语言，例如中国无数的不同的方言。

亚伯拉罕传记摘要

约 2170	<u>亚伯拉罕</u> 在 <u>吾珥</u> 出生	约 2080	<u>以实玛利</u> 出生
约 ?	搬到 <u>哈兰</u> 去	约 2065	<u>所多玛城</u> 毁灭了
约 2090	搬到 <u>迦南地</u> 去	约 2065	<u>以撒</u> 出生
约 ?	<u>罗得</u> 和 <u>亚伯拉罕</u> 分开	约 1990	<u>亚伯拉罕</u> 死

(所有的年代指公元前。以上年代为估计；实际年代更晚甚至两百年也有可能)

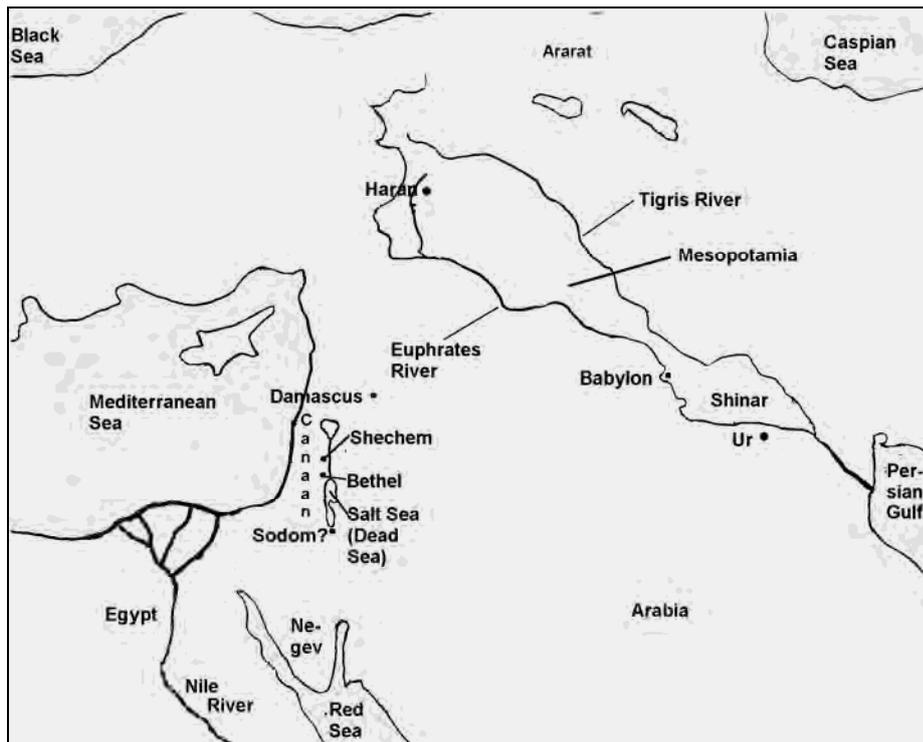
请复习创世记 11:27-32。

亚伯拉罕特别被上帝选择、呼召，要设立犹太民族和犹太教。他是：

- 第一个犹太人，所有犹太人的祖先
- 第一个被明确描述为“因信称义”的人
- 成为所有相信耶和華真上帝的人的属灵上的祖先，包括基督徒，无论他们是不是血缘的犹太人

能确认的圣经历史从亚伯拉罕时代起。要明白他的历史，先要了解一些古代中东地理和文化背景。亚伯拉罕不是在茫茫的过去从仙山上跳下来的；他却是在具体的时代从具体、有名的城市来的。

时代：虽然历史学还不能确定亚伯拉罕生活的精确时间，但已经确认他出生年代的范围是公元前 2200-2000。这时代算吾珥城城邦第三朝代（看以下地理）。那时，米所波大米（又称两河流域）城市的财富及技术的发展可能超越世界的其它地方。这种情况不奇怪，因为挪亚洪水以后，人类文化就是在中东重新开始。中国历史的同一时代称为夏朝，可是如今考古学没发现实在的朝代的遗迹，并且好像也没有象吾珥城那么发达的城市。中国同时代的遗迹属于新石器时代。



The Middle East in Abraham's Time

Geography:

Abraham's ancestral home was the city of Ur in Mesopotamia. Ur was about 150 kilometers from the Persian Gulf, in present day Iraq. Ancient Ur has already undergone very thorough archaeological excavation. The results show that, several hundred years before Abraham (in c. 2500 BC) Ur had already attained an advanced material and cultural level. Scholars estimate the city and suburbs had a population in excess of 300,000. Jewelry and other manufactured articles found in the royal tombs reflect a high level of artistic ability and a flourishing

economy. An average house had two stories, with each level about 200 square meters. There were also palaces and temples, including Babylonian style ziggurats. By the time of Abraham, writing had already existed for a long time, and their mathematics included cube roots and basic geometry. The surrounding alluvial plane supported a flourishing irrigation agriculture, providing the economic base for the city's culture. Commerce and trade were also well developed.

The city of Haran was in northwestern Mesopotamia. In Abraham's time it was an important trade city, being located at the crossroads of the east-west and north-south caravan trading routes, for example, the routes traveled by merchants taking goods from Babylon to Egypt. Please note, one must distinguish the city of Haran from Abraham's brother who was named Haran (Genesis 11:31). In the original language, they are two different words. Moreover, the Chinese "Union Version" Bible translates Genesis 11:31 rather poorly: "*Terah took his son Abram [Abraham] and his grandson Haran's son Lot....*" This should probably be translated "*Terah took his son Abram and his [Terah's] grandson, Haran's son Lot....*" Haran was Abraham's brother; Lot was Abraham's nephew.

The land of Canaan is about the same as the modern area of Palestine. This area was not as developed as Abraham's ancestral home.

The whole plane of the Jordan River refers to the area around the Dead Sea and the river valley adjacent on the north. In ancient times the Dead Sea was smaller than it is now and there were cities around it.

Genesis 11:27-32

Terah left his ancestral home, the city of Ur, taking with him his son Abraham (also called Abram), his daughter-in-law Sarah (also called Sarai), and his grandson Lot. He intended to go to Canaan. Genesis does not record the reason he moved, but from the New Testament in Acts (7:2) we know it was because his son Abraham heard God's calling and direction. But when they arrived at Haran, the entire household stopped there, and Haran died there.

It seems that Terah's household knew the true God, Yahweh, but at the same time worshipped idols. Among Abraham's descendants, a similarly mixed religion was often seen. This was a sin against God.

Genesis Chapter 12

Please review Genesis 12:1-7.

In Haran, Abraham once more heard God's call, telling him to go to the land of Canaan (12:1). At the same time, God granted him several great promises (12:2-3). Every detail of these promises has been fulfilled, and continues to be fulfilled.



亚伯拉罕时代中东 (约公元前 2000 年)

地理：

亚伯拉罕的老家是米所波大米地区的吾珥城。吾珥城离波斯湾约 150 公里，属于今天的伊拉克。古代吾珥城已经经过很彻底的考古挖掘，结果表明在亚伯拉罕时代的几百年之前（约公元前 2500 年）吾珥城已经达到了很发达的物质和文化水平。学者估计城市及郊区有超过 30 万人口。王族坟墓里发现

的首饰及制品反映了高超的艺术水平和经济的繁荣。有代表性的房子有两层，每层差不多 200 平方米。也有宫殿与庙宇，包括与巴比伦类似的金字塔形神塔。到亚伯拉罕时，用字母写字已经存在很长时间了，并且他们的数学包括立方根和基本几何学。周围的江河平原是很发达的灌溉农业基地，是当时城市文化的经济基础。商业和贸易也很发达。

哈兰城在米所波大米西北部。在亚伯拉罕时代，它是一个主要贸易城市，所在地是东西向和南北向贸易旅行队路线的交点，比如说商人把货物从巴比伦运到埃及去。请注意，要分清哈兰城和亚伯拉罕的兄弟，名称哈兰（创 11:31）。原文是两个不同的词。并且中文“和合本”圣经翻译创世记 11:31 不太好：“他拉带着他儿子亚伯兰 [即亚伯拉罕] 和他孙子哈兰的儿子罗得”大概应该作“他拉带着他儿子亚伯兰和他 [他拉] 的孙子哈兰的儿子罗得”。哈兰是亚伯拉罕的兄弟；罗得是亚伯拉罕的侄子。

迦南地指与现代巴勒斯坦地区差不多的地区，这地区没有亚伯拉罕老家那么发达。

约旦河的全平原指死海周围及它靠近北边的流域。古代死海比现代小，周围有城市。

创世记 11:27-32

他拉，带着他的儿子亚伯拉罕（又称亚伯兰）、他的儿媳妇撒拉（又称撒莱）和他的孙子罗得，离开老家吾珥城，想进入迦南地。创世记没记载他搬家的缘由，但根据新约的使徒行传（7:2）我们知道是因为他儿子亚伯拉罕听到了上帝的呼召和指示。可是到了哈兰城他们一家都停留在那里，并且他拉在那里死了。

他拉的家庭好象知道真上帝耶和華，但是同时还在拜偶像。在亚伯拉罕的后代中，类似混合的宗教是常见的。这就得罪了上帝。

创世记 12 章

请复习创世记 12:1-7。

在哈兰城，亚伯拉罕再一次听到上帝的呼召，叫他去迦南地（12:1）。同时上帝赐给他几个很伟大的诺言（12:2-3）。这诺言每一个特点都已经被应验了，并且还在继续应验。

1. *I will make you a great nation.* During the past 3,500 years, Jews have usually had a population of at least several million. In ancient times, this rated as rather large. In 1990, worldwide there were more than 17 million Jews. More obvious is their influence in philosophy, economics, science and politics. Just in the past 200 years, we have seen Goethe, Hegel, Marx, Freud, Einstein, and many other famous Jews. Although the Jews are less than 0.3% of the world's total, they have attained 15% of the Nobel prizes. Although they represent less than 5% of the population of the United States, about 25% of American university professors are Jewish. This most important aspect is religion, whether true (Judaism, Christianity) or false (Islam also regards Abraham as a spiritual and physical ancestor. Also, Freud's wild conjectures and Marx's rejection of Christianity are also related to religion).

2. *I will bless you.* Abraham's most important blessing was spiritual: He was the friend of God. Besides this, he was very rich. His descendants have also often been rich.

3. *Make your name great.* Very few people from 4,000 years ago are still remembered, but even to today Abraham is regarded as "the father of faith." Throughout Europe, Africa, North and South America, the Middle East, India, and even in some places in East Asia, there are people named Abraham in memory of this man.

4. *I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse.* History has countless examples showing that nations which oppress or oppose the Jews are subsequently punished, while nations which treat the Jews well prosper. For a modern example, compare Hitler's Germany with the United States. Also the Arab nations which oppose Israel are always defeated.

5. *In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.* This prophecy has been amazingly fulfilled. Jesus Christ is directly descended from Abraham and his offspring.

In the scientific arena, after the religious Reformation in the West (beginning about 1500), comparatively pure Christianity became the philosophical basis for the development of modern science. Despite having long histories, stable cultures and nation-states, and highly developed technology, ancient Egypt, India, and China were all unable to produce modern science and technology. First, Christianity taught Western people that Nature was solely created matter, and thus had no divinity in it, and that the Creator's own nature was logical. It was not until then that modern science began. Thus we can know that it was not Western culture that provided a basis for modern science, still less is it that Westerners are more intelligent than Chinese, but rather the philosophical outlook of the Bible provided the necessary preconditions and base for the scientific method. The reason that China was not the first to develop modern scientific research methods is because China had not been influenced by the Bible.

Christianity has also contributed to the development of society in other ways besides science. Under the influence of the Bible, Western culture eradicated slavery. Later other nations followed their example. There are many examples of contributions to China. Christian missionaries were the first to call for an end to female foot binding. Missionaries also founded most of China's most famous universities and high schools, including Yenching University (now combined with Beijing University) and Lingnan University (now combined with Sun Yat Sen University).

The greatest blessing is spiritual. The only one who can enable people to escape God's judgment and attain resurrection and eternal life is Abraham's descendant Jesus Christ. He is the only savior for every person from every place and nationality.

Even unbelieving scholars admit that Genesis was written many hundreds of years before Christ. At that time, only a tiny minority of the people in the world had heard of Judaism or the Bible. This was even more the case at the time Genesis was actually written (around 1450 BC) or when Abraham actually received the promises (around 2100 BC). At that time, to say the all the peoples in the world would be blessed because of Abraham would have sounded like an idle boast. No one could have foreseen that this tiny people group and religion would influence the entire world. Today however, we can see people in every place and every nation worshipping Abraham's descendant Jesus Christ and the true God, Yahweh. This prophecy did not begin to be fulfilled until the first century AD, but as much as 1,500 years earlier the prophecy had already been written in the Bible. This event could not have been imagined by humans; it must have been a prophecy revealed by God.

Genesis Chapter 15

Please review Genesis 15:1-21. Abraham had no physical children, so he was preparing to make Eleazar his heir. God promised him:

1. Abraham himself would have a son.
2. He would have countless descendants.
3. The land of Canaan would belong to them; Genesis 13:15 and 17:8 add that it would belong to them "*forever.*"
4. But they would first live in a foreign land (Egypt) for 400 years and be oppressed.
5. Afterwards they would come out and return to Canaan.
6. At that time, the wickedness of the Canaanites would have reached a level that God would have to punish, so God would drive them out and give the land to the Israelites.

1. *我必叫你成为大国*。3,500 年来，犹太人通常最少有几百万人口，在古代这算是比较多的。1990 年全世界犹太人超过 170 万。更明显的是他们在哲学、经济、科学和政治界的影响。仅仅 200 年来，有哥德、黑格尔、马克思、弗洛伊德和爱因斯坦及其他有名的犹太人。虽然犹太人总人口不到全世界总人口的 0.3%，他们得到了约 15.0% 的诺贝尔奖；虽然他们的人数不到美国总人口的 5%，美国大学教授约 25% 是犹太人。最主要是宗教方面，无论说真的（犹太教、基督教）或假的（伊斯兰教也以亚伯拉罕为属灵和血缘的祖先。而且，弗洛伊德的胡乱猜想和马克思对基督教的拒绝也与宗教有关）。

2. *我必赐福给你*。亚伯拉罕最重要的福气是属灵的：他是上帝的朋友。此外，他也很有钱。他的后代常常也是很有钱的。

3. *叫你的名为大*。四千年前的人很少被人记得，但是直到今天亚伯拉罕还是被尊称为“信心的祖父”。无论欧洲、非洲、南北美洲、中东、印度、甚至东亚的一些地方，到处都有人以亚伯拉罕为名字，就是纪念这个人。

4. *为你祝福的，我必赐福与他；那咒诅你，我必咒诅他*。历史上有无数的例子，压迫或对抗犹太人的国家后来受到惩罚，善待犹太人的国家则繁荣。近代例子要对比希特勒时代的德国和美国，而且反对以色列国的阿拉伯国家总是失败了。

5. *地上的万族都要因你得福*。这句预言很奇妙地被应验了。基督教是直接地从亚伯拉罕及他的后代来的。

在科学方面，西方宗教改革 / 更正(约公元 1500 年起)运动以后，比较单纯的基督教成为现代科学发展的哲学基础。原来古代埃及、印度、中国，虽然历史悠久、文化与国度稳定、经济繁荣、学术发达，却都不能产生现代科学与技术。直到基督教教导西方人明白大自然完全是被创造的物质，所以没有什么神性，而且创造者的本性是逻辑的，所以人能用逻辑的观察与分析去发现上帝所创造的自然法则，现代科学才开始。所以我们可以知道，不是西方文化为现代科学提供了基础，更不是西方人比中国人聪明，而是圣经的哲学观点为科学方法提供了前提条件和基础。不是中国首先发展了现代科学研究方法的原因，是因为中国没有受到圣经的影响。

除了科学发展以外，基督教也对社会发展有贡献。在圣经的影响之下，西方国家取消了奴隶制度，后来世界其它国家学习它们的榜样。对中国有贡献的例子很多，最早要求取消女人缠脚的就是基督教的传教士；原来也是传教士建立了中国大部分现在最有名的大学及高中，包括燕京大学（现今与北京大学联合）、岭南大学（现今与中山大学联合）等。

最主要的福是属灵的，唯一能使人避免上帝的审判并得到复活和永生的是亚伯拉罕的后代耶稣基督，他是各地各族各个人唯一的救主。

连非信徒的学者都承认创世记公元前好几百年已经写好了。在那个时候，听说过犹太教或圣经的人在世界上算是极少数。创世记实际写下的时代（大约公元前 1450 年）和亚伯拉罕实际接受诺言的时代（约公元前 2100 年）更是如此。在那时候，说全世界的民族要因亚伯拉罕得到祝福可能听起来像吹牛夸口。没有人能预知这个不重要的小民族及宗教会影响全世界。如今，我们能看到各国各地有人在崇拜亚伯拉罕的后代耶稣基督与真神耶和華。这个预言直到公元第一世纪才开始应验；但是早在 1,500 年之前预言已经写在圣经里了。这现象不可能被人想像到；必定是上帝所启示的预言。

创世记 15 章

请复习创世记 15:1-21。亚伯拉罕没有血缘的儿女，他就准备把以利以谢当作他的继承人。上帝向他许诺：

1. 亚伯拉罕自己会生一个孩子。
2. 他将有千千万万后代。
3. 迦南地将会属于他们；创世记 13:15, 17:8 增加了，会“永远”属于他们。
4. 但他们先要住在外国（指埃及）400 年，并受压迫。
5. 然后他们出来，回到迦南地。
6. 到那时候，迦南地民族的罪孽会已经达到上帝必惩罚的限度，所以上帝就会把他们赶出去，把土地赐给以色列民。

In this passage, God lets Abraham know the next 500 years of history of his descendants, the Israelites, covering about 2050 to 1350 BC. All of the prophecies listed about have already been fulfilled. First, Abraham and Sarah gave birth to a son named Isaac. The second and third generations of Isaac's descendants, under the leadership of his grandson Joseph, moved to Egypt. They flourished in Egypt, becoming a nation of one or two million people. Later, they were oppressed by the Egyptians. Finally, under Moses' leadership, they left Egypt and returned to Canaan. Under the leadership of Joshua, they conquered the corrupt Canaanites who resisted them. Lessons 5 to 8 will discuss the details of these events.

In Genesis 17:8, God added a detail, promising that Canaan would **forever** belong to the Israelites:

"And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." (Genesis 17:8)

This prophecy has been amazingly fulfilled in our own time. We quote from Science and Faith by Mr. Yan Wei:

Right now the greatest miracle in the world, which fully illustrates that the Bible is true and reliable, is the history of the Jews (Israelites). The World Knowledge Publisher of China recently published a book entitled *Israel* to introduce this Jewish country specifically. Its subtitle is *A Nation of Enigma*, because from the general historic point of view, Israel's history has been extremely peculiar and inconceivable. How could a weak and small nation such as Israel, having been subjugated for more than twenty-five hundred years (which corresponds to since the "Spring and Autumn" period in China), and having had its people driven away from their own land and dispersed to different places in the world for almost two thousand years, not have perished or been assimilated? Why did continuous calamities and catastrophes always cling tightly to this nation which is so small and weak but boasts of extraordinary achievements? How could such a despised and persecuted small nation rebuild its own country two thousand years after its original country perished and its people were driven away from their own land? How could such a small country, surrounded and attacked by strong enemies and suffering from continuous wars, not have been destroyed? But on the contrary, how could it grow stronger and stronger through all the wars, and transform the desolate and barren land into fertile and well-cultivated farms, building up a country with modern industry and agriculture within mere decades? All these, from the viewpoint of man, are unbelievable miracles. However, seen from the perspective of the Bible, they are just facts which should definitely come true. All these events which happened to the Israelites in later years were clearly predicted in the Bible as early as two or three thousand years before. Of course, this goes far beyond the capability of man. That was the work of God, so it does seem miraculous in man's eye. The authors of the book *Israel* acknowledge that the Bible has made great contributions to human culture, but being constrained by prejudice, they do not believe that the Bible was the revelation of God, but merely consider it to be the traditional legends of the Jewish people. Therefore, they could never find the right answer, and that is why the book started with "enigma" and also ended up with "enigma." The Israelites have a special position in the Bible. They are called the "chosen people of God," and this is why they are different from all the others. If one does not know this, he can never understand the Israelites. (Science and Faith, English edition, pp. 17-18)

God's promise to Abraham made 4,000 years ago continues to be fulfilled today. Furthermore, the 1,900 year scattering of the Jews throughout the earth was also prophesied (see Lesson 11). Clearly the Bible is true and inspired by God.

Concerning the current conflict between the Palestinians and the Jews, Christians should not be biased. Their basic problem is that two groups of sinners hate each other, and moreover regard a patch of arid ground as more important than human life. Although God will sooner or later allow the Jews to regain control of all of Israel, including the Temple Mount (see Lessons 8 and 16), this does not mean that the Jews can disregard the rights of the Palestinians. In the same way, the Palestinians' hatred of the Jews and desire to drive them out is also unjust. If people on both sides do not repent and believe in Jesus Christ, they will all alike receive God's judgment and go to eternal hell. Although in history God frequently uses the freely chosen evil acts of sinful human beings to attain His own determined ends, that does not mean God causes them to sin or approves of their evil.

Biblical Passage	Prophecy	Date of Prophecy (Appx.)	Date of Fulfillment	Time between Prophecy and Fulfillment
Gen. 12, 22, 26	All the people of the world will be blessed through Abraham's offspring	2000 BC	begins 30 AD	2,000 years until begins.
Gen. 12, 13, 15, 17	The land of Canaan (Palestine) will belong to Abraham's descendants (Jews) forever.	2000 BC	c. 1400 BC to now	600 yrs. until begins; 4,000 yrs. (from prophecy to now)

在这段经文里，上帝让亚伯拉罕知道他的后代以色列民未来五百多年的历史，即公元前约 2050-1350 年。以上所有的预言都已经应验了。首先，亚伯拉罕与撒拉生了一个儿子，名称以撒。以撒第二、三代的后代，在他的子孙约瑟的带领下，搬到埃及。他们在埃及生活很繁荣，变成一个有一二百万人口的民族，后来他们被埃及人压迫。最后，在摩西的带领下，他们从埃及出去，回到迦南地。在约书亚将军的带领下，以色列民族战胜那些腐败、抵抗他们的迦南人。第 5 至 8 课将讲述这些事情的细节。

在创世记 17:8，上帝增加了一个细节，许诺迦南地将会永远属于以色列人：

我要将你现在的寄居之地，就是迦南地，赐给你和你的后裔，永远为业。我也必作他们的上帝。

这个预言在我们当代很奇妙地应验了。我们引用微言先生写的《科学与信仰》：

当前世界上有一个最大的奇迹，可以充分说明圣经的真实可信，那就是犹太人（以色列人）的历史。中国世界知识出版社最近出版了一本专门介绍「以色列」的书，副题称它为「谜一般的国家」。因为以色列人的经历以一般历史的眼光看来，实在太奇特，太不可思议。为什么以色列这么一个又弱又小的民族，亡国已经二千五百多年（相当于中国春秋时代），被驱离本土，并分散到世界各地也已经近二千年，却不被同化消灭？为什么连续不断的苦难和浩劫总是紧紧伴随著这个弱小却又表现非凡的民族？为什么一个这么被鄙视、迫害的弱小民族却在亡国失土两千多年以后居然又能重建他们的国家？为什么这么一个小国在强敌围攻，战祸不断的情况下，却不被摧毁，反而越战越强，在短短几十年中，把一块荒凉不毛之地改造为沃土良田，并建立起现代化的工农业国家？所有这些，在人看来都是难以置信的奇迹，但从圣经看来却是理所当然，事所必至。因为早在两、三千年以前，圣经已经预先将以色列人日后的这些情景写得清清楚楚。这当然不是人所能做到的，这是神的作为，所以在人眼中看为希奇。「以色列」一书的作者们虽然承认圣经对人类文明有重大贡献，但却囿于成见，不相信圣经是神的启示，只把它看作犹太人的传说，因此他们始终不能找到正确的答案，该书也就只能以「谜」开始，也以「谜」结束。以色列人在圣经中有独特的地位，被称为「神的选民」，他们之所以与众不同，原因在此。如果不明白这一点，便不可理解以色列人。（《科学与信仰》16-17 页）

上帝四千年前对亚伯拉罕的诺言，到如今一直正在应验。并且犹太人一千九百年被驱散到世界各地也是圣经所预言的（看第 11 课）。很明显，圣经是正确的、被上帝启示的。

对于现代巴勒斯坦人和犹太人之间的矛盾，基督徒不应该有偏见。他们基本上的问题是两批罪人互相仇恨，而且把一片干燥的土地看得比人的生命还重。虽然上帝早晚会让犹太人恢复对整个以色列，包括耶路撒冷的圣殿山的控制（看第 8、16 课），但是这并不是说犹太人可以不顾巴勒斯坦人的权利。巴勒斯坦人恨犹太人、想把他们杀死或赶出去，这同样不是正义的。如果他们双方不悔改、相信耶稣基督的话，都一样要受到上帝的审判、下永恒的地狱去。虽然上帝经常会在历史上利用罪人自由选择的恶行来达到他自己的所定的结果，这并不等于说是上帝导致他们犯罪或容忍他们的邪恶。

圣经段落	预言	发表预言年份(大约)	应验时间	预言和应验之间的时间
<u>创世记</u> 12, 22, 26	<u>亚伯拉罕</u> 的后代（指 <u>耶稣</u> ）会使全球的人得到祝福	公元前 2000 年	公元 30 年起	两千年才开始
<u>创世记</u> 12, 13, 15, 17	<u>迦南地</u> （指 <u>以色列</u> ）会永远属于 <u>亚伯拉罕</u> 的后代（指 <u>犹太人</u> ）	公元前 2000 年	公元前约 1400 年起，一直至今	六百年才开始：四千年（从发表预言直到今）

Justification by Faith

Although fulfilled prophecies are amazing, they are not the most important thing in the passage. The Bible says, when Abraham heard God's promise, "*Then he [Abraham] believed in Yahweh, and He reckoned it to him as righteousness*" (Genesis 15:6). This is the first place where the Bible directly raises its central truth: justification by faith. "Justification by faith" means God will regard a believer's faith as his or her righteousness, allowing him or her to avoid God's judgment. All human beings have sinned and failed to attain to God's righteous standard. There are two parts to God's judgment on human evil. One is that our bodies must die. Much more terrifying than that is, that after our bodies die, God will judge our souls, and then our souls will suffer forever in hell, separated from God. Separation from God is spiritual death. Regarding hell, the Bible says: "*where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched*" (Mark 9:48). People who go to hell suffer eternal torment. How can we escape it?

Jesus Christ has already taken our place and borne our sins. Despite the fact that He himself had never sinned, God punished Him. On the cross, not only did Jesus's body die, but God also abandoned His soul; that is to say, Jesus went to hell.

Now, if we want to avoid God's judgment, we only need to really believe in Jesus, confess our sins, and truly repent. You must do this before God will regard Jesus's righteousness as your righteousness, and regard your sin as having already been punished in Jesus. This is the only way to avoid judgment, and it comes from God's love and grace; it is "*by grace, through faith*" (Ephesians 2:8).

The concept "justification by faith" did not come from human thinking. As far as this writer knows, at the time of Abraham, about 2000 BC, or at the time that Moses wrote Genesis, about 1450 BC, there was no concept of "justification by faith" in any other religion. This idea suddenly appeared at that time, as if it had fallen from heaven. In fact, it came from God. All the religions which humans have established throughout history tell people to establish good relations with God by their own efforts, no matter whether by good works ("good morality," "repentance is salvation," "do good to atone for past sins") or by religious observances (burning incense, praying, worshipping). All religions except for the Bible's always emphasize: although people have sin, by relying on your own efforts, you can achieve salvation. In contrast, the Bible says all "good works" are simply what you ought to do, and they cannot "atone" for any "sins" which we have committed in the past. Worse than that, we are so corrupt that we do not even attain to our own, rather low, personal moral standard, much less do we live a life in accordance with God's righteous demands. Even when we are intending to "do good works," we still often sin. The Bible says there is no way to escape God's judgment except by believing in Him and accepting the grace He freely grants.

Humanity has never come up with this kind of a concept, because it too deeply contradicts our natural pride. By this we can know that the Bible is a revelation from God, not something thought up by humans.

Genesis Chapters 18-19

Please review Genesis 18:16-19:29.

These two chapters describe the destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the other cities of the plain south of the Dead Sea. We will first examine the historical and archaeological evidence, then the spiritual meaning.

The remains of Sodom and Gomorrah are probably under the water at the south end of the Dead Sea. The ancient Dead Sea was much smaller than now. Two first century AD historians, the Jew Josephus and the Roman Tacitus, both state that the remains of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the three other cities could still be seen in their day at the southern edge of the Dead Sea (see The New Unger's Bible Dictionary, pp. 492, 1206). Archaeologists have found a worship center on a hill south of the Dead Sea which may have been used by the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. The site went out of use **before** 1900 BC (see Archeology and Bible History p. 57).

The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was probably carried out by God using an earthquake. Even to today, that region has natural asphalt, sulfur, and petroleum. The region is a fault zone. At that time, there was probably an earthquake first. The rock layers were split open, shooting asphalt, petroleum or natural gas into the air, along with sulfur. This inflammable mixture ignited in the air and fell down onto the cities of the plain. Supporting this interpretation is the fact that certain rock layers in the mountains surrounding the Dead Sea show evidence of high heat metamorphism. Besides an explosion caused by an earthquake, the event was perhaps accompanied by an ordinary volcanic eruption.

Regarding Lot's wife becoming "*a pillar of salt*," at present we cannot give a definitive explanation. However, at the ancient Italian city of Pompeii, which was destroyed by a volcano, corpses have been discovered buried in the ashes. The bodies and bones had been replaced by mineral salts. One can truly say they had become "*pillar[s] of salt*."

因信称义

虽然被应验的预言很奇妙，这一段最重要的是另外一点。圣经说，亚伯拉罕听到上帝的诺言，“亚伯兰 [亚伯拉罕] 信耶和華，耶和華就以此为他的义”（创世记 15:6）。这是圣经第一次直接提到它的中心道理：因信称义。“因信称义”，这句话指上帝把一个信徒的信心当作他的公义，使他能避免上帝的审判。我们全人类都犯了罪，没达到上帝公义的标准。上帝对人类罪孽的审判有两个部分，一个是使我们的身体必须死亡；更可怕的是，身体死了以后，上帝还要审判我们的灵魂，然后我们的灵魂在地狱永远受苦、与上帝隔绝。与上帝隔绝是属灵的死亡。关于地狱圣经说：“在那里虫是不死的，火是不灭的”（马可福音 9:48）。下地狱的人受永远的痛苦，我们怎样才能逃避它？

耶稣基督已经代替我们、担当了我们的惩罚。尽管他自己从来没犯过什么罪，但上帝惩罚他。在十字架上，不但是耶稣的身体死了，上帝也离弃他的灵魂，就是说，耶稣进入地狱。现在，

如果要避免上帝的审判，只有真心相信耶稣、承认自己的罪、真心悔改，这样上帝才会把耶稣基督的公义当作你自己的公义，并把你的罪当作属于那些耶稣基督已经受过惩罚的罪。这唯一能避免审判的方法是出自上帝的爱心和恩典，是“本乎恩，也因着信”（以弗所书 2:8）。

“因信称义”这个概念不是从人的思想来的。据作者所知，在亚伯拉罕时代，约公元前 2000 年，或者摩西写创世记的时代，约公元前 1450 年，在其它宗教中，一点都没有这个“因信称义”的概念。这是当时突然出现的，好象是从天堂降下来的。实际上，就是从上帝而来的。历史上各种各样的人所建立的宗教都叫人凭着自己的行动来取得与上帝和睦的关系，无论是凭着好的行为（“仁义道德”、“回头是岸”、“立功赎罪”）或者通过宗教的礼仪（烧香、祷告、崇拜），圣经之外的宗教总是强调：虽然人有罪，但靠着自己的能力，还能得到拯救。相反的，圣经说所有的“立功”都是理所当然、应该作的，并不能“赎”我们以前所犯的任何“罪”。而且，更严重的是，我们多么腐败，连个人自己比较低的道德标准都达不到，更不用说真的过一个符合上帝公义要求的生活。连我们想要“立功”的时候，还常常犯罪。圣经说，除了信上帝、接受他白白赐给的恩典以外，我们没有任何办法逃避审判。

人类从来没有提到类似的概念，因为这与人本性的骄傲有太深的矛盾。因此我们可以明白圣经是上帝启示的，而不是人想出来的。

创世记 18、19 章

请复习创世记 18:16-19:29。

这两章描述所多玛、蛾摩拉和其它死海南边平原城市的毁灭。我们先看看历史和考古学的根据，然后再看属灵的意义。

所多玛与蛾摩拉的遗迹大概在死海南部浅水之下。古代死海比现代小。公元第一世纪的两位历史作家，犹太人约瑟夫斯（Josephus）和罗马人 Tacitus，都证明在他们的时代还能在死海南边看见所多玛、蛾摩拉及三个城市的遗迹（参看《新 Unger's 圣经百科全书》492, 1206 页）。考古学发现死海南边山上的宗教崇拜地点，很可能是所多玛和蛾摩拉人所使用的，那地方公元前 1900 年之前已经停止使用（参考《考古学与圣经历史》57 页）。

所多玛与蛾摩拉的毁灭大概是上帝利用地震施行的。一直到现在，那地方有天然沥青、硫磺、和石油。那地方是断层带。当时大概先有地震，裂开的岩石突然把原来埋藏着的沥青、石油或天然气，夹带着硫磺，喷射到空中，这些很易燃的混合物在空中就着火了，落在平原的城市上。支持这个解释的根据是死海周围的山，有些岩层显示了高热变态。除了地震的爆炸以外，也许伴随着普通的火山熔岩爆发。

关于罗得的妻子“变成了一根盐柱”目前还不能作个明确解释。可是在古代意大利被火山毁灭的庞培（又译庞贝）城曾经发现在火山灰里埋葬的尸体，身体和骨头被矿物构成的盐状物置换了，真可以说他们变了“一根盐柱”。

The people of Sodom were completely depraved. Genesis 19:5 [in the Chinese Union version] “*let us do what we want with them*” is not translated very well. The original language is very clear; their meaning was: Let us have sexual relations with them. As soon as they heard there were travelers staying in their town, they intended to commit homosexual gang rape. Regarding them, Ezekiel 16:49-50 says:

... this was the guilt of...Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food, and careless ease, but she did not help the poor and needy. Thus they were haughty and committed abominations before Me [God]. Therefore I removed them when I saw it.

The people of Sodom were rich, but arrogant, and not concerned about the poor. They indulged their own lusts and became corrupt. The example of Sodom is a warning to all humanity: God hates all sin and will certainly punish everyone who is not willing to repent. This includes people who, on the surface, have not committed sins as severe as the people of Sodom – God will punish each individual according to the sins of each individual.

God’s punishment of Sodom is an example of judgment on people who do not believe and repent. Therefore God saved Lot, who was a believer. But Lot was an extremely bad believer who conformed to a corrupt society – note in 19:8 how he was willing to make use of own his daughters. He originally went to Sodom because he coveted its splendor. Subsequently he was influenced by them and was himself half corrupted. Let every believer be careful!

Conclusion

In light of the above historical and archaeological research, we must acknowledge that Genesis very accurately records historical facts. Clearly this history belongs to the period of 2000 BC. It absolutely cannot be a myth fabricated by the Israelites a long time later. Moreover, as early as Abraham’s time, the Bible already had prophecies which were not fulfilled until much later. These prophecies were outside the realm of human knowledge. They were revealed to Abraham so he would know future events, and Abraham passed them down to his descendants (perhaps they were written down). Finally, Moses compiled them in Genesis.

Appendix 4: Other Archaeological Research Giving Evidence for the Biblical Record about Abraham

Genesis Chapter 13

Please review Genesis 13:5-13. Abraham took his nephew Lot to Canaan. Because they had too many cattle, they separated. Lot went to the southern part of the Jordan River valley (the plain of the Jordan) because the area was fertile and well watered. Eventually he lived in the city of Sodom.

The Bible says that at the time of Abraham and Lot, the southern section of the Jordan River valley was fertile and its agriculture productive. But the 19th century and early 20th century unbelieving scholars denied the accuracy of the Bible, because for the past several thousand years the southern section of the Jordan River valley has been a hot, arid wasteland. But archaeological advances which began in the 1920s have proven that in the period of 2050 BC that area was fertile and had a large population. It did not become a wasteland like it is now until over a hundred years later (c. 1900 BC). Regrettably, the erroneous concepts of the 19th century had already been widely disseminated, first in Germany and the European continent, then spreading to England and its colonies, and finally to the United States. These erroneous ideas misled many scholars, causing Western culture to reject the Bible as its basic belief and to begin to decay.

Unbelieving scholars also said that Genesis was not completed until very late (after 1000 BC). We need to ask, if it was not written until so late, how did the writer know the conditions of a thousand years earlier? He could not have known. Further, if Genesis really were just a legend, it could not be so accurate.

Genesis Chapter 14

Please review Genesis chapter 14. The reason our study includes this chapter, as well as chapters 18 and 19 which were discussed above, is that they demonstrate that the history recorded in Genesis is both ancient, around 2050 BC, and accurate. Moreover they are excellent examples of how modern scientific archeology refutes earlier erroneous conjectures. In the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, theories which denied the historical accuracy of the Bible were very popular. This is part of the reason why Marx rejected the Bible and became an atheist.

Chapter 14 records a war between two alliances of kings of small city-states. Four petty trivial kings from Mesopotamia formed an alliance together to invade five city-states in the southern Jordan River valley. In the past, unbelieving scholars claimed:

1. The southern Jordan River valley was never so prosperous and never had such a large population.
2. The names of the Mesopotamian city-state kings were fabricated, not real.
3. In early times (c. 2050 BC), such a long expedition, from Mesopotamia to Palestine, was not possible.
4. At that time, it was impossible to march along the eastern side of the Jordan River the area was a wilderness without a road.

Each of the above erroneous accusations has been refuted by archaeology:

所多玛人完全堕落。创世记 19:5 “任我们所为”翻译得不好。原文很清楚，他们的意思是：让我们与他们性交。他们一听到有路人住在他们城市里，就想集体同性强奸。关于他们以西结书 16:49-50 说：

……所多玛的罪孽是这样：她和她的众女都心骄气傲，粮食饱足，大享安逸，并没有扶助困苦和穷乏人的手。她们狂傲，在我面前行可憎的事，我看见便将她们除掉。

所多玛人富有，但很骄傲，不关心穷人，只放纵自己的情欲，腐化了。所多玛的例子警告全人类：上帝憎恨所有的罪，一定要惩罚不愿意悔改的人。这也包括表面上来看没有所多玛人那么厉害的罪——上帝要按照各人所犯的罪惩罚各人。

上帝对所多玛的惩罚是审判不相信、不悔改的人的例子，所以上帝拯救罗得那个信徒。但罗得是一个非常不好、效法腐败社会的信徒——看他在 19:8 愿意怎样利用他自己的女儿们。他原来因为贪图财富而往所多玛去，后来就受到他们的影响，自己也一半腐败了。这叫每一位信徒小心！

结论

根据以上的历史和考古学研究，我们不得不承认创世记很准确地记载了历史事实。这些历史很明显是属于公元前 2000 年的时代，绝对不是很长时间以后以色列民编造的神话。而且早在亚伯拉罕传记，圣经已经有预言，经过很长的时间才应验了。这样的预言是在人的意料之外，就是上帝启示亚伯拉罕让他知道未来的事情，亚伯拉罕传给他的后代（也许被写了下来），最后被摩西编写在创世记里。

4 课附录：其它证明圣经有关亚伯拉罕的记载的考古学研究

创世记 13 章

请复习创世记 13:5-13。亚伯拉罕原来也带着他的侄儿罗得去迦南地。因他们两家的牲畜太多，他们就分开了。罗得往约旦河流域南部（约旦的平原）去，因为那里土地很肥沃，水源多。最后他住在所多玛城里。

圣经说，在亚伯拉罕和罗得时代，约旦河流域南部很肥沃、农产丰富。可是 19 世纪和 20 世纪初期的非信徒学者否认圣经的准确性，因为几千年来约旦河南部是个又热又干旱的旷野。但是 1920 年代起的考古学进展已经证明，公元前 2050 年的时代那地方肥沃、人口很多，直到再过一百多年（大约公元前 1900 年）那地方才变成了荒地，象现在一样。圣经历史被考古学证实了。遗憾的是这些 19 世纪错误的概念早已广泛传播了，首先在德国以及欧洲大陆，后来传到英国以及其殖民地，最后传到美国。这些错误的概念误导了许多学者，使西方文化拒绝以圣经为其信仰的根据，开始堕落。

又有非信徒学者说创世记是很晚（公元前 1000 年以后）才写成的。若是这样晚才写成的话，我们要问，作者怎么知道一千年前的情况呢？他不可能知道。因而如果创世记原来只是传说的话，就不会那么正确。

创世记 14 章

请复习创世记 14 章。我们的学习包括这章和以上所讨论的 18、19 章，因为它们证明了创世记记载的历史既古老，约公元前 2050 年，又准确。并且它们作为很好的例子让我们明白现代科学性考古学怎样驳倒以前错误的推测。19 世纪和 20 世纪上半期，否认圣经历史事实性的学说很流行。马克思拒绝圣经、变成无神论者的一部分原因在此。

14 章记载两组城邦小王国联盟的战争。四个米所波大米地区的小王国联合入侵约旦河流域南部五个城邦小王国。以前，非信徒的学者断言：

1. 约旦河流域南部从来不是那么富饶、人口多的地区。
2. 米所波大米城邦国王的名字是虚构的，没有真实性。
3. 早期（约公元前 2050 年），从米所波大米到巴勒斯坦南部那么长的远征是不可能的。
4. 那时代行走约旦河的东边是不可能的，那一带全是旷野、没有道路。

以上每一个错误的控告都已经被考古学反驳：

1. The first “error,” saying that the southern Jordan River valley did not have highly developed cities, was refuted in the discussion of chapter 13 above. In c. 2050 BC, the area’s population was large, but by c. 1900 BC it had become a wasteland. Here we add a special detail. Archaeologists have found religious worship centers at the southern end of the Dead Sea, very possibly used by the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. These sites went out of use **before** 1900 BC (see Archeology and Bible History p. 52, 57).

2. As for the names of the Mesopotamian kings, at present we cannot confirm the actual personages. But archaeology has already discovered identical or similar names recorded in materials from the same time period and places, including the names of kings of city-states. Obviously these people were not fabricated a thousand years after the time of Abraham (see Archeology and Bible History p. 52-53).

3. C. 2300 BC, Sargon, king of the city of Akkad (near Babylon) recorded invading and defeating the Amorites of Syria and Palestine. This event occurred several hundred years **before** the events of Genesis chapter 14. Furthermore, archaeologists have discovered cart rental contract in Babylon. The contract explicitly forbade the renter to drive the cart to the Mediterranean coast. Naturally, there would have been no need to forbid what could not have been done! The approximate time of the contract was 1800-1600 BC. Although the contract was written after Abraham’s time, it still belongs to the time period during which the scholars critical of the Bible’s accuracy had said it was impossible to have commerce between Mesopotamia and Palestine. Clearly, Mesopotamia and Palestine had military and commercial concourse at an early period (see Archeology and Bible History p. 52-53).

4. In the first half of the 20th century, archaeologists discovered the remains of the string of cities on the east side of the Jordan River. There were about 70 or more of these cities, which were occupied around 3000-2000 BC. Hence, there was a line of advance for armies in Abraham’s time (see Archeology and Bible History p. 52).

The last event in chapter 14 tells us about Melchizedek, the king of Salem, the place later called Jerusalem. Melchizedek shows that in Abraham’s time, some other people appear to have known the true God, Yahweh, calling Him “*God Most High*.” This is consistent with the teaching of Romans 1:21-23: in the beginning, all humanity knew that there is only one God, and that He is not material. Later people rejected this knowledge, gradually grew ignorant, and fabricated polytheism and idols.

The Door of Lot’s House

Sometimes even the tiny details of the Bible show its accuracy. Genesis 19:6, 9 notes that the door of Lot’s house was very sturdy. The crowd pressing against Lot was not able to break it. They intended to “*break the door*” in order to enter the house.

While excavating the city of Debir on the west side of the Dead Sea (called Kirjath-Sepher in the Bible; see Joshua 15:15, etc.), archaeologists discovered several layers of remains from different time periods of occupation. In the Middle Bronze period (c. 2200-1600 BC), they found that the walls of the houses were thick and the doors strong. This was the time of Abraham and Lot, when there was no protection from a central government. By Early Iron II period (c. 900-600 BC), however, archaeologists found very few door sockets. The houses merely had arched doorways, which seemed to have been covered by door curtains. This was the period of strong Israelite government which was able to protect the public peace (see Archeology and Bible History p. 56-57).

Unbelieving scholars think Genesis was not written until 900-700 BC. If that were so, how could the author have guessed that, a thousand years earlier, doors in that place were very thick, unlike the door curtains of his own time? Was he an ancient archaeologist, who excavated the remains of Sodom? If it really were a story fabricated so late, it is very difficult to explain such accurate details.

1. 第一个“错误”，说约旦河流域南部没有发达的城市，在以上讨论的第 13 章中，可以看到这点已经被驳倒了。公元前 2050 年这里人口很多，而到约公元前 1900 年已经变成了荒地。就象我们在以上讨论过，考古学发现死海南边山上的宗教崇拜地点，很可能是所多玛和蛾摩拉人所使用的，那地方公元前 1900 年之前已经停止使用（参考《考古学与圣经历史》52, 57 页）。

2. 至于米所波大米城邦国王的名字，目前还不能确认所指出的人物。可是考古学研究已经发现，在同一时代、从相应地方来的材料也记载了同样或类似的名字，包括城邦国王的名字，很明显他们不是亚伯拉罕一千年之后的虚构的人物（参考《考古学与圣经历史》52-53 页）。

3. 约公元前 2300 年，Akkad 城邦（靠近巴比伦）的王 Sargon 记载他入侵叙利亚和巴勒斯坦 Amorite 人的地区，打败了他们。这件事发生在创世记 14 章几百年之前。而且，考古学家在巴比伦发现了一本关于出租货车的合同。合同里明确地禁止租户把车拉到地中海沿边。当然不用禁止不可能发生的事！合同的时代大约是公元前 1800-1600 年。虽然那本合同大概是亚伯拉罕以后写的，但那时代还是属于批评圣经准确性的学者原来说米所波大米和巴勒斯坦之中不可能有交往的时期。很明显，米所波大米和巴勒斯坦早期已有军事和商业的交通（参考《考古学与圣经历史》52-53 页）。

4. 20 世纪上半页考古学家在约旦河东边发现一连串城市的遗迹。这些城市一共有 70 多个，是大约公元前 3000-2000 年的人居住的。所以亚伯拉罕时代有一条用于进军的路线在此地（参考《考古学与圣经历史》52 页）。

14 章最后的事件告诉我们撒冷城的王，指以后名称耶路撒冷的地方的王，名称麦基洗德。麦基洗德王表明亚伯拉罕时代好象还有一些其他人认识真神耶和華，把他称为“至高上帝”。这与罗马书 1:21-23的教导相同：最早全人类都知道上帝只有一位，他并不是物质的。后来人们拒绝了知识，渐渐蒙昧了，编造了多神论与偶像。

罗得房子的门（创世记 19:6, 9）

有时连圣经小小的细节也能证明它的准确性。创世记 19:6, 9提到罗得房子的门，这个门好象很牢固，众人拥挤罗得也无法破坏它，他们想“攻破房门”才能进入房子。

考古学家挖掘出了死海西边的 Debir 城市（圣经中名称基列西弗（Kirjath-Sepher）城，看约书亚记 15:15 等），他们发现了几层不同时代居住的遗迹。在中青铜器时代（约公元前 2200-1600 年）层，他们发现房子的墙壁很厚、房门强牢固，这是亚伯拉罕和罗得的时代，没有什么中央政府保护安全。但是到了早铁器二时代（约公元前 900-600 年），考古学家们所发现的房门门墩少得差不多没有了，那些房子只有拱形门口，好象原来有门帘，这是以色列王国那强大的政府能够保护社会安全的时代（参考《考古学与圣经历史》56-57 页）。

非信徒学者认为创世记是公元前 900-700 年才写的。假如是这样的话，作者怎么能猜到同地区的房子一千多年前有很厚的房门，并不象他自己时代的门帘一样？难道他自己是个古代考古学家，曾经去挖掘所多玛的遗迹？如果真是那么晚才编造的故事，类似的精确细节很难解释。

Lesson 5: The Ten Plagues of the Exodus

Before discussing this lesson, please read:

Bible: Genesis 37:2-36, 41:38-45, 45:16—46:7, 50:22-26; Exodus 1:1—4:9, 5:1-9, 7:1—11:8.

c.2090	Abraham moves to Canaan
c.1885	Joseph becomes a high official in Egypt
c.1876	Israelites (i.e., Jacob's household) move to Egypt
c.1805	Joseph dies
c.1800-1550	Israelites prosper in Egypt
c.1520	Moses is born in Egypt
c.1520-1480	Moses is educated in Pharaoh's court
c.1480	Moses flees from Egypt to Midian
c.1480-1440	Moses is a shepherd in Midian
c.1440	Moses returns and leads the Israelites out of Egypt
c.1440-1400	Israelites journey in the wilderness
c.1400	Moses dies in the wilderness
c.1400	Joshua leads the Israelites into Canaan

(The dates above are estimates; the estimates of some scholars who believe in Christianity are much later, up to 200 years later)

Jacob's descendants, the 'Israelites,' Go to Egypt

Please review Genesis 45:25—46:7, 50:22-26; Exodus 1:1-16.

Abraham's grandson Jacob (also called Israel) had twelve sons, including Joseph. These twelve sons later became the ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel. Joseph was sold into Egypt by his brothers. There he became prime minister. Later, when there was a famine in Canaan, Jacob's entire household moved to Egypt and lived in the region of Goshen (Egypt's northeastern corner). After several hundred years, they were prosperous and their population had increased greatly. A new pharaoh ascended the throne (probably the founder of a new dynasty). Because he feared the Israelites might rebel in the future, he began to oppress them. For a period of time he went so far as to kill all male infants born to the Israelites. Moses was born under these historical circumstances.

An Outline of Moses's Life

Moses lived a total of 120 years, which can be divided into three approximately equal periods of about 40 years each.

Please review Exodus 2:1-15.

The first period was about 40 years in the court of Pharaoh in Egypt, under the protection of the princess who adopted him. Here Moses received the highest education of the ancient Egyptians. This education of course included the two or three writing systems in use at that time by Egyptians, and probably also included literature, history, astronomy, and religion. One day, when he saw an Egyptian oppressing an Israelite, Moses took sides for the sake of justice and killed the Egyptian. Afterwards, because he feared punishment from Pharaoh, he fled to Midian.

Please review Exodus 2:16-22, 3:1-15.

The second period was about 40 years in Midian shepherding his father-in-law's sheep. Here he married and had two sons. Later, God appeared to Moses in the bush which burned but was not consumed: "And God said to Moses, 'I am who I am'" (Exodus 3:14). The phrase "*self-existent and eternally existent*" literally translated is "*I am who I am,*" which means roughly 'I am I' (compare the English translation: I am who I am). The true God is absolutely unique. There is nothing which God can use to compare Himself to or to describe Himself. He can only compare Himself to Himself. Because He is not material, He cannot use any physical object to describe His nature. Because He is eternal, without beginning or end, He cannot use any origin to describe Himself, the way a person's last name shows who his or her ancestors were, or a person might describe himself as coming from a certain place. Therefore the 'Union' version Chinese Bible uses "*self-existent and eternally existent*" to represent the meaning of that phrase. Most scholars think that God's name for Himself, "*Yahweh,*" comes from the same root as the word for "*I am.*" The meaning of "*Yahweh*" may be 'He is,' emphasizing that He is self-existent, or it may be 'He causes [everything] to be,' emphasizing that He is the Creator of all that exists.

5 课：出埃及的十个灾难

讨论此课之前请阅读：

创世记 37:2-36, 41:38-45, 45:16-46:7, 50:22-26; 出埃及记 1:1--4:9, 5:1-9, 7:1--11:8。

约 2090	<u>亚伯拉罕</u> 搬到 <u>迦南地</u> 去
约 1885	<u>约瑟</u> 在 <u>埃及</u> 当上了高官
约 1876	<u>以色列人</u> (指 <u>雅各</u> 的家庭) 都搬到 <u>埃及</u> 去了
约 1805	<u>约瑟</u> 去世
约 1800-1550	<u>以色列人</u> 在 <u>埃及</u> 的生活很富足
约 1520	<u>摩西</u> 在 <u>埃及</u> 出生
约 1520-1480	<u>摩西</u> 在 <u>法老</u> 王宫里长大、受教育
约 1480	<u>摩西</u> 逃跑出 <u>埃及</u> 、到 <u>米甸</u> 去
约 1480-1440	<u>摩西</u> 在 <u>米甸</u> 牧羊
约 1440	<u>摩西</u> 回到 <u>埃及</u> ，带领 <u>以色列人</u> 出 <u>埃及</u>
约 1440-1400	<u>以色列人</u> 在旷野路途上
约 1400	<u>摩西</u> 在旷野去世
约 1400	<u>约书亚</u> 带领 <u>以色列人</u> 进入 <u>迦南地</u>

(以上的年代为估计；有些相信基督教的学者把年代估计得更晚，甚至晚于 200 年之后。)

雅各的后代‘以色列人’到埃及去

请复习创世记 45:25-46:7, 50:22-26; 出埃及记 1:1-16。

亚伯拉罕的孙子雅各 (又名称以色列) 生了十二个儿子，其中包括约瑟。这十二个儿子后来成为以色列人十二个家族的祖先。约瑟被哥哥们出卖到埃及去，在埃及他当上了宰相。后来迦南地发生饥荒时，雅各的全家都搬家到埃及去，居住在歌珊地区 (指埃及东北角)。过了几百年，他们的生活很富足、人数有很大的增加。有一位新的法老登基 (大概是新王朝的建立人)，因为怕以色列人将来会造反，所以开始迫害他们，有一段时间，甚至想杀死以色列人生的男婴。在这历史背景下，摩西出生了。

摩西传记摘要

摩西一生共有 120 年，可以分为三个大约相等的部分，每部分大约 40 年。

请复习出埃及记 2:1-15。

第一部分，大约 40 年在埃及，在法老王宫里，在公主收养与关怀下。在此，摩西接受了古代埃及人最高等的教育。这些教育当然包括埃及人当时用的两三种不同写字的方法，而且大概也有文学、历史、天文、宗教等。有一天，当看到一个埃及人逼迫一个以色列人，打抱不平的摩西就杀死了那个埃及人。后来，由于害怕法老的惩罚，他就逃命往米甸去。

请复习出埃及记 2:16-22, 3:1-15。

第二部分，大约 40 年在米甸地放他岳父的羊。在此他结婚、生了两个儿子。后来，上帝在被火烧而烧不坏的荆棘丛中向摩西显现：“上帝对摩西说：‘我是自有永有的’” (出埃及记 3:14)。“自有永有”那句话，照字义翻译就是“我是那位我是的”，意思差不多是‘我就是我’ (对比英文的翻译：I am who I am)。真神上帝是独一无二，没有任何东西是上帝能用来自比较、形容他自己，只有他自己能比较自己。因为他不是物质的，他不能用任何物质的东西来形容他的属性。因为他是永恒的、没有开始也没有结束的，他不能用任何来源描述自己，比如人的姓表示祖先是誰，或者人会自称是来自某个地方的人。因此，中文‘和合本’圣经使用“自有永有”来表达那句话的意义。大部分的学者也认为上帝自称的名字“耶和華”就是取自“我是”那句话的同一个词根。“耶和華”的意思可能是‘他是’，强调他是自有的，或可能是‘他使[万物]存在’，强调他是万有存在体的创造者。

God sent Moses back to Egypt to lead the Israelites out. God promised He would display miracles to make the Egyptians willing to set the Israelites free. Moses went back to Egypt.

The third period was 40 years leading the Israelites out of Egypt. First God displayed many miracles in Egypt through Moses, then Moses led the masses out of Egypt toward Canaan. However, because the Israelites lacked faith and did not obey God's commands, God made them sojourn in the wilderness for 40 years, until that generation (all those 20 years or older) had all died. Before this period of sojourning in the wilderness ended, Moses himself died.

The Main Purpose and Teaching of the Ten Plagues

Yahweh, the true God, is all powerful. He did not have to save the Israelites, bringing them out of Egypt, by means of the complex process of the ten plagues. Why did He want to use this method? The Bible tells us that at the time of the 7th plague (hail), God warned Pharaoh:

"Thus says Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews...."For this time I will send all My plagues on you and your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is no one like Me in all the earth. "For if by now I had put forth My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, you would then have been cut off from the earth. "But, indeed, for this cause I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power, and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth."....And Moses said to him [Pharaoh], "As soon as I go out of the city, I will spread out my hands to Yahweh; the thunder will cease, and there will be hail no longer, that you may know that the earth is Yahweh's. (Exodus 9:13, 14-16, 29)

By means of the ten plagues, Yahweh wanted Egypt, Israel, and the entire world to know that He was the one and only true God, that the physical universe had been created and was controlled by Him, and that all other so-called 'gods' were false.

In human history, there have been essentially three different views of nature:

- Superstitious religions think that natural forces are controlled and managed by different gods, or even that those natural forces are themselves gods. Natural phenomena are not rule governed, but rather are under the control of many self-willed 'gods.'
- Atheists think matter is eternal and everything (including human beings) is controlled by natural laws. The existence of the universe is without cause or reason.
- Judaism and Christianity tell humanity: Nature was created and is controlled by the one and only God. Most of the actions by which He exercises His sovereignty are by means of the natural laws which He Himself has established and maintains. Occasionally He temporarily sets aside or supercedes these natural laws and performs a miracle.

In the Egypt of that time, there were few or no atheists. Moses was facing superstitious idolaters. Ancient Egyptians worshipped countless gods, most of which were related to natural phenomena, such as the sun god, the god of the Nile river, the frog god, etc. Because of this, God's most important goal in the first through ninth plagues was to prove that 'gods' worshipped by the Egyptians were natural phenomena under the sovereign control of the true God Yahweh. Therefore God, through Moses, prophesied the occurrence of natural phenomena which were beyond the realm of human foresight.

The next section discusses in detail these natural phenomena and their causal relationships. First examine the diagram on the next page:

上帝差遣摩西回到埃及去，带领以色列人出来。上帝许诺他会显现神迹使埃及人愿意释放以色列人。摩西就回埃及去。

第三部分，40 年带领以色列民出埃及。首先上帝通过摩西在埃及显现了很多神迹，然后摩西带领群众出埃及，往迦南地去。可是因为以色列人缺少信心、不服从上帝的命令，上帝就使他们 40 年旅居在旷野中，直到那一代人（二十岁或以上的）都死了，这段旷野旅居时期结束之前，摩西自己也去世了。

十个灾难(十灾)的主要目的和教训

真神上帝耶和华，是全能的，他本来可以不通过十个灾难，这个很复杂的过程来拯救以色列民族出埃及。他为什么要用这个方法？圣经告诉我们，第七个灾难（冰雹）时，上帝警告法老说：

耶和华，希伯来人的神，这样说。。。“因为这一次，我要叫一切的灾殃临到你和你臣仆，并你百姓的身上，叫你知道在普天下没有像我的。我若伸手用瘟疫攻击你和你的百姓，你早就从地上除灭了，其实，我叫你存立，是特要向你显我的大能，并要使我的名传遍天下。”。。。 摩西对他[法老]说：“我一出城，就要向耶和华举手祷告，雷必止住，也不再冰雹，叫你知道全地都是属耶和华的。”（出埃及记 9:13, 14-16, 29）

通过十个灾难，耶和华要埃及、以色列以及全世界的人都知道他是独一无二的真神，物质宇宙是他所创造、所控制的，并且一切其它所谓的‘神’都是假的。

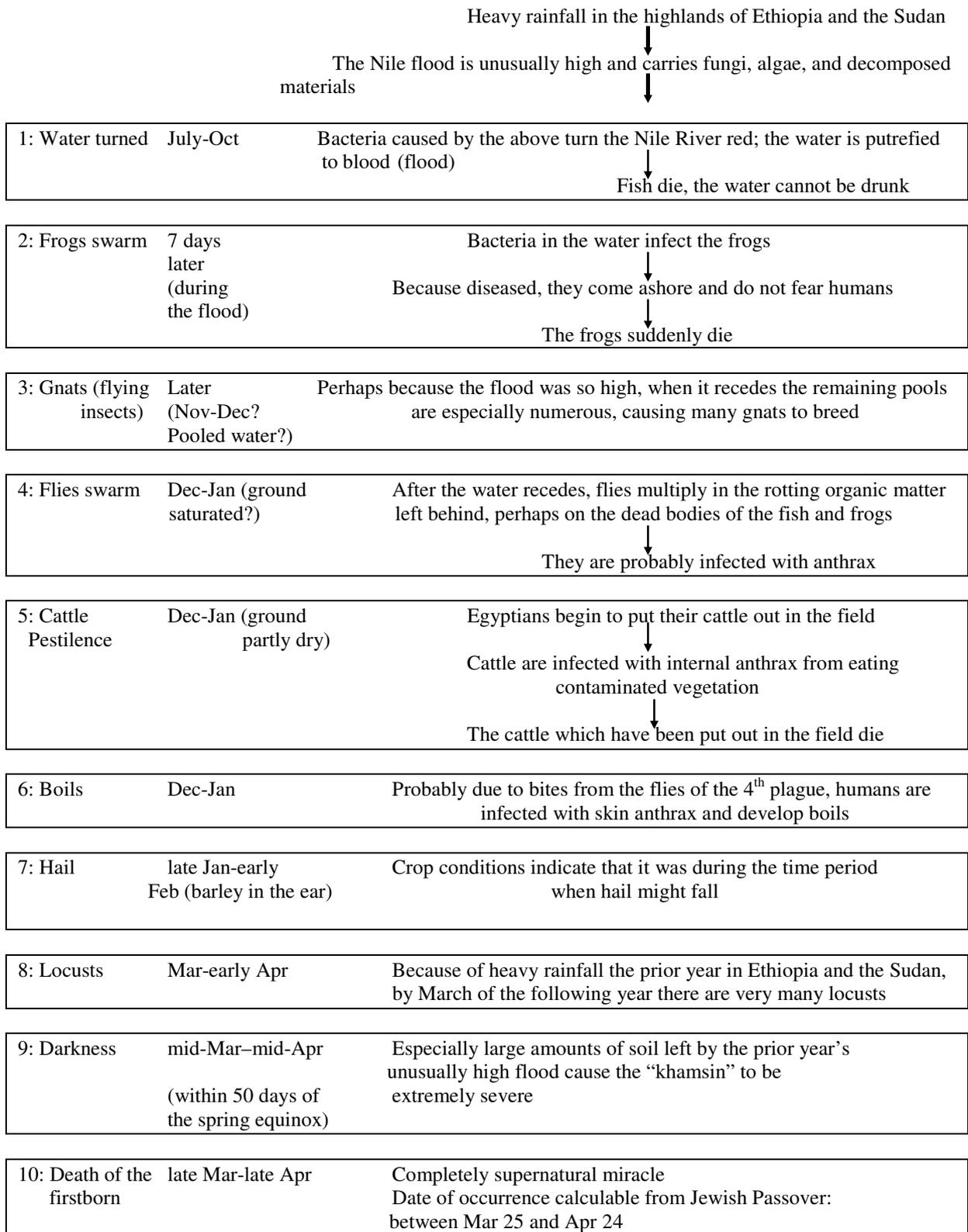
在人类历史上，对于大自然基本上有三种不同的观点：

- 迷信的宗教认为自然势力是不同的神所控制、掌管的，甚至那些自然势力本身就是神。自然现象不是有规律的而是处在很多任性的‘神’的控制下。
- 无神论者认为物质是永恒的，万物（包括人）是被自然规律控制的。宇宙的存在是无缘无故的。
- 犹太教及基督教告诉人类：大自然是独一无二的上帝所创造的、所控制的。他行使他的主权的行动大部分是根据他自己所设立、所维持的自然规律；偶尔他会暂停或超越这些规律，施行神迹。

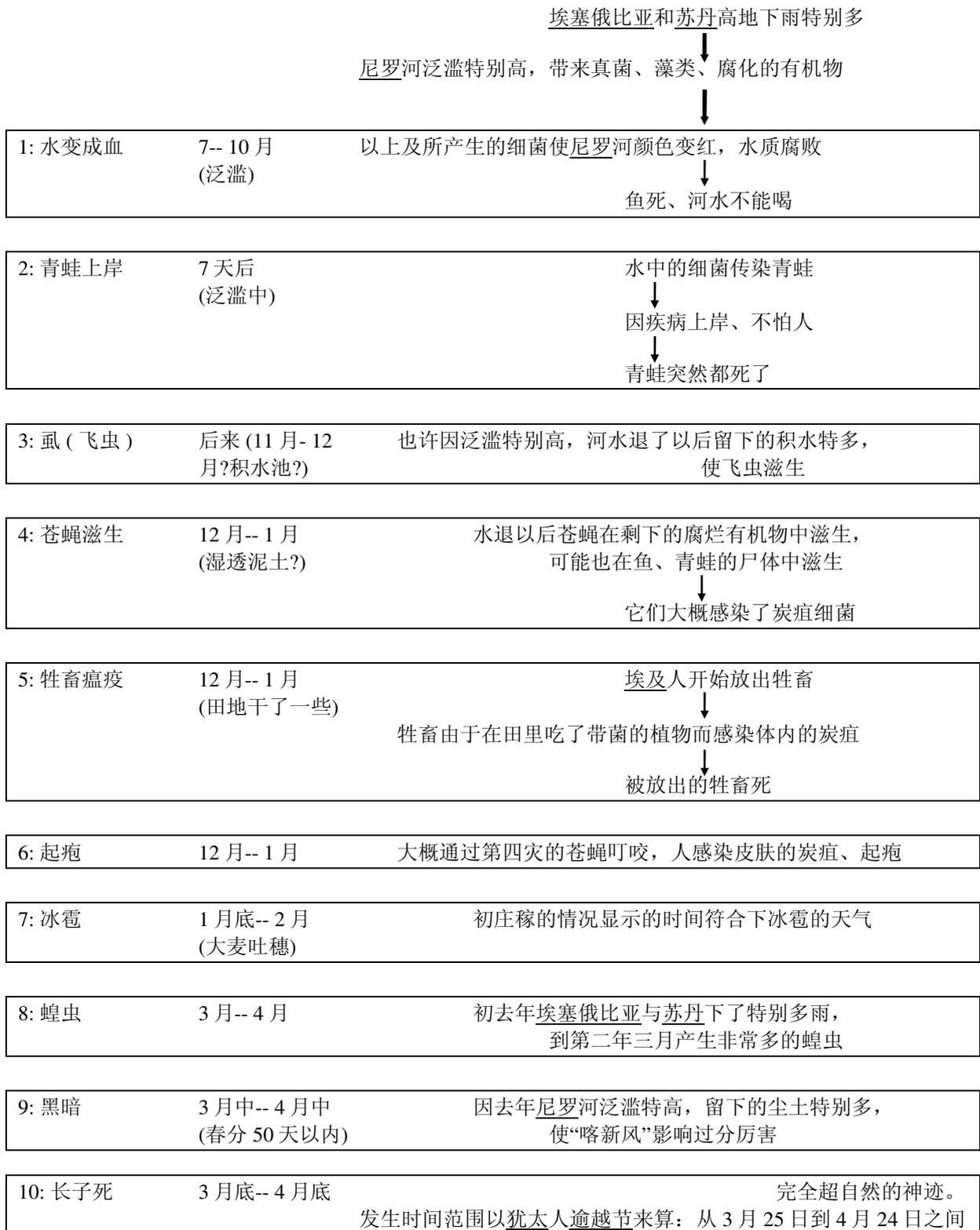
在当时的埃及，无神论者少得几乎没有，摩西所面对的是拜偶像的迷信者。古代埃及人崇拜无数的神，大部分与自然现象有关，如太阳神、尼罗河神、青蛙神等等。因此，上帝在第一至九灾难中最大的目标，是要证明埃及人所敬拜的‘神’只不过是在真神耶和华的主权控制之下的自然现象。所以上帝通过摩西，预言了在人能预知的范围之外的自然现象。

下一段详细讨论这些自然现象以及他们的因果关系。先看下一页的图表：

Plagues One to Nine: A Seasonal, Geographical, Causal, Linked Sequence.



第一到第九灾：一连串季节性的、地理性的、因果关系的顺序。



The First through Ninth Plagues (Exodus Chapters 7 to 10)

1. Water turned to 'blood' Time: probably began no earlier than late Jun., no later than early Nov. (Exodus 7:14-24)

Calling the water "*blood*" refers to its color changing to red and the water quality going bad, becoming undrinkable. The Nile River flooded for several months every year and normally carried some red-colored soil. Scholars estimate the time of the first plague from the time of the flooding. That year, however, there were several special elements. The river water not only carried some mud, but also became rancid, undrinkable, unlike the normal floods. The interlinked series of causes was probably:

1. That spring, rainfall in Ethiopia and the Sudan (the sources of the Nile) was especially heavy. This too was prepared beforehand by God, causing the first to ninth plagues to be ready to occur when Moses came to Egypt.
2. Because of the heavy rainfall, the flooding of the Nile and its tributaries was especially severe, and carried a large amount of sediment, much more than usual.
3. Because of this, the amount of algae, fungi, and decaying organic material in the water was much greater than usual.
4. These materials, the by-products of their decay, and bacteria living off them made the Nile's water undrinkable.
5. The materials, poisons, and bacteria in the water killed all the fish.

Although the water of the Nile has some changes every year during its flood, it is extremely rare that it is so severe. If it had merely been the usual Nile flood circumstances, the soil sediments in water stored in vessels would probably settle out after a while, and the water would be drinkable (compare Exodus 7:19). But this time the Egyptians had to dig wells by the banks of the Nile to obtain water for drinking which had already been filtered by the sandy soil (7:24), showing that this flood was different from usual. (We should note that some scholars think "*in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone*" refers to clean water already in the vessels **before** Aaron struck the river water with his rod, and that this water became rancid by a direct miracle).

No one in Moses's time was able to predict this event. They could not even guess the weather in Ethiopia and the Sudan, much less could they know the causal relationships of natural science. So the miracle lies in this: Moses's prophecy and the severity of the plague.

Please note that the first plague came about as the result of a series of interlinked causes. Moreover, it belongs to circumstances unique to Egypt. Most of the following plagues are the same. If Exodus were the legends of some Jews in Palestine, how could it have this kind of natural science accuracy?

Because the Egyptians regarded the Nile River as a god and worshipped it, this plague showed that Yahweh was the real God, who controlled the natural objects and forces which they worshipped.

2. Frogs swarm ashore Time: Seven days after the first plague (Exodus 7:25—8:15)

The rotting fish infected the frogs in the Nile River. Possibly this was anthrax (see plagues five and six below; spores of the anthrax bacteria can be preserved in soil for a long time), or some other kind of bacterial or viral disease.

This disease caused their strange behavior ("*go...on your people*" Exodus 8:3), and caused them to suddenly die. The miracle in this was Moses being able to predict the frogs coming ashore in swarms, to predict their strange behavior, and to petition God that they would die at the selected time.

The Egyptians also worshipped a frog god. This plague once more demonstrated that Yahweh was the only true God, and that what the Egyptians worshipped was merely a part of His creation and under His sovereign control.

3. Gnats (small flying insects) swarm Time: After the plague of frogs (Exodus 8:16-19)

"*Gnats*" refers to a tiny insect. Its bite can cause itching. Their origin was perhaps related to the especially severe flood of the Nile River. The magicians saying "*This is the finger of God,*" was not an admission that Yahweh is the only true God. It was merely acknowledging that this could not be done by their own so-called "*magic*" which they used to trick people. It had to be the work of some sort of 'god.'

4. Flies swarm Time: After the plague of gnats; probably Dec. or Jan. (Exodus 8:20-32)

This kind of fly (probably the species *Stomoxys Clacitrans*) is very vicious, flying as fast as an arrow in swarms, latching onto bodies of men and beasts with its bite. After the flood of the Nile river recedes, (December to January) is the most likely time for flies to swarm and bite man and beast. This time, however, they were especially numerous, and fierce. These flies may have carried anthrax infection from the bodies of frogs, the mud, or the water of the Nile (see plagues five and six below).

The miracle in this plague was shown in three elements: predicting the beginning, ending in answer to prayer, and the regional scope of the plague (Goshen, where the Israelites lived did not have the flies). Since during the previous plague the magicians had said it was caused by some 'god,' but were not willing to acknowledge Yahweh, God treated the Egyptians and the Israelites differently during the plague, thus showing that it was the Israelites' God Yahweh who was performing these miracles.

第一至九灾难（出埃及记 7 至 10 章）

1: 水变成‘血’ 时期：大概早于六月底起，晚于十一月初（出埃及记 7:14-24）

把水称为“血”是指它的颜色变红而且水质变坏了，变成不能喝的水。尼罗河每年泛滥几个月，通常也会带来一些红色的尘土。按照泛滥时期学者估计出第一灾的时间。但是那一年有几个特点，河水不但带着一些泥土，而且腐败了，不能喝，与通常的泛滥不同。一连串的因果大概是：

1. 那年春天，埃塞俄比亚和苏丹地区（是尼罗河水的来源）雨量特别大。这也是上帝提前安排的，使摩西来到埃及的时候第一至九灾难已经准备好了。
2. 因雨水特别多，尼罗河和它的来源河流的泛滥特别厉害，带来了大量的沉积物，比平时多得多。
3. 因此水中的藻类、真菌和正在腐化的有机物特别多。
4. 这些物质和它们的化学副产品、以及以它们为食物的细菌使尼罗河水不能喝。
5. 水中的物质、毒素、细菌使所有的鱼都死了。

虽然尼罗河每年泛滥时河水会有一些变化，但极少有那么厉害的。如果只是一般的尼罗河泛滥的情况，盛在器皿里的水，大概只要等一会儿，尘土沉淀下来，水就能喝了（对比出埃及记 7:19）。但是这次埃及人要在尼罗河旁边挖井，得到已经被沙土过滤的水才能喝（7:24），所以这一次能被看作是与以往不同的。（应该说，有学者认为“器皿里的水”是指亚伦用杖击打河里的水之前已经在器皿里的干净水，藉着直接的神迹变成腐败了）。

摩西时代谁也无法预知这件事情，连埃塞俄比亚与苏丹天气都猜不到，更不用说自然科学的因果关系了，这是他们完全不知道的。所以神迹在此：摩西讲的预言和灾难的严重性。

请注意，第一灾难是由于一连串有互相关系的原因导致的结果，并且是属于埃及的独特情况，以下的灾难大部分也是如此。假如出埃及记原来是巴勒斯坦一些犹太人的传说，怎么会有这样的自然科学正确性？

因埃及人把尼罗河当作神、崇拜它，这个灾难表明耶和華是真正的上帝，能够控制他们所拜的自然物体与势力。

2: 青蛙集体上岸 时期：第一灾起七天以后（出埃及记 7:25-8:15）

腐化的鱼把疾病传染给了尼罗河的青蛙，可能是炭疽（详看以下第五、六灾害；炭疽细菌的孢子能在泥土里面保存很长时间），或者是另外一种细菌或病毒引起的疾病。

这种病引起它们奇怪的行为（“上你百姓的身上”出埃及记 8:3），并使它们突然死去。在此的神迹是摩西能预言青蛙集体上岸、预言它们奇怪的行为，并祈求上帝使它们按照所定的时间突然死去。

埃及人也拜青蛙神。这个灾难再一次表明耶和華是唯一的真神，埃及人崇拜的对象只不过是其所创造的大自然的一部分，都在他权力之下。

3: 虱(极小飞虫)滋生 时期：青蛙灾以后（出埃及记 8:16-19）

“虱”指一种体型极小的昆虫，人体被它叮过会产生奇痒。它们的来源可能与特别厉害的尼罗河泛滥有关系，那些行法术的说“这是神的手段”并不是承认耶和華为唯一的真神，只是承认这件事无法通过象他们自己骗人的所谓“法术”而作成，应该是某一种「神」作的。

4: 苍蝇滋生 时期：虱灾以后；大概十二月或一月（出埃及记 8:20-32）

这种苍蝇（种类大概是 *Stomoxys Calcitrans*）甚为恶毒，象箭一样迅速成群飞到，牢牢叮在人畜身上。尼罗河大水退后（十二月到一月），最易滋生蝇类，叮咬人畜；但此次特别多，分外凶猛。这些苍蝇可能带着从青蛙尸体、泥土里、或尼罗河水里传染的炭疽（看以下第五、六灾害）。

这次灾害的神迹表现在三个方面：预言开始，随着祷告停止，灾难地区的范围（以色列人住的歌珊地没有这些苍蝇）。因为上一灾难中行法术的说这是藉着一种「神」作的，却不愿意承认耶和華，所以上帝通过对埃及人和以色列人在受灾时的区别对待，来表明是以色列人的上帝耶和華行了这些神迹。

5. Plague on livestock Time: After the plague of flies; probably Dec. or Jan. (Exodus 9:1-7)
 Please note that this plague only came on “*livestock which are in the field*” and did not include those in barns or pens. Perhaps right after the Nile floodwaters receded the Egyptians put their livestock out into the fields which had been underwater. The mud in the fields probably contained anthrax bacteria from the Nile river water, the bodies of the frogs, or the bodies of the flies.
 There are two types of anthrax, internal (including lung and intestinal) and skin. Internal is usually fatal. When the livestock put out into the fields ate grass, they were infected with the bacteria in the mud, causing internal anthrax. From infection to the beginning of symptoms takes between 12 hours and five days.
 The miracle here includes Moses’s prediction of this event (he did not have modern science to tell him the particulars of anthrax infection), the time of the plague (even modern science would find it hard to predict), and the limitation of the area where the plague occurred.
 The gods of the Egyptians included the bull, the cow and the calf. These ‘gods’ could not hinder Yahweh.
6. Boils Time: After the plague on livestock; probably Dec. or Jan. (Exodus 9:8-12)
 This plague was probably skin anthrax. This kind of anthrax causes comparatively severe boils on the skin and is very contagious, but it is not fatal. The symptoms of skin anthrax require a time period of a half a day to five days to manifest. The most natural conjecture is that the flies of the fourth plague infected people with anthrax. But we do not know how much time elapsed between the fourth and sixth plagues, so we can only hypothesize. Perhaps it was spread by the flies of the fourth plague, or the bodies of the livestock of the fifth plague, or bacterial spores in the ground, or by several factors combined together.
 The livestock which suffered from this plague (Exodus 9:9) were those which had not been put out into the fields during the fifth plague.
 The miracle here was God’s revelation to Moses, who did not have modern scientific knowledge, which allowed him to predict the future plague.
7. Hail Time: Late Jan. to early Feb. (Exodus 9:13-35)
 From the crop conditions recorded in Exodus 9:31 we can calculate the time, which in fact is the period during which hail might fall. It did not hail in the Goshen, to the east of the Nile River delta; some scholars say this fits the climactic differences between the two regions. In Goshen, a region to the east of the Nile River delta, no hail fell. Some scholars say that this is in accord with the differences in climate between two regions. The seasonal, climactic, and geographical records are without mistake.
 The miraculous nature of the hail is in three things. The beginning of the hail was predicted (hail is rarely seen in Egypt, making the prediction even more amazing). The hail stopped due to Moses’s prayer. The severity of the hail was worse than anything Egypt had ever experienced. In this plague, people who did not revere Yahweh could be killed by lightning or hailstones.
8. Locusts Time: Mar. to early Apr. (Exodus 10:1-20)
 In Egypt, the wind comes from the east in March and April. The Hebrew language of the Old Testament of the Bible only has four wind directions (east, west, south, and north). Exodus 10:13’s “*east wind*” was probably a wind blowing from the southeast. The direction of the wind and the length of time it blew show that the locusts probably came from Ethiopia and the Sudan. Why were there so many locusts? The severity of the Nile flood in the previous year was due to heavy rainfall in Ethiopia and the Sudan. This would cause the vegetation in those areas to flourish, making the number of eggs laid by locusts especially great. By spring of the second year, the young locusts which hatched out would be especially numerous. In March they were not yet mature, which was their most ravenous period.
 The wind blew 24 hours before the locusts reached Egypt, so the locusts must have come from a very distant place. This showed that Yahweh God was not merely the ‘god’ of some local area, like the ‘gods’ of the religions of Egypt and other peoples. Yahweh was the lord of all the earth.
 Note: all of the geographical details completely fit Egypt’s conditions, but they do not fit those of Palestine. More over, the time elements are also faultless. So this history cannot possibly be a Jewish ‘legend!’
 Moses prophesying the coming of the locusts and their severity, and furthermore driving them out through prayer – the miraculous nature of these things is obvious.
9. Darkness Time: Mid-Mar. to mid-Apr. (Exodus 10:21-29)
 “The ninth plague was a plague of darkness; most [scholars] think it was a caused by a “khamsin wind” ([Arabic:] khamsin). This is a hot, dry east wind which frequently visits Egypt during the 50 days from the last third of March to the beginning of May. It occurs very suddenly, bringing with it sweltering heat and windblown sand and dust. Where it goes, the sun is obscured for the next two to three days” (QiDaoBen Bible, page 125). Although we cannot say for certain that the darkness was caused by a “khamsin wind,” calling this a type of darkness “*which may be felt*” is very appropriate for a condition caused by dust and sand (Exodus 10:21). It’s special severity was probably due to the previous year’s Nile River flood having been much higher than usual. Hence the amount of mud deposited was especially large. Because of this, the amount of dust blown by the wind was especially great, resulting in a darkness unlike the usual. Besides this, the timing also fits this phenomenon, as does the land of Goshen avoiding most of its influence (compare 10:23).

5: 牲畜瘟疫 时期: 苍蝇灾以后; 大概十二月至一月 (出埃及记 9:1-7)

请注意, 灾难只临到“田间的牲畜”, 不包括谷仓或围栏里的。可能是尼罗河水刚退去, 埃及人就放牧牲畜到以前被淹没的田地上, 田地的泥土里大概含有来自尼罗河水、青蛙的尸体、或苍蝇的尸体的炭疽病菌。

炭疽有两种, 体内的(包括肺脏的和肠胃的)和皮肤上的, 体内的一般可以致命。被放出去的牲畜吃草时就被泥土里的细菌感染了, 产生了体内的炭疽。从感染到发病的时间间隔有长短(从 12 小时到 5 天)。

在此的神迹包括摩西能预言这件事(没有现代科学告诉他炭疽传染的特性)、灾难发生的时间(连现代科学也很难预报), 及灾难的地区范围限制。

埃及人的神包括公牛、母牛、牛犊。这些‘神’也不能阻挡耶和華。

6: 起疱 时期: 牲畜瘟疫以后; 大概十二月至一月 (出埃及记 9:8-12)

这个灾害大概是皮肤上的炭疽。这种病菌使皮肤起了比较厉害的疱, 并且非常容易传染。虽然症状会很厉害, 但是不是致命的。在人的身上, 炭疽的症状要半天到五天才显现出来。最自然的推测是说, 第四灾的苍蝇把炭疽传染给人。但是我们不知道第四到第六灾难之间隔了多长时间, 所以只能猜测, 可能是第四灾的苍蝇、第五灾牲畜的尸体或土地中的细菌和孢子, 或者是几个方面结合在一起传染的。

遭遇这次灾难的牲畜(出埃及记 9:9)是指第五灾时没有放牧到田间所剩下的牲畜。

在此神迹是上帝启示那位没有现代科学知识的摩西, 让他能预言未来的灾难。

7: 冰雹 时期: 一月底至二月初 (出埃及记 9:13-35)

通过出埃及记 9:31 节所记载的庄稼情况, 我们可以推算出这一时间, 并且那时候也是会下冰雹的天气时期。尼罗河三角洲东边的歌珊地没有下冰雹, 有学者说这也符合两地的气候区别。时期、气候、地方记载都没有错误。

冰雹的神迹性有三个方面: 下冰雹的开始被预言了(冰雹在埃及很少见, 使预言显得更神奇); 随着摩西的祷告停止了; 而且下冰雹的程度比埃及所曾经经历的更厉害。在这个灾难中, 不敬畏耶和華预言的人也会被闪电与大冰雹杀死。

8: 蝗虫 时期: 三月至四月初 (出埃及记 10:1-20)

在埃及, 三、四月的季候风从东边吹来。旧约圣经原文希伯来语只有四个方向(东西南北)。出埃及记 10:13 的“东风”大概是指从东南方吹来的风。风的方向和时间的长短显示蝗虫大概是从埃塞俄比亚和苏丹来的。蝗虫为什么那么多? 上一年尼罗河的过度泛滥是由于埃塞俄比亚和苏丹地区下雨特别多, 这会使那个地方的植物长得很茂盛, 使蝗虫产的卵特别多, 到第二年春天, 孵出小蝗虫特别多。三月份它们未成熟, 是它们最贪吃的时候。

那股风吹了 24 小时才把蝗虫吹到了埃及, 所以蝗虫是从很远的地方来的, 这表明耶和華上帝并不是只属于某一地区当地的「神」, 象埃及人和其他民族的宗教的「神」一样。耶和華是全世界的主。

请注意, 所有的地理细节完全符合埃及的情况, 但不符合巴勒斯坦, 并且时间上也没有错误。所以这篇历史不可能是犹太人的「传说」!

摩西能预言蝗虫的来到和程度, 并通过祷告赶走它们的神迹性很明显。

9: 黑暗 时期: 三月中至四月中 (出埃及记 10:21-29)

“第九灾为黑暗之灾, 一般[学者]认为是“喀新风”(〔阿拉伯语:] khamsin) 所造成。这是一种从三月下旬到五月初, 五十天中出现的干热东风, 常常光顾埃及。出现时非常突然, 带来酷热、风沙与尘土。所到之处, 日为之蔽两三天后便消失”(圣经《启导本》125 页)。虽然不能确认黑暗一定是由于“喀新风”造成的, 但是把类似的黑暗当作是“似乎摸得着”的情况就很符合是由尘土、沙子造成的(出埃及记 10:21)。它的特别严重应该是由上一年的尼罗河泛滥比一般情况高得多, 所沉淀的泥土特别多, 因此被风吹过来的尘土特别多, 结果黑暗的情形与众不同。除此之外, 时间上也符合这现象的出现, 并且歌珊地应该可以避免它所产生的大部分影响(对比 10:23)。

These three factors – the essential cause of the severity of the “khamsin wind,” the geographical difference between Egypt and Goshen, and the time of occurrence – all fit with the explanation of modern natural science. How can one say that Exodus is a ‘legend’ edited by priests and scribes after 1000BC in Palestine? If it really were so, how could it be so accurate?

Among the many ‘gods’ worshipped by the ancient Egyptians, perhaps the highest was the sun ‘god,’ Ra (the name given it by the Egyptians). The ninth plague showed that Yahweh God was greater than the sun god. Yahweh could block it out at His pleasure, because the sun was nothing more than one of the material objects which God had created.

The miracle in the ninth plague was that, as soon as Moses stretched out his rod, the “khamsin wind,” a suddenly occurring phenomenon which could not be predicted by humans, immediately occurred.

Plagues 1 to 9 comprise a linked series of cause/effect relations, showing Exodus is not a fabricated legend but actual history

By now the reader might be asking: “Since the first through ninth plagues were natural phenomena, what evidence is that for God? Isn’t it just that the Israelites saw some natural phenomena, then recorded them in their national history book?”

Good question! The goal in researching this part of Biblical history is not proving that the Bible is revelation from God, but rather to show its historical accuracy. Unbelieving scholars usually think that the five books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy) are false. They say that different writers at different times wrote down the traditions of the Jewish people, sometimes adding stories which they made up themselves. Finally, editors gathered all these materials, and compiled them into a book of the Bible. They claim that all the books in the Old Testament of the Bible were written this way. They divide the ‘ten plagues’ into three sets of material with separate origins. In these so-called ‘origins,’ one described seven plagues, one had five, and the other had four or five. Later an editor compiled them together. This hypothetical process began 900 BC at the earliest, and was not finished until as late as 600 BC or 400 BC, and was done by Jews living in Palestine. The unbelieving scholars claim that the other books of the Old Testament of the Bible are the same, all having several authors, with multiple source materials being compiled much later by various editors. This viewpoint was advanced by 19th century scholars who followed the evolutionary philosophy of Hegel, and is still the theory held by unbelieving scholars today. Part of the reason Marx rejected Christianity was that he was heavily influenced by these erroneous ideas while he was in college. All Western scholars who reject the factuality of the Old Testament of the Bible take this theory as their basis.

Now we can use the history of the ten plagues to test which of these two contradictory viewpoints is correct: Exodus is a single author’s record or actual history; Exodus is many different authors’ and editors’ compilation of traditions and myths. **If it is myth, how did an editor living in Palestine accurately arrange a sequence of plagues whose geography, seasons, and cause and effect relations belong to Egypt?**

Special Geographical Features.

- Obviously, the Nile River flood belongs to Egypt. The natural phenomena it produced are all characteristic of that area, namely the 1st plague, water turned to blood, 2nd plague, frogs come ashore, 3rd plague, gnats, and 4th plague, swarms of flies.
- After the 1st plague, water turned to blood, the Egyptians could dig wells anywhere along the banks of the Nile. This is not the situation in Palestine.
- The probable cause of the darkness of the 9th plague, darkness, was the “khamsin wind,” a special characteristic of Egypt.
- Goshen avoiding the 7th plague, hail, and the 9th plague, darkness, fits the geographical and climatic differences of different parts of northern Egypt.

Seasonal Sequence.

- Please see the diagram above. The 1st plague, water turned to blood, had to come first.
- The 3rd plague, gnats, 4th plague, swarms of flies, and 5th plague, livestock pestilence, all had to happen after the floodwaters had receded.
- The 7th plague, hail, had to happen in winter.
- The 8th plague, locusts, had to happen in spring, and is especially appropriate to the year following an especially great Nile river flooding.
- The 9th plague, darkness, should occur after the spring equinox, which is Passover season.

Cause and Effect Relationships.

- The 1st plague, water turning to blood, caused the severity of the 2nd plague, frogs coming ashore, 3rd plague, gnats, and 4th plague, swarms of flies.
- The 2nd plague, frogs come ashore, and the 4th plague, swarms of flies, probably caused the 5th plague, livestock pestilence, and the 6th plague, boils.

这三个方面——“喀新风”严重性的根本原因，埃及和歌珊的地理差别，及发生时间——都符合现代自然科学的解释。怎么能说出埃及记原来是巴勒斯坦、公元前 1000 年以后祭司和文士编辑的「传说」？假如真是这样，怎么可能那么准确？

古代埃及人所崇拜的许多「神」之中，也许有最高地位的是太阳「神」Ra（是埃及人对其的称呼）。第九灾表明耶和華上帝比所谓的太阳神更伟大，耶和華随便就能遮蔽它，因太阳只不过是上帝所创造的物质实体之一罢了。

第九灾所在的神迹是摩西一伸出他的杖，那非常突然、人不能预知的“喀新风”现象就来到了。

第一到九灾是由一连串的因果关系构成的，表明出埃及记不是编造的传说，而是实在的历史

那么，到此读者可能会问“既然第一到第九灾难都是自然现象，那就给了上帝什么证明呢？不是应该说，以色列人只不过是看到一些自然现象，然后把它们记在民族历史书中？”

问得好！那么现在研究这段圣经历史，目的不是证明圣经是被上帝启示的，而是证明它的历史事实性。非信徒学者通常认为摩西所写的五本书（创世记，出埃及记，利未记，民数记，申命记）是假的。他们说不同的作者在不同的时间写下犹太民族的传说，而且有时增加了自己所编造的故事，最后有编者把这些材料集合，编成圣经中的一卷。他们断言圣经旧约里所有的书是这样写成的。他们把‘十灾’的事件分为三篇有不同来源的材料。所谓‘来源’，一篇描写七个灾难，一篇有五个，另一篇有四个；后来编者把他们汇编起来。这个假想的过程最早从公元前 900 年起，晚于公元前 600 年或 400 年才完成，并且是居住在巴勒斯坦的犹太人作的。非信徒学者也断言其它旧约圣经书卷也一样，都有几个作者，而且很晚以后才有不同的编者把那么多样的材料来源汇编起来。这个观点是 19 世纪信奉黑格尔进化哲学的学者提出的、一直到今日非信徒学者还在辩论的理论。马克思拒绝基督教的部分原因，就是因为他在读大学时受到了这些错误概念很大的影响。所有拒绝圣经旧约事实性的西方学者都以这个理论为根据。

现在我们能用十灾的历史来验证这两个矛盾的观点哪个才是正确的：出埃及记是一个作者记载实实在在的历史；出埃及记是很多不同作者和编辑编写的传说与神话。**假如那是神话，住在巴勒斯坦的编辑怎么能正确地安排属于埃及地理的、季节性的、有因果关系的灾难顺序？**

地理特点。

- 尼罗河泛滥很明显属于埃及。它所产生的自然现象，指第 1 水变成血，2 青蛙上岸，3 虱，4 苍蝇滋生的灾难，都属于那地区。
- 第 1 水变成血的灾难以后，埃及人沿河随地可以挖出水井，这不是巴勒斯坦的情况。
- 引起第 9 黑暗灾难的黑暗大概的原因“喀新风”是埃及的特点。
- 歌珊地避免了第 7 冰雹、9 黑暗灾，这适合北埃及不同地方的地理和气候区别。

季节顺序。

- 请看以上的图表。第 1 水变成血的灾难必须是最早的。
- 第 3 虱、4 苍蝇滋生、5 牲畜瘟疫的灾难必须等洪水退去以后才发生。
- 第 7 冰雹灾必须是冬天。
- 第 8 蝗虫灾必须是春天，并且是在最符合尼罗河特大的泛滥之后的第二年。
- 第 9 黑暗灾应该是春分以后，就是逾越节期间。

因果关系。

- 第 1 水变成血的灾难引起第 2 青蛙上岸、3 虱、4 苍蝇滋生灾难的严重性。
- 大概是第 2 青蛙上岸、4 苍蝇滋生的灾难引起第 5 牲畜瘟疫、6 起疱的灾难。

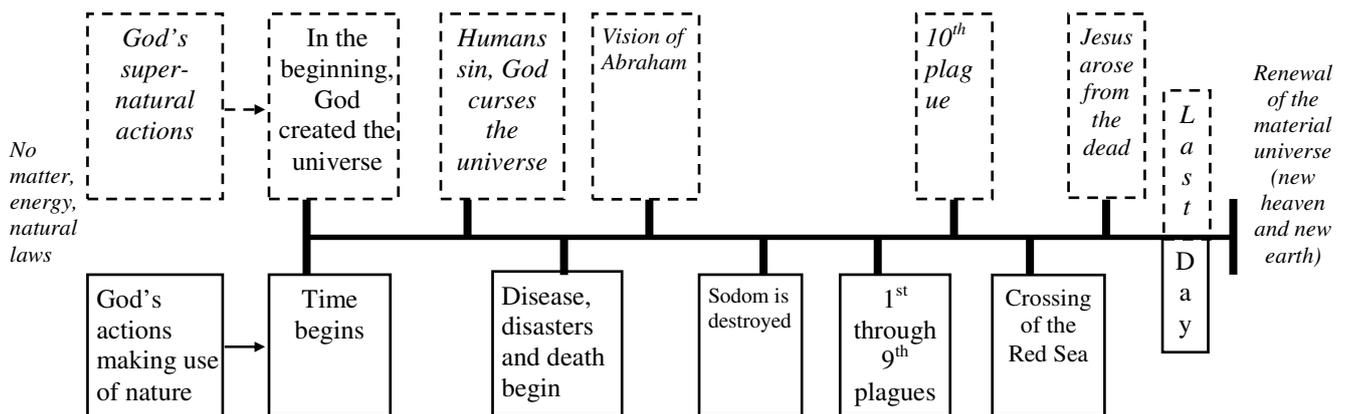
- That Goshen did not have the 4th plague, swarms of flies, is probably because most of that region was not part of the Nile River valley.
- Although the Bible does not mention it, since most of Goshen was not part of the Nile River valley, it probably also avoided the 2nd plague, frogs coming ashore.
- Because they did not suffer the 4th plague, swarms of flies, (and perhaps not the 2nd plague, frogs coming ashore), the Israelites did not suffer the 5th plague, livestock pestilence.
- The cause of the 8th plague, locusts, was probably the same as that of the 1st plague, the prior year's exceptionally heavy rainfall in Ethiopia and the Sudan.
- The severity of the 9th plague, darkness, was because the flooding of the Nile River was unusually high, and indirectly caused by the prior year's exceptionally heavy rainfall in Ethiopia and the Sudan.

The special characteristics above could not have come about by 'chance.' Not to speak of the specific content, the probability of only just arranging nine items in the correct sequence is one in $1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4 \times 5 \times 6 \times 7 \times 8 \times 9 =$ one in 362,880! It is quite obvious that the Israelites were already living in Palestine before 1000 BC. If Exodus were myths compiled after 900 BC, how did the editor come up with a sequence 100% logical and accurate? That is impossible. Exodus is an eye witness account.

The first to ninth plagues are mostly natural. With regards to that, we need to understand God's purpose. By means of Christianity, Western culture, and (in a few places) Islam, the Bible has already achieved worldwide influence. But we must not forget, before the influence and propagation of the Bible, most people were still worshipping natural forces, regarding them as 'gods.' Therefore the target of God's attack in the ten plagues was not atheism or philosophical materialism, but polytheism and its idols. So He made use of natural processes to show that natural entities and forces are not at all divine. Only Yahweh, who is able to foreknow natural phenomena, is God.

Pious Israelites regarded natural entities and forces as natural phenomena created by God. We cannot but acknowledge that what we usually regard as the 'modern scientific' viewpoint was already in existence among the Israelites as early as Moses's time. This viewpoint came from the religion which God revealed to them. Later, this viewpoint became the foundation of Western culture and produced modern science. If Western culture had not had Christian natural philosophy as its foundation, it never would have been able to cast off the chains of superstition and establish modern science. We should understand very clearly that among the people who created modern science there were few or no atheists. Generally speaking, they all believed in an immaterial, supernatural Creator like that spoken of in the Bible. The reason that Chinese people of that period did not produce modern science is just this, that they did not clearly differentiate between created matter and the immaterial Creator. They thought natural things might have some 'divinity' about them, so they could not use a purely objective method to analyze natural phenomena and entities.

The diagram below represents two different methods by which God acts in the human realm: He influences the world through the 'natural' laws which He created and sustains, and He also influences the world through what we regard as 'supernatural' methods.



Conclusion

We are currently researching the evidence for a three step proof of Christianity:

1. Nature demonstrates the existence, power, and supernatural Nature of God.
2. History and archeology demonstrate that the Bible records are historically accurate.
3. Fulfilled biblical prophecies demonstrate that the Bible is a revelation from God.

Lessons 1 and 2 enabled us to understand that Nature, especially biological life, evidences the existence of the God described in the Bible. In Lessons 4 and 5 we have already begun to see that the Bible records factual history. The following Lessons 6 to 11 will further introduce the Israelites' history and their dealings with God.

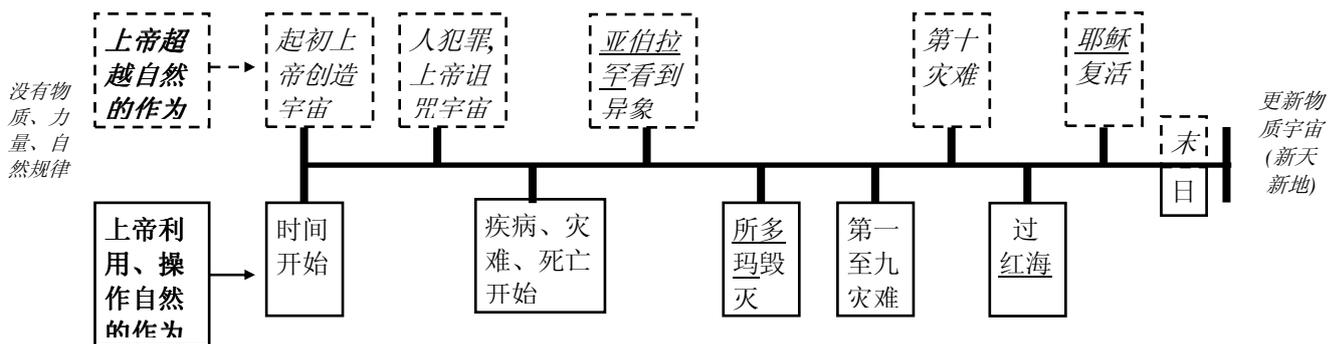
- 歌珊地没有第 4 苍蝇滋生的灾难应该是因为那地区大部分不属于尼罗河区域。
- 虽然圣经没有提到，因为歌珊地大部分不属于尼罗河区域，它大概也避免了第 2 青蛙上岸的灾难。
- 因为没遇到第 4 苍蝇滋生的灾难（并可能没有第 2 青蛙上岸灾），所以以色列人也没有遭受第 5 牲畜瘟疫灾。
- 第 8 蝗虫灾的起因应该与第 1 灾一样，前一年在埃塞俄比亚和苏丹高地下雨特别多。
- 第 9 黑暗灾的严重性是因为上次尼罗河的泛滥特别高，也是前一年在埃塞俄比亚和苏丹高地下雨特别多间接引起的。

以上的特点不可能是‘碰巧’形成的。不用说具体的内容，仅仅是能够正确地 3 九件事情的顺序的可能性是 $1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4 \times 5 \times 6 \times 7 \times 8 \times 9 = 362880$ 分之一！很明显，以色列人早在公元前 1000 年之前已住在巴勒斯坦地。如果出埃及记原是公元前 900 年之后编写的神话，编者怎么能想像出百分之百符合逻辑的、精确的安排？这是不可能的。出埃及记就是目击者的记录。

至于第一至九灾难大部分的自然性，我们要明白上帝的目标。圣经的影响，通过基督教及西方文化，已经达到了全世界。可是我们不要忘记，在圣经的影响及传播之前，大部分人类还在拜自然势力，把它们当作‘神’。因此，上帝通过十灾要攻击的对象不是无神论或唯物主义，乃是多神论以及它的偶像。所以他利用自然过程来显明大自然的物体和势力没有什么神性，只有那位能预知自然现象的耶和華是上帝。

虔诚的以色列人把自然物体与势力当作被上帝创造、自然性的现象。我们不得不承认，我们通常认为‘现代科学’的观点，早在摩西时代已经存在以色列人当中。这观点是从上帝启示他们的宗教而来的。后来这观点变成了西方文化的基础，就产生现代科学。如果原来西方文化没有以基督教的自然哲学为基础，它就永远不能摆脱迷信的镣铐，建立现代科学。我们要很清楚地知道，在现代科学的创始人中，无神论者少得差不多没有。总的来说，他们都相信有一位像圣经所说的非物质、超自然的创造者。同时代的中国人没有产生现代科学的原因也就在此，由于他们没有分清被创造的物质与非物质的创造者，以为自然的事物还会含点‘神性’，所以他们不能用单纯客观的方法分析自然现象和物体。

以下的图画可以代表上帝在人类宇宙中两种不同的行动方法：通过他所建立的、所支持的‘自然’规律影响世界，也通过我们人认为‘超自然’的方法影响世界。



结论

我们正在研究确认基督教的三步证明：

1. 大自然证明上帝的存在、大能、超自然性
2. 历史学和考古学证明圣经记载有历史真实性
3. 圣经里已经应验了的预言证明圣经是被上帝启示的

第 1、2 课叫我们明白大自然，特别是生物，证明圣经所描述的上帝存在。在第 4、5 课我们已经开始看到圣经所记载的是实在的历史。以下第 6 至 11 课多介绍以色列人的历史及他们与上帝的交往。

Lesson 6: Passover; Crossing the Red Sea

Before discussing this lesson, please read: Exodus 11:1—14:31.

Passover

Please review Exodus 11:4-7, 12:1-30.

The tenth plague was different from the other nine. The first nine can be regarded as warnings. Few or no people died in them (perhaps a few died in the hail). The tenth plague, however, was not a warning, but an actual punishing of evil. Just as we have seen in Lesson 2 in Adam and Eve's fall, the punishment for sin is death – spiritual death and physical death. The tenth plague is a picture, drawn in physical, human history, which represents a spiritual fact: sin always leads to the punishment of death.

Another aspect of the tenth plague was also different from the first nine. To avoid some of the other plagues, such as the hail or the darkness, one merely had to be in Goshen where the Israelites were living. To avoid the death of the firstborn in the tenth plague, Israelites or others had to actively slaughter the Passover lamb and sprinkle its blood on the doorposts.

The teaching of the tenth plague warns humanity to escape the judgment to come. It also teaches us about God's compassion, telling us what sinners need to do to avoid God's punishment. The punishment from God for sin is eternal suffering in hell, forever cut off from God. The physical picture representing this physical fact was the death of the firstborn of Egypt. This was merely a representative picture, not God's actual punishment. The firstborn sons who died would have faced physical death sooner or later anyway; everyone must die. God made the firstborn of Egypt die a little early as a lesson to we who would come later in history. After the firstborn sons died, they faced the judgment and punishment of God. Their souls received a just judgment according to what they did while they were on earth.

The major symbols of Passover and their meanings are:

1. The lamb represents a sinless sacrificial victim dying in place of another, in place of the firstborn sons of the Israelites.
2. The lamb must be perfect (Exodus 12:5 "*unblemished*"), representing that the sacrificial victim who took the place of another must be perfect (completely faultless) and may not have any sin of his own.
3. The blood of the lamb represents its life, especially its life sacrificed, taking the punishment which someone else's sin deserved.
4. Sprinkling the blood of the lamb on the doorposts showed that a person (or household) believed what God had spoken through Moses, and because he believed, obeyed.
5. The death of the firstborn sons of the Egyptians represents God's punishment of sin, which is eternal death in hell.
6. The fact that the firstborn sons of the Israelites did not die represents that God had forgiven the sins of the Jews, and probably some non-Jews, who believed Moses and sprinkled the blood on the doorposts. Like Abraham, this is an example of "justification by faith." The Israelites were sinners just like the Egyptians were, and they too deserved punishment. But when God punished the Egyptians, He 'passed over' any house which had blood sprinkled on the doorposts. These were the people who believed Him.

These symbols all prefigure Jesus Christ. He is the 'lamb' who came later obtain forgiveness for our sins:

1. Jesus is the sinless sacrificial victim, dying in the place of another, suffering the punishment of God in the place of all humanity. The books of the New Testament of the Bible frequently refer to Jesus as "*the lamb of God.*"
2. Jesus was perfect, "*unblemished.*" He never once in His entire life disobeyed or overlooked a single command of God.
3. Jesus blood, which is to say His sacrifice of His life on the cross, was in place of humanity, taking the punishment which the sins of human beings deserve.
4. Just as the lamb's blood had to be sprinkled on the door posts before the firstborn sons inside the house could avoid judgment, in the same way, if we want to attain forgiveness through the blood of Jesus, each person must believe in Jesus, otherwise His death will not be effective for us. One sprinkling of a lamb's blood only had effect for a single house; the faith of a person in Jesus only has effect for that single person.
5. Just as the firstborn sons in houses which did not have the blood sprinkled on the doorposts died, so too people who do not believe in Jesus will receive God's judgment and go to hell.
6. That the firstborn of the Israelites did not die represents that Christians, who believe in Jesus, will not go to hell, even though they have sin. When God carries out the final judgment, He will 'pass over' anyone who has the blood of Jesus sprinkled on his or her heart. These are the people who believe in Him.

6 课：逾越节；过红海

讨论此课之前请阅读：出埃及记 11:1—14:31。

逾越节

请复习出埃及记 11:4-7, 12:1-30。

第十个灾难与其它第一至九灾不同。头九个可算为警告，很少或没有人在灾难中死去（可能一些人死在冰雹里）。可是第十灾难不是警告，而是实在的惩罚罪恶。就像我们在第 2 课已经看到的关于亚当和夏娃的堕落的情况一样，罪恶的惩罚就是死亡——属灵的死亡和肉身的死亡。第十个灾难是一幅代表属灵事实的人类物质历史上的图画：罪恶总是引起死亡的惩罚。

第十个灾难的另一个方面也与前九个灾难不一样。为了避免一些其它的灾难，比如冰雹或黑暗，你只不过要呆在以色列人所居住的歌珊地就可以。为了避免第十灾难的长子死，属于以色列或其他人还必须要主动地宰逾越节羔羊、把羔羊的血涂抹在门框上。

第十灾难的教训警告人类要避免未来的审判，也是教训我们上帝的怜悯，告诉我们有罪的人怎样作才能够避免上帝的惩罚。上帝对罪的惩罚是让人在地狱里受永恒的痛苦、永永远远与上帝的爱隔绝了。代表这个属灵事实的物质上的图画就是埃及人长子的死亡。这只不过是一幅有代表性的图画，并不是上帝真正的惩罚。那些死亡的长子，他们本来早晚要面对肉身的死亡；人人都要死去。上帝使埃及的长子提前去世是为了教训我们这些以后的历史上的人类。那些长子死去之后面对上帝的审判和惩罚，是按照他们在地球上的行为，灵魂会受到公正审判。

逾越节的主要象征以及它们的意义：

1. 羔羊代表无罪的牺牲者，代替他人死去、代替以色列人的长子。
2. 羔羊要完全（出埃及记 12:5 “无残疾”），代表代替他人死去的那个牺牲者必须完全（完美无瑕），自己不能有罪恶。
3. 羔羊的血代表它的性命，特别是说它的性命被牺牲、承受他人的罪恶该得的惩罚。
4. 把羔羊的血涂抹在门框上，显示了某一个人（或一家人）相信上帝通过摩西所说的话，而且因为相信，所以顺从。
5. 埃及人长子的死亡代表上帝惩罚罪、在地狱里永恒的死亡。
6. 以色列人长子不死，代表那些相信摩西、把血涂抹在门框上的犹太人，大概也包括一些非犹太人，他们的罪已经得到上帝的赦免。象亚伯拉罕一样，是一个“因信称义”的例子。本来那些以色列人象埃及人一样有罪、应该受惩罚。可是上帝惩罚埃及人的时候，他就‘逾越过’任何有血涂抹在门框上的房子，这些就是相信他的人。

这些象征都预示耶稣基督，他就是后来使我们的罪恶得到赦免的‘羔羊’：

1. 耶稣是无罪的牺牲者，代替他人死亡、代替全人类受上帝的惩罚；圣经新约全书经常把耶稣当作“上帝的羔羊”。
2. 耶稣是完全，“无残疾”；他一生中一次也没有违背或忽略上帝的任何一条命令。
3. 耶稣的血，就是说他在十字架上牺牲他的性命，是为了代替人类、受人类的罪恶该得的惩罚。
4. 就象羔羊的血要涂抹在门框上，房子里的长子才能避免死亡，同样地，若想通过耶稣的血得到赦免，人类每个人都要相信耶稣基督才有效。一次涂抹羔羊的血只对一个房子有效；一个人信耶稣只能够对自己一个人有效。
5. 就象在没有羔羊的血涂抹在门框上的房子里的长子都死去了，同样地，没有信耶稣的人都要受到上帝的审判、下地狱。
6. 以色列人长子不死，代表相信耶稣的基督徒避免了上帝的审判，尽管有罪还是不用下地狱。在上帝施行末日审判时，他会‘逾越过’任何有耶稣的血涂抹在心灵上的人，这些就是相信他的人。

The Tenth Plague: Death of the Firstborn Sons

10. Death of the Firstborn Sons Time: A day between March 25 and April 24 (Passover) (Exodus 11:1-12:30)

Please review Exodus 11:1-10, 12:29-36.

This final plague was a completely supernatural miracle.

Passover and the tenth plague occurred on the same evening. According to the Jewish calendar, it was the 14th day of the first month. The Jews used a lunar calendar; according to modern solar calendar reckoning, the 14th day of the first month was some day between March 25 and April 24. Through this plague, God said *“against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments”* (12:12). “[A]ll the gods of Egypt” included Pharaoh, since the Egyptians regarded him as a god (the son of the sun god) and his firstborn son died in the tenth plague. All of the gods of Egypt were judged in the tenth plague since not one could protect humans or livestock, allowing them to escape the righteous anger of the true God, Yahweh. After the firstborn of the Egyptians died, everyone should have known that the gods worshipped by the Egyptians were false. Only Yahweh was the true God, and everyone was under His authority.

Regarding the killing of the firstborn of Egypt, we must not forget that God has unlimited authority to determine the length of every person’s life. Besides this, even more clear is that God loathes all forms of sin and will certainly punish those who oppose Him. The Egyptians had intended to kill all of the male infants of the Israelites (Exodus 1:15-16, 22). Moreover they ceaselessly oppressed them, making them slaves. The Egyptians consistently refused to repent, to the point that even after the tenth plague they wanted to enslave them again (14:5-6). This was not only Pharaoh, but also his officials and the common people in his army.

Exodus 11:10 says: *“yet Yahweh hardened the Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go out of his land.”* It sounds as if God purposely made Pharaoh willing to yield. There are other places in Exodus chapters 4 through 14 (such as 4:21, 10:27 and 14:4) which say the same. There is a translation issue here. The word *“hardened”* (the original is the Hebrew word ‘chazaq’) should have been translated *“firmed”* or *“strengthened,”* as the same word is translated in Isaiah 35:3-4: *“Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen [chazaq] the feeble. Say to those with anxious hearts, ‘Take courage [chazaq], fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance; the recompense of God will come, but He will save you.’ ”*

Pharaoh did not want to repent and let the Israelites go, but the plagues he had seen were so frightening that they may have been unbearable for him, he may not have had the psychological ability to resist. So God ‘strengthened’ his heart, giving him enough psychological strength to do what he already wanted to do. This not only was not compulsion, but was actually an expansion of the range of his free will, allowing him to overcome his mood and terror.

God was not, in fact, unwilling for the Egyptians to repent and avoid the death of the firstborn. In fact it is very possible that the Egyptians also had a chance to escape the tenth plague. Moses publicly warned the Egyptians that the plague of death on the firstborn was about to occur (11:4-8). To escape this judgment, the only requirement was the sprinkling of lamb’s blood on the doorposts (12:7, 13, 22-23). Perhaps there were some Egyptians (or other peoples living in Egypt) who revered Yahweh and entered Israelite houses, or sprinkled blood on their own houses. This way they could escape the punishment of the death of the firstborn. There are two incidents which support this idea. First, when Moses was prophesying the hail of the 7th plague, *“The one among the servants of Pharaoh who feared the word of Yahweh made his servants and his livestock flee into the houses”* (9:20). Thus we know that before the death of the firstborn there were already a few Egyptians who feared or revered Yahweh. Second, Exodus 12:38 says that, after the death of the firstborn in the tenth plague, when the Israelites were leaving, *“a mixed multitude [foreigners] also went up with them....”* Thus we know there were many non-Israelites who left Israel with them. It is hard to imagine that someone whose own firstborn son had died would have been willing to leave with the Israelites. The ones who went with them were probably Egyptians and minority group people who had heard Moses’s warning, believed, and sprinkled the blood, seizing the opportunity to escape the tenth plague. Perhaps it is because of this that these non-Jews who believed in Yahweh followed the Israelites and left Egypt with them.

We must also note that the sins of parents necessarily influence their children. This is unavoidable. If a mother and father clearly know their child needs an immunization to prevent disease, but they do not take the child for the injection, and as a result the child gets sick and dies – whose fault is it? God’s?

Regarding Miracles

The death of the firstborn was different from the nine plagues before it. In the first through ninth plagues, God made use of natural forces. The tenth plague was 100% supernatural. How should we regard this record?

第十个灾难：长子死

10: 长子死 时期：从3月25日到4月24日之间的某一天（逾越节）（出埃及记 11:1-12:30）

请复习出埃及记 11:1-10, 12:29-36。

这个最后的灾难完全是超自然的神迹。

逾越节和第十灾是同一天晚上发生的，按犹太人的历法算是1月14日。犹太人使用阴历，所以，按现代用犹太人用的阳历，阴历1月14日是阳历从3月25日到4月24日之间的某一天。这次灾难上帝“要败坏[审判]埃及一切的神”（12:12）。“一切”也包括法老，因为埃及人也把他当作神（太阳神的儿子），而他的长子在第十灾难中死了。所有埃及的神在第十灾的时候都受到审判，因为没有任何一个能保护人或牲畜逃避真神耶和华的义怒。埃及人的长子死后，人人都该知道埃及人所拜的神是假的，惟有耶和華是真的上帝，没有谁不在他的权力下。

至于埃及的长子被杀死，我们不可忘记上帝有无限权利能决定每一人生命的长短。除此以外，更明显的是上帝恨恶所有的罪恶，一定要惩罚反抗他的人。埃及人原来想杀死所有以色列人生的男孩（出埃及记 1:15-16, 22），并且不断地剥削他们，把他们当作奴隶。埃及人一直都不愿意悔改，甚至第十灾以后还想再次控制他们（14:5-6）。这不但是法老，也包括他的臣仆和军队里的平民百姓。

出埃及记 11:10 说“耶和華使法老的心刚硬，不容以色列人出离他的地”。这句话很容易被误解。好像是说上帝故意地使法老不愿意让步。出埃及记第4至14章其它地方（例如 4:21, 10:27, 14:4）也有同样的话。在此有一个翻译问题。“刚硬”那个词（原文是希伯来语‘chazaq’），本来应该翻译成“刚强”或“坚强”，就像在以赛亚书 35:3-4 翻译同一个词一样：“你们要使软弱的手强壮 [chazaq]，无力的膝稳固。对胆怯的人说，你们要刚强 [chazaq]，不要惧怕。看哪，你们的神必来报仇，必来施行极大的报应；他必来拯救你们。”

本来法老不想悔改、让以色列人走，可是他所看到的灾难是多么可怕的，也许它们使他心理受不了、没有精神抵抗。所以上帝就‘坚强’他的心，使他有足够精神去作他自己本来想作的。这不但不是勉强他而且是扩大他自由意志的范围，使他能够超过他自己的情绪和恐惧。

上帝本来不是不愿意埃及人悔改、避免长子的死亡。甚至很可能埃及人也有机会逃过第十灾。摩西公开地警告埃及人长子死的灾难快要来临（11:4-8）。为了避免这个审判，唯一的要求是要在门框和门楣上涂羔羊的血（12:7, 13, 22-23）。也许有尊敬耶和華的埃及人（或居住埃及其它民族的人）进入以色列人的房子里，或把血涂在自己的房子上，这样就可以避免长子死的惩罚。支持这个想法的有两件事。第一，在摩西预言将有第七灾冰雹的时候，“法老的臣仆中惧怕耶和華这话的，便叫他的奴仆和牲畜跑进家来”（9:20）。所以我们知道长子死的灾难之前，已经有一些埃及人惧怕或敬畏耶和華。第二，在第十灾长子死之后，出埃及记 12:38 说，以色列人出去时，“又有许多闲杂人 [外族人] ……和他们一同上去”。所以我们知道有很多以色列民族以外的人跟着他们一同离开埃及。很难想像自己的长子已经死去的人会愿意跟着以色列人出去。跟着他们走的人大概是听了摩西的警告、相信、涂抹了血、趁着机会避免了第十灾难的埃及人，以及居住在埃及的少数民族。可能就是因为这样，这些相信耶和華的非犹太人便跟着以色列人一同离开了埃及。

我们也应该注意，父母的罪必然会影响到孩子们，这是无法避免的。假如有一对父母明明知道孩子需要注射预防针来预防疾病，但他们却不带孩子去接受注射，结果孩子就生病、死了——这事到底算谁的错？是上帝的吗？

关于神迹

长子死亡的灾难与之前九个灾难不同。第一到九灾都是上帝使用自然力量；第十灾是百分之百超自然的。我们应该怎样看待这种记载？

First, we should not have a prejudiced viewpoint in our minds. If we blindly accept philosophical materialism, of course we will reject the occurrence of all supernatural phenomena. But that kind of analysis is merely a kind of presupposition, not scientific method of observational analysis. In Lesson 1 we have already seen that philosophical materialism is completely unable to explain the natural phenomenon of existence of biological life. Because of this, we know a supernatural God exists. This conclusion is not philosophical idealism, but rather the result of a strict application of logical analysis. God's creation of nature is a miracle which completely transcends the death of the firstborn. Because we know God exists, and has the power to create life, we absolutely must not reject a record of miracles because of prejudice.

The miracles recorded in the Bible can be divided into three types:

1. Those which use nature: For example the first through ninth plagues. God controlled the timing, scope and severity of natural phenomena, but the means He used were not obviously supernatural. This is frequently associated with prophecy.
2. Completely supernatural: For example the death of the firstborn in the tenth plague, or the resurrection of Jesus Christ. God temporarily sets aside His natural laws and performs a completely divine miracle which could never be explained by science.
3. Prophecy: For example, announcing beforehand through Moses the time and place of the fourth plague (swarms of flies), and the time and target of the tenth plague (death of the firstborn) (Exodus 8:22-23, 11:4-5). God reveals to a prophet a future event which humans cannot foreknow. These can be about natural events (like the childless old man Abraham having countless descendants) or supernatural events (like the death of the firstborn).

The Bible also records false miracles, which can be divided into two kinds;

1. Tricks which deceive people. Pharaoh's magicians changing their staves into snakes (Exodus 7:12) very possibly was this kind of trick.
2. Satanic miracles. It seems that Satan originally was the highest angel. His power is very great. Perhaps he is able to use some supernatural tricks to imitate God's miracles. To give an example of Satan's power, the New Testament of the Bible in Luke 13:11 records a woman whose bodily illness was caused by a demon. The miracles Satan displays or tricks he uses are always intended to hinder God's work and lead people to believe in false gods and to worship idols. Jesus warned us: "*For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance*" (Matthew 24:24-25). If a so-called 'miracle' leads people astray, away from the true God, we should regard it as the work of Satan. To give another example, Acts 16:16-19 records a woman who was able to divination because she had an evil spirit. If she really could foretell the future, than the power was demonic. Some think the events prophesied by demon-possessed people are then later caused to happen by the demons themselves.

The Israelites Cross the Red Sea

Please review Exodus 14:5-29.

At present, it is not possible to precisely determine the place where the Israelites crossed the "*Red Sea*" (literally "*Reed Sea*"; see Exodus 13:18). Most likely it was at the north end of the Gulf of Suez. (Some scholars think it was in the Bitter Lakes region north of the Gulf of Suez.) Recently two scientists have researched this question. J. Finegan reports their findings:

Exodus 14:21, 26-27 mentions "a strong east wind all night" which swept back the sea, allowing the Israelites to cross over, and the Egyptians to be drowned when the sea returned. According to oceanographic and meteorological research making use of computer calculations, Nof and Paldor have learned that the Gulf of Suez, being a long, narrow, shallow northward extension of the much larger body of water of the Red Sea. They assume that the site where the Israelite crossing occurred is at the northern tip of today's Gulf. They further assume that the "east wind" of Exodus 14:21 was in fact a northeast wind. This is entirely possible, since in Biblical Hebrew there are only four wind directions (east, west, north, and south), so "east" can also mean northeast or southeast. In an analysis of possible oceanographic and meteorological processes, a 40 to 45 mile per hour northeast wind, blowing continuously for 10 hours, was regarded as able to blow the water back about a mile from the northern tip of the Gulf, lowering the depth by 10 feet or more, thus allowing the Israelites' crossing of the sea to occur on dry ground. A sudden relaxation of the wind would bring the water back as a gravity wave within minutes, flooding the temporarily dry area. Thus they think the Israelites' crossing occurred when the water receded, and the Egyptians were drowned as a result of the rapid return of the gravity wave. ("Are there oceanographic explanations for the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea?" Bulletin of the American Meteorological Union, 73 (1992), cited in Jack Finegan Handbook of Biblical Chronology 1998 (Revised Edition), pg. 231, paragraph 400. Back translated from the Chinese.)

首先，我们心里不应该存有先验的看法。如果我们盲目地接受唯物主义，当然会拒绝一切超自然现象的存在。可是这样分析只不过是一种先验论，不是科学的经验分析方法。在第 1 课，我们已经看到唯物主义完全无法解释生物存在的自然现象。因此，我们知道有一位超自然的上帝存在。这个结论并不是唯心主义，而是严格使用逻辑分析的结果。上帝所创造的大自然是一种完全超过长子死亡的神迹。因为我们知道上帝存在，而且有创造生命的能力，所以我们绝对不要先验地拒绝神迹的记载。

至于圣经所记载的神迹，可以分为三种：

1. 操纵大自然的：例如第 1 到第 9 灾，上帝控制自然现象的时间、范围、强度等，但是他使用的方法不是明显超自然的。这经常和预言有关系。
2. 完全超自然的：例如长子在第 10 灾中死去或耶稣基督的复活，上帝暂时把他的自然法则搁在一边，行一件完全神性、科学永远无法解释的奇迹。
3. 预言：例如通过 摩西 预报第 4 灾（苍蝇滋生）的时间与地点，和第 10 灾（长子死）的时间与对象（出埃及记 8:22-23；11:4-5）。上帝向先知启示人类无法预知的未来的事情，可以是关于自然的（例如无儿女的老人亚伯拉罕要有千千万万后裔）或超自然的事（例如长子死亡）。

假的奇迹圣经也有记载，可以分为两种：

1. 欺骗人的手段。为法老行法术的人把自己的杖变成蛇（出埃及记 7:12）很可能是这样的手段。
2. 魔鬼撒旦的奇迹。撒旦原来好像是最高级的天使，他的能力很大。可能他会用一些超自然的手段，模仿上帝的神迹。举一个显示撒旦能力的例子，新约圣经路加福音 13:11 记载了一位妇女身上的病是由鬼引起的。撒旦所显的奇迹或所用的手段总是为了阻挡上帝的工作及令人相信假的神、去拜偶像。耶稣基督警告我们：“*因为假基督、假先知将要起来，显大神迹、大奇事；倘若能行，连选民也就迷惑了。看哪！我预先告诉你们了*”（马太福音 24:24-25）。假如所谓的‘奇迹’令人走入歧途、离开真神上帝，就应该认为是撒旦的工作。再举一个例子，使徒行传 16:16-19 记载一位妇女，因被污鬼附着所以能占卜。如果她真的能算命，那么这种力量属于魔鬼。有人认为被污鬼附着的人所预言的事情，是魔鬼自己后来造成的。

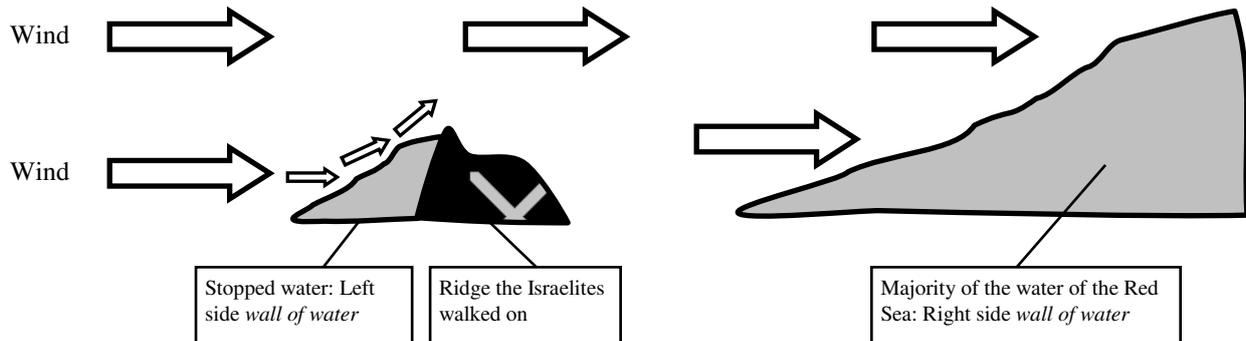
以色列人过红海

请复习出埃及记 14:5-29。

以色列人过“红海”（原文“芦苇海”；看出埃及记 13:18）的地点目前还不能精确地确认。最大的可能是指苏伊士湾北部。（还有学者认为是指苏伊士湾北边的苦湖等湖的地区。）最近有两位科学家研究这个问题，J.Finegan 报告他们的结论：

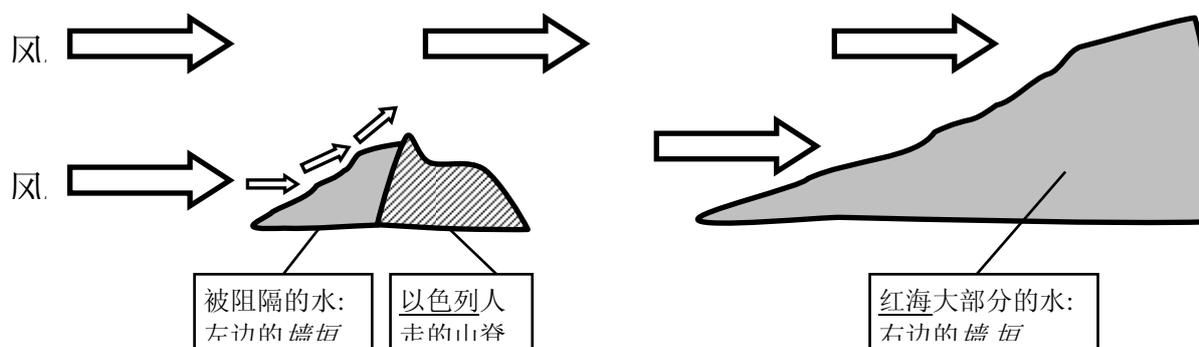
出埃及记 14:21, 26-27 提到“大东风，使海水一夜退去，”把那海水吹退，使那些以色列人可以通过，然后又让海水涨起来把埃及人淹没了。根据海洋地理和大气层科学研究，运用计算机的计算，Nof 和 Paldor 认识到苏伊士海湾很特殊，属于比它本身水域大得多的红海海区，又长又窄又浅的向北延伸，并且推断出那些以色列人通过的地方在今天海湾的北部边缘。他们还推断出埃及记 14:21 的“东风”实际上是一股东北风，这完全是可能的，因为在圣经的希伯来语中只有四个风向（东、西、北、南），而且“东”也可表示东北或东南。在有关的可能的海洋地理及大气层变化过程的分析中，一股每小时 40 到 45 英里速度的东北风，持续地吹了 10 个小时，被认为是能够把海湾的海水从北岸吹退 1 英里左右，并使其深度降低 10 英尺或更多，就令能让那些以色列人通过的海底干沙地的情况出现。而风势突然缓和下来就令那些海水由于重力作用而在几分钟内涨起来，把暂时被吹干的海底沙地淹没。这样他们认为那些以色列人的通过发生在水退的时候，而埃及人的被淹没则是海水‘重力波浪’的快速涌退的结果。（“关于以色列人通过红海，在海洋地理学上的解释是否存在？”，《美国气象协会会刊》73（1992），参考在 Jack Finegan 《Handbook of Biblical Chronology》1998（修订本），231 页 400 段）。

Some think God’s parting of the Red Sea to allow the Israelites to cross was a completely supernatural miracle. This viewpoint may be correct. However, the above research gives us another idea: perhaps God used some natural phenomena to let the Israelites cross the Red Sea and at the same time kill their enemies who wanted to harm them. Some will ask, if the water was blown back by the wind in one direction, how could it have been that “*the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left*”? We cannot give a definite answer to this point at present. However, the scientist who wrote the report above, as well as some other scientists, have suggested that at the place where the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, there may have been an underwater ridge two to three meters high. This would have been like a long dam, stopping the water on one side, which would have formed the “*wall*” on the Israelites’ left. They would have walked atop this small ridge. On their left would have been a very long, very narrow ‘wall of water.’ On their right would have been the Red Sea water, higher than the ridge, forming the ‘wall of water’ on their right. Below is a conjectural diagram:



Although this event was probably God using natural phenomena, there were still two miraculous aspects. The first was God foretelling the parting of the Red Sea; the second was the perfect timing, allowing the Israelites to cross safely while the Egyptians suffered disaster.

有人认为上帝分开红海让以色列人过去是属于完全超自然的神迹。这个观点可能是对的。可是以上的研究给我们这样一个概念，可能上帝是利用了某种自然现象使以色列人可以过红海，同时杀死想害他们的仇敌。有人会问，如果海水被风朝一个方向吹退，怎么会有“水在他们的左右作了墙垣”的情况发生？这一点目前还不能给出一个明确的答案，可是写以上报告的科学家以及其他一些科学家曾经提出，可能在以色列人过红海的地方，水底有一条两米高的小山脊，它像一条大坝，阻隔了一边的海水，成为以色列人左边的“墙”。他们走在那小山脊上，左下方是一堵很长、很窄的水‘水墙’，右面是高过山脊的红海海水，是他们右边的‘水墙’。以下为猜想的画面：



尽管这件事大概是上帝利用了自然现象，但仍有两个神迹的特点。第一是上帝预言红海的水要分开成为两边；第二是恰到好处的时间安排，好让以色列人安全地渡过，而埃及军人受难，

Lesson 7: The Ten Commandments

Before discussing this lesson, please read: Exodus 19:1—20:26.

Moses Promulgates the Ten Commandments

Please review Exodus 20:1-17.

Moses received many commands from God on Mount Sinai. Among them, the most important were the so-called ‘ten commandments.’ In order to better understand the meaning of the Ten Commandments, we will quote from Pastor John Stott’s explanation in Basic Christianity:

1. *You shall have no other gods before me.*

This is God’s demand for exclusive worship. It is not necessary to worship the sun, the moon and the stars to break this law. We break it whenever we give to something or someone other than God himself first place in our thoughts or our affections. It may be some engrossing sport, absorbing hobby, or selfish ambition. Or it may be someone whom we idolize. We may worship a god of gold and silver in the form of safe investments and a healthy bank balance, or a god of wood and stone in the form of property and possessions. None of these things is necessarily wrong in itself. It only becomes wrong when we give to it the place in our lives which belongs only to God. Sin is fundamentally the exaltation of self at the expense of God. What someone wrote of the Englishman is true of everyman: he is ‘a self-made man who worships his creator.’ For us to keep this first commandment would be, as Jesus said, to love the Lord our God with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind (Matthew 22:37); to make his will our guide and his glory our goal; to put him first in thought, word and deed; in business and leisure; in friendship and career; in the use of our money, time and talents; at work and at home. No man has ever kept this commandment except Jesus of Nazareth.

2. *You shall not make for yourself a graven image.*

If the first commandment concerns the object of our worship, the second concerns its manner. In the first God demands our exclusive worship, and in the second our sincere and spiritual worship. For ‘God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth’ (John: 4:24). We may never have manufactured some gruesome metal image with our hands, but what hideous mental image do we hold in our minds? Further, although this commandment does not forbid the use of all external forms in worship, it implies that they are useless unless there is inward reality as well. We may have attended church; have we ever really worshipped God? We may have said prayers; have we ever really prayed? We may have read the Bible; have we ever let God speak to us through it and done what he said? It is no good approaching God with our lips if our hearts are far from him (Isaiah 29:13; Mark 7:6). To do so is sheer humbug. (Basic Christianity, pp. 65-66)

3. *You shall not take the name of Yahweh your God in vain.*

This commandment includes not using “heaven,” “god” and similar words to express our surprise. Believers in God should also be careful not to casually use “Thank God,” “Hallelujah” and the like without considering the meaning of what one is saying. God is both glorious and holy; misusing His name is an offense against Him.

4. *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

The sabbath mandated one day of rest in every seven. God originally established the sabbath for the good of humanity (compare Mark 2:27). One application of this command was to protect servants, and modern workers, to guarantee them their necessary rest. Another aspect is to tell us that we ourselves need a day of rest every week. At the same time, on that day we should especially attend to our spiritual life, worship, reading the bible, attending church, etc.

For the Jews of the Old Testament period, observance of the sabbath was required. Christians today in the New Testament period do not have an absolute duty to observe the sabbath (see Romans 14:5). But a day of rest in every week is still a necessity for humanity.

As early as the first century, New Testament period believers were already in the habit of taking Sunday as the day of worship. This custom had the approval of the apostles (see Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5).

We again quote from Basic Christianity to explain the fifth through tenth commandments:

5. *Honor your father and your mother.*

This fifth commandment still belongs to the first half of the law which concerns our duty to God. For our parents, at least while we are children, stand towards us *in loco Dei*: they represent God’s authority. Yet often it is in their own homes that people, young people especially, are at their most selfish and inconsiderate. It is all too easy to be ungrateful and neglectful, and to fail to show our parents due respect and affection. How often do we write to them or visit them? Or do they need financial support which we could give but deny them?

7 课：十诫

讨论此课之前请阅读：[出埃及记 19:1-20:26](#)。

摩西颁布的十诫

请复习[出埃及记 20:1-17](#)。

摩西在西奈山上从上帝那里接受了很多命令，其中最重要的是所谓的‘十诫’。为了明白更多十诫的意义，我们引用司徒德牧师在《真理的寻索》书上写的解释：

1. 除了我以外，你不可有别的神

这是上帝对人的要求，要人专一地崇拜他。破坏这律法，并不必去拜日月或星辰。只要我们让某人或某物占据了我们的思想，感情的首位，就已犯了这律法了。这可能是沉溺于运动或癖好，或是自私的野心，或是我们醉心崇拜的人物。我们可以因耽于投资获利或积储金钱而拜了金银的神像。我们可以因贪求产业或财物而拜了木石之神。本来这些东西并不一定是错的，它们成了错谬，只是因我们把它们放在生活中应属乎上帝的首位。基本上说来，罪乃是自我高举而忘了上帝。曾有人说：「英国人是个自力成功的人，是个自我崇拜者。」其实这句话可以应用在每一个人身上。我们要守这第一条诫命，就要象耶稣所说：尽心尽性尽意尽力爱我们的神（[马太福音 22:37](#)）；以他的观点去看世事，所作的无不为他；以他的旨意作前导，以他的荣耀为目标；在思想，言语，行为上，事业和闲暇中，友情和工作里，在金钱，时间和才能的使用上，在家或出外，都以他居首位。除了拿撒勒人耶稣以外，没有人曾完全实践这诫命。

2. 不可为自己雕刻偶像

如果第一诫是论到我们崇拜的对象，第二诫就是论到崇拜的方式。在第一诫中，上帝要求我们专一地崇拜，在第二诫中，他要求我们诚恳而属灵的崇拜，因为「上帝是个灵，所以拜他的，必须用心灵和诚实拜他」（[约翰福音 4:24](#)）。我们可能从来没有亲手以金银制作过什么可怕的偶像，但在我们思想中所存的是什么可怕的心灵偶像呢？还有，这诫命虽然没有禁止在崇拜中使用一切外表形式，但也暗示，若内心没有真挚，外表形式是一无用处的。我们可能曾到教堂聚会；但有没有真正地崇拜过上帝呢？我们或者念诵过祷告文；但有没有敬虔地祷告过呢？我们也许读过圣经；但，有没有让上帝借圣经对我们说话，并照他所说的去行呢？如果我们口头亲近上帝，心却远离他（[以赛亚书 29:13](#)；[马可福音 7:6](#)），这就是欺骗。（[真理的寻索 54-55 页](#)）

3. 不可妄称耶和華你神的名

这个诫命包括不可利用“天”、“神”等类似的词表示我们的惊奇。信上帝的人也要小心，不可随便说“感谢主”、“哈利路亚”等，却不思考自己所说的是什么意思。上帝又伟大又圣洁，利用他的名字就会得罪他。

4. 当纪念安息日，守为圣日

安息日规定每七天之内要有一天的休息。上帝原来设立安息日是为了人类的好处（对比[马可福音 2:27](#)）。这个命令一方面的应用是为了要保护仆人和现代的打工一族，以保证他们所需要的休息。另一方面，它告诉我们每个星期自己要用一天来休息，而同时应该特别注意属灵的生活，礼拜、看圣经、参加聚会等。

对于旧约时代的犹太人，遵守安息日是必须的。现代新约时代的基督徒没有绝对的责任要遵守安息日（参考[罗马书 14:5](#)）。可是每周休息一天还是人类的需要。

新约时代的信徒，早在第一世纪已经习惯以星期天作为作礼拜天。这个习惯也有使徒的许可（参考[使徒行传 20:7](#)；[罗马书 14:5](#)）。

解释第五到第十诫命我们再次引用《真理的寻索》：

5. 当孝敬父母

第五诫是栽于第一法版中，与我们对上帝的责任同列，因为至少在我们年幼期间，父母之于我们，是好像站在上帝的地位一般的。他们代表上帝的权柄。然而许多人，特别是青年人在自己家里的时候，自私自利和不体贴亲心。我们惯于忘恩和粗心大意，不把父母当得的爱和尊敬归于他们。我们有多少次去探望他们和写信给他们？当他们有经济上的需要而我们又有余力的时候，我们有没有拒绝他们呢？

6. *You shall not kill.*

This is not just a prohibition of murder. If looks could kill, many would kill with a look. If murder can be committed by cutting words, many are guilty. Indeed, Jesus said that to be angry with someone without a cause, and to be insulting, are just as serious (Matthew 5:21-26), while John draws the right conclusion when he writes, 'Any one who hates his brother is a murderer' (1 John 3:15). Every loss of temper, every outburst of uncontrolled passion, every stirring of sullen rage, every bitter resentment and thirsting for revenge – all these things are murder. We can kill by malicious gossip. We can kill by studied neglect and cruelty. We can kill by spite and jealousy. We have probably all done so.

[Procured abortion is equivalent to murder, because the fetus is already a life, a person. See Psalm 139:13-16; Isaiah 44:2, 24; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:15, 34-35; etc.]

7. *You shall not commit adultery.*

Again, this commandment has a far wider application than just to unfaithfulness in marriage. It includes any sort of sex outside the marriage relationship for which it was designed. It includes flirting, experimenting, and solitary sexual experience. It also includes all sexual perversion, for although men and women are not responsible for a perverted instinct, they are for its indulgence. It includes selfish demands within wedlock, and many, if not all, divorces. It includes the deliberate reading of pornographic literature, and giving in to impure fantasies. Jesus made this clear when he said, '...every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart' (Matthew 5:28). Just as to entertain murderous thoughts in the heart is to commit murder, so to entertain adulterous thoughts in the heart is to commit adultery. This commandment in fact embraces every abuse of a sacred and beautiful gift of God.

8. *You shall not steal.*

To steal is to rob a person of anything which belongs to him or is due to him. The theft of money or property is not the only infringement of this commandment. Tax evasion is robbery. So is dodging the customs. So is working short hours. What the world calls 'scrounging' God calls stealing. To overwork and underpay one's staff is to break this commandment. There must be few of us, if any, who have been consistently and scrupulously honest in personal and business affairs. As Arthur Hugh Clough wrote: "Thou shalt not kill", but need'st not strive, officiously to keep alive; 'Thou shalt not steal' – an empty feat, when it's more lucrative to cheat."

These negative commandments also imply a positive counterpart. In order to truly abstain from killing, one must do all in one's power to foster the health and preserve the life of others. To refrain from the act of adultery is insufficient. The commandment requires the right, healthy and honorable attitude of each sex toward the other. Similarly, to avoid stealing is no particular virtue if one is miserly or mean. Paul was not satisfied that a thief should stop stealing; he had to start working. Indeed, he had to continue in honest labor until he found himself in a position to give to those in need (Ephesians 4:28).

9. *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

The last five commandments express that respect for the rights of others which is implicit in true love. To break these commandments is to rob a man of the things most precious to him, his life ('you shall not kill'), his home or his honor ('you shall not commit adultery'), his property ('you shall not steal'), and now his reputation ('you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor'). This commandment is not only applicable to the lawcourts. It does include perjury. But it also includes all forms of scandal, slander, idle talk and tittle-tattle, all lies and deliberate exaggerations or distortions of the truth. We can bear false witness by listening to unkind rumors as well as by passing them on, by making jokes at somebody else's expense, by creating false impressions, by not correcting untrue statements, and by our silence as well as by our speech.

10. *You shall not covet.*

The tenth commandment is in some ways the most revealing of all. It turns the decalogue from an outward legal code into an inward moral standard. The civil law cannot touch us for covetousness but only for theft. For covetousness belongs to the inner life. It lurks in the heart and the mind. What lust is to adultery and temper is to murder, that covetousness is to theft. The particular things which we are not to covet and which are mentioned in the commandment are surprisingly modern. In the housing shortage there is much coveting of our neighbor's house, and the divorce courts would not be so full if men did not covet their neighbor's wife. 'Covetousness...is idolatry' wrote Paul (Colossians 3:5), and by contrast, 'There is great gain in godliness with contentment' (1 Timothy 6:6).

Listing these commandments has brought to light an ugly catalogue of sins. So much takes place beneath the surface of our lives, in the secret places of our minds, which other people do not see and which we manage to conceal even from ourselves. But God sees these things. His eye penetrates into the depths of our inner hearts. 'And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do' (Hebrews 4:13). He sees our true face, his law reveals our true figure. In fact, the purpose of the law is to reveal sin, for 'through the law comes the knowledge of sin' (Romans 3:20).

6. 不可杀人

这诫命并不仅是一条禁止谋杀的禁令。如果眼睛可以杀人的话，相信很多人都会用眼睛去杀人了。如果尖刻的言语可以达成谋杀，很多人都已犯上这罪。事实上，耶稣说过，凡向人无故发怒和侮辱别人的，其严重性不下于谋杀行动（马太福音 5:21-26），约翰写书时也说：「凡恨他兄弟的，就是杀人的」（约翰一书 3:15），这是一个正确的结论。每一次发脾气，每一次暴怒，每一次悻然的愤激，每一次苦毒的愤怒和睚眦必报——都是谋杀的行动。我们可因恶意的闲话杀人，我们可因故意的疏忽和残忍杀人，我们可以用轻蔑和嫉妒杀人；我们各人或者都已这样作过了。

人工流产也等于谋杀，因为胎儿已经是一个生命，一个人。参考诗篇 139:13-16；以赛亚书 44:2, 24；耶利米书 1:5；路加福音 1:15, 34-45；等等。

7. 不可奸淫

这诫命所包含的，也不仅是婚姻上的不忠。它包括婚姻正常关系以外的苟合。它包括婚前的性经验，肆意的调情和自渎（手淫）。它包括逆性行为。虽然人类不能禁止逆性的冲动，却要为了放纵这冲动而负责。它包括婚姻上的自私要求，以及大部分或所有的离婚案件。它包括放任地阅读诱惑性书籍，以不洁思想自娱。这一点，耶稣说得很清楚：「凡看见妇女就动淫念的，这人心里已经与她犯奸淫了」（马太福音 5:28）。心中蕴藏着谋杀意念的是犯杀人罪，照样，心中蕴藏淫亵念头的，也是犯了奸淫。事实上，这诫命包括一切妄用这个上帝所赐的高贵功能。

8. 不可偷盗

偷盗就是把属于别人或应归于别人之物夺为己有。这不单是说偷盗金钱财产。逃税是抢劫。漏关税是偷盗。工作偷懒也是一样。世人说是「顺手牵羊」，上帝却说这是偷盗。强迫工人加班工作而克扣工资也是犯了这诫命。在公私事上自始至终都谨守诚实的人，在我们中间真是凤毛麟角。克拉夫（A. H. Clough）的讽刺话：「『不可杀人』，但也不需自告奋勇相救；『不可偷盗』——如能以欺诈图大利，谁还去作这徒劳无功的妙技」，正好一语道破一般人的哲学。

这些消极的诫命都含有它们积极的一面。若要真的避免凶杀，人必须尽力维护别人的健康，保障他们的生命。不犯奸淫的行为并不够，还要在两性之间有正确健全高尚的态度。人若是吝啬的，守财的，卑鄙的，他虽无偷盗行径，也不算是有德之人。保罗也不以偷盗者不重操故业为足，保罗〔新约圣经里几本书的作者〕要他开始工作，以诚实的劳力获取所需，一旦有余力，还要分给缺乏的人（以弗所书 4:28）。

9. 不可作假见证陷害人

最后五诫是说明对人权的尊重，是真爱心的表现。触犯这些律法就是剥夺人最宝贵的东西，他的生命（「不可杀人」），他的家庭和尊严（「不可奸淫」），他的财产（「不可偷盗」），以及他的声誉（「不可作假见证陷害人」）。第九诫并不是单在法庭里才适用的。它固然包括发假誓的罪，但也包括各种方式的诽谤诬蔑，一切闲话空谈，一切谎言和故意夸张或歪曲事实的话。藉着聆听及传播恶意的谣言、说使人难堪的笑话、使人生发错误印象、不更正谬误的言词，我们都可以作假见证。并且不但是我们所说的话会撒谎，而且有时我们不说话也算一种撒谎。

10. 不可贪婪

第十诫在几方面看来，是最具启发性的，它把十诫从外在的法律规条变成个人的道德标准。民法不能管制我们的贪心，只能制裁偷窃，因为贪婪是属于内心的。它隐伏在思想意念中。贪婪之于盗窃，正如情欲之于奸淫，怒气之于谋杀一般。在这诫命中所提我们不可贪恋的东西，是现代化得使人惊奇的。在今天房屋短缺声中，对邻舍房屋的贪恋已司空见惯；并且，倘若人不贪恋邻舍的妻子，法庭的离婚案就不会堆积如山了。保罗说：「贪婪就与拜偶像一样」（歌罗西书 3:5）。反过来说，「敬虔加上知足的心便是大利了」（提摩太前书 6:6）。

列举这些诫命后，许多丑恶的罪行就显明出来。这些东西发生在我们生活的心里，在我们思想的隐秘处，是世界所看不见的，甚至我们也可以设法向自己掩饰。但上帝看见这一切。他洞察我们内心的深处，「并且被造的，没有一样在他面前不显然的，原来万物，在那与我们有关系的主题前，都是赤露敞开的」（希伯来书 4:13）。他看出我们的真面目，他的律法把我们罪的真相显明出来。事实上，律法的目的就是显出罪来，因为「律法本是叫人知罪」（罗马书 3:20）。

The great 19th century evangelist Spurgeon, when he was fourteen years old, experienced the knowledge of sin in his heart. Two truths came clear to his heart as they never had before: ‘the majesty of God and my sinfulness.’ He was oppressed by a feeling of unworthiness. He said: ‘I could say in good conscience that whoever had examined my life would not have found any special sinfulness, but when I examined myself I found rampant sins of disobedience to God. I was not like other boys, deceitful, dishonest, swearing, etc. But suddenly I met Moses carrying the Law...God’s ten commandments...when I read them, they seemed to unite in condemning me before the Holy, Holy, Jehovah’. Our situation is the same. Nothing can cause us to know our sin better than the lofty and just law of God. (Basic Christianity, pp. 65-69; portions of last two paragraphs back translated from Chinese)

Seeing God’s moral standard, we all must admit two things. First, God’s standard is correct, just, and proper. If everyone observed God’s standard, this world would be a paradise. The second thing we must all admit is our own sin. Perhaps viewed from the outside we are relatively good persons, or at least an “ordinary person,” not very bad. But in fact our inner hearts are full of sin.

This world is in such a mess, not because humans have an ‘animal nature’ vestigial of the evolutionary process, and not because ‘society’ is corrupt. Although people frequently cite these as excuses, they are not the reason for sin. Actually, the evil which we ourselves personally choose ruins this world and society. Moreover, after death, God will judge every single one of us.

Lesson 7 Appendix: The Origin of the Religion and Morality of the Old Testament of the Bible

Besides letting us know our own sin, God’s Ten Commandments also demonstrate the following three important facts:

1. Humanity has never made any progress in its moral standards.
2. The uniqueness of the Bible’s teaching.
3. The Ten Commandments and the book of Exodus belong to the period prior to 1000 BC.

1. Humanity has never made any progress in its moral standards.

The fourth through tenth commandments all have to do with human relations in society (honor your father and mother, do not murder, etc.). These moral standards are the same in all times and places. As early as a thousand years before Moses, the Egyptian religious classic The Book of the Dead also had similar moral standards. The moral conscience which God gave to humanity reflects His own holy character. From the beginning of history till now, there has been no change in the moral standard indicated by humanity’s conscience. It is only that we harden our own hearts, reject this truth, and invent excuses. The ‘moral standard progress’ we have heard of is just a myth.

In the 20th century there were two world wars. The Japanese invaded China and all of East Asia, cruelly harming and killing the common people. The Germans heartlessly massacred six million Jews and two to three million other people (none of them soldiers, and many of them their own countrymen). In the first half of the century, China had several civil wars, and in the second half of the century suffered the misery of the Cultural Revolution. Today in China robbery, fornication and adultery, procured abortion (which God regards as murder), drug abuse, greed, etc. are all increasing.

I’d like to ask you, readers: Where is the progress in moral standards?

2. The uniqueness of the Bible’s teaching.

Although most of the moral standards of the Ten Commandments are universal, the first and second commandments are unique in the world’s ancient history. “*You shall have no other gods besides Me.*” As early as 1500 BC, the religions of all peoples were polytheistic. Originally, the survivors of Noah’s flood all knew that there was only one God. Because people refused to acknowledge the true God, but still wanted to explain the natural phenomena in the world, they gradually fabricated polytheistic religions. This phenomenon is just like what is said in the book of Romans:

For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. (Romans 1:21-23)

Unwilling to acknowledge the true God, humanity sought some jerry-rigged solution to explain the origin of the universe. Today’s evolution and atheism are this way too – they regard matter and energy as the Creator! Thus the historical process:

IS NOT: Ignorance→Religion→Science→Knowledge→Atheism
BUT RATHER: Knowledge→Rejection→Conjecture→Error→Idol Worship and Atheism

著名的十九世纪布道伟人司布真，当他十四岁时，内心就经历知罪感觉。有两点真理从来没有那么清晰地临到他心中，就是「上帝的威严和我的罪恶」。他那不配的感觉把他压碎。他说：「我可以毫不迟疑地说，凡审察我生活的人，不会看出我有什么特殊罪恶，然而当我看自己时，就看见那违背上帝的猖獗罪行。我并不象其他小孩子，狡诈，不诚实，赌咒等。但是，突然间我遇见摩西手携律法……上帝的十诫……我阅读时，它们好象联合起来，在圣哉圣哉的耶和華面前定我的罪」。我们的情形也是一样，没有什么东西比上帝崇高而公义的律法更能使我们知罪的了。（真理的寻索 56-59 页）

这样，看到上帝的道德标准我们都要承认两件事。第一，上帝的标准很正确、公义、适当。假如所有的人都遵守上帝的标准，这个世界会是一个乐园。第二，我们都要承认的是我们自己的罪。可能从外表看我们算是相当好的人，起码只是个“普通人”，不算太坏。可是我们的内心实在满有罪恶。

这个世界那么混乱，并不是因为人有进化过程中残留的‘动物天性’，也不是因为‘社会’很腐败。尽管人们经常以此为借口，但这并不是犯罪的理由。其实是我们个人选择的罪恶破坏了这个世界和社会。而且，人死之后，上帝还要审判我们每一个人。

7 课附录：旧约圣经的宗教及道德的来源

除了让我们知道自己的罪以外，上帝的十诫也可证明以下三点主要事实：

1. 人类从来没有道德标准的进步
2. 圣经中教训的独特性
3. 十诫和出埃及记属于公元前 1000 年之前的时代

1. 人类从来没有道德标准的进步。

第四到第十诫命都是关于社会中人与人之间的关系(当孝敬父母、不可杀人等等)。这些道德标准时时处处都一样。早在摩西的一千年前，埃及宗教经典死人书籍也有类似的道德标准。上帝原来赐给人类的良心反映了他自己的圣洁品德。历史上从头到尾，人的良心所表明的道德标准没有什么改变。只不过是我們硬化自己的心，拒绝这真理，并编造借口。我们所听说过的‘道德标准进步’只是神话而已。

20 世纪有两次世界大战，日本人侵略中国及全东亚、到处残害平民；德国人残酷无情地屠杀六百万犹太人以及二到三百万其他人（他们都不是军人，甚至很多是自己的同胞国民）。上半世纪中国有几次国内战争，下半世纪又遭受文革的苦难。当代国内强盗、未婚同居和婚外恋、人工流产(上帝把它当作一种谋杀)、吸毒、贪财等等都越来越多。

读者们，试问，哪儿有道德标准的进步呢？

2. 圣经中教训的独特性。

虽然十诫中大部分的道德标准很普遍，第一、二诫命在世界古代历史上独一无二、与众不同。

“除了我以外，你不可有别的神。”早于公元前 1500 年，任何民族的宗教都是多神论的。原来挪亚洪水的残存者都知道上帝只有一位。因人不愿意承认真神上帝而拒绝他，但还要解释世界上的自然现象，所以渐渐编造了多神论的宗教。这现象就象罗马书所说的：

... 他们虽然知道上帝，却不当作上帝荣耀他，也不感谢他。他们思念变为虚妄，无知的心就昏暗了。自称为聪明，反成了愚拙；将不能朽坏之上帝的荣耀变为偶像，仿佛必朽坏的人和飞禽、昆虫的样式。（罗马书 1:21-23）

不愿意承认真神上帝，人就找土办法来解释宇宙的来源。如今的进化论和无神论也算是如此——以物质与能量为创造者！所以，历史上的过程

不是从：无知⇒宗教⇒科学⇒知识⇒无神论

乃是从：知识⇒拒绝⇒猜想⇒错误⇒偶像崇拜及无神论

From the beginning until now, pure monotheism is only found in Christianity and Judaism, which are based on the Old Testament of the Bible. (The founder of Islam, Mohammed, was originally an idolater. He obtained the idea of monotheism from what he knew of Christian and Jewish doctrine, as is the case with a few other small religions and denominations.) This idea comes from the Bible. Religions and cultures which have not been influenced by the Bible do not have monotheism. Therefore, the question we must answer is, since at that time the people of all the world had long already become polytheists, where did the Jews get the idea of monotheism? Reasonably speaking, we must conclude that this idea came by a revelation from God and was not thought up by humans. There is no tendency or process in human society to evolve from polytheism to monotheism. The monotheism in the Bible was revealed to humanity by God Himself.

Not only the monotheism of the first commandment was unique in the ancient world. Besides that, the second commandment's "*you shall not make for yourself an idol*" forbidding idol worship is also absolutely unique. In ancient times all of humanity, including Abraham's ancestors, used idols to worship their so-called 'gods.' Even if relatively intelligent worshippers probably regarded their idols as merely a representation of their gods, and not the gods themselves, everyone was still using idols in worship, and moreover regarded them as 'divine' objects. The Egyptians were extremely idolatrous. In this background of superstitious ideology, suddenly Moses carried down from Sinai the word: "*you shall not make for yourself an idol.*" Since Moses, no other religion or people has been able to cast off idol worship, unless it first received direct influence from the Old Testament (like Christianity), or else indirect influence (like philosophical materialism, which was produced by Western culture). The traditional religions of modern China (Taoism, Buddhism) are no exception. Most such believers use modernized, plastic idols with little electric light bulbs. Although a few people 'believe from a philosophical standpoint,' even they do not try to persuade the others not to worship idols. Thus the rejection of idolatry is a unique teaching of the Bible's Old Testament.

3. The Ten Commandments and the book of Exodus belong to the period prior to 1000 BC.

The command "*you shall not make for yourself an idol*" not only shows that the Bible is a revelation from God and is unique, but also at the same time it demonstrates that Exodus was written at an early period and is completely accurate. In the ancient Middle East, every people group, one can even say every individual, worshipped idols. Only the religion of the Israelites forbade the use of idols, because Moses's Ten Commandments did not allow it. When did this command begin? Archaeology gives us an answer.

The archaeology of Palestine is very well developed. The remains of dozens of ancient cities where the Israelites lived have been excavated to a greater or lesser extent. A good example is Megiddo. That site has been systematically excavated level by level. The earliest level belongs to Canaanites who lived there before the Jews left Egypt and entered Palestine; the latest level belongs to Jews who lived there about 500-400 BC. The first through fifth levels (the first level is the latest, the fifth is earlier) all were lived in by the Israelites (c. 1100-400 BC). Regardless of whether it is Megiddo, or any of the other sites in all of Palestine where the ancient Israelites lived, archaeologists have never found an image of Yahweh. Not even one! The Israelites were extremely unfaithful, and frequently worshipped the idols of false gods. Many idols of goddesses have been unearthed in the cities where the Israelites lived. This is the same as the report of the Bible: when the Israelites had moral decline, they frequently worshipped the idols of the surrounding Canaanite peoples. Often this kind of worship was combined with the worship of Yahweh. But the influence of the second commandment was so deep that the worshippers of false gods did not dare to make an image of Yahweh.

This was completely the opposite of the situation among the surrounding peoples. Idols of male gods are frequently unearthed in areas where non-Israelites lived. But by 1000 BC, the Israelites had for a long time already been unwilling to carve an idol representing the true God Yahweh. This very clearly indicates that the second commandment was propagated long before 1000 BC. From this we know that the Ten Commandments appeared very early, which is in keeping with the historical record of Exodus. This enables us to believe that the Old Testament of the Bible is historically accurate.

一直到现在，单纯一神论只有以新、旧约圣经为基础的基督教及犹太教。（伊斯兰教的建立人穆罕默德本来是拜偶像，他就是从他所知道的基督教和犹太教的教条得到这个一神论概念，其它的一些小的宗教和教派也一样）。这概念是从圣经来的。没有受圣经的影响的宗教或文化就没有一神论。所以我们要回答的问题是，那时全世界的人早已变成了多神论者，那么犹太人原来是从哪里得到一神论的概念呢？按道理，我们应该断定这概念是从上帝的启示来的，而不是人想出来的。人类社会里根本没有什么从多神论演变到一神论的倾向或过程。圣经里的一神论是上帝亲自启示让人知道的。

不但第一诫命的一神论在古代世界很独特，而且除此之外第二诫命的“不可为自己雕刻偶像”的禁止拜偶像也算独一无二。古代全人类，包括亚伯拉罕的祖先，都在利用偶像来崇拜他们所谓的神。尽管比较聪明的崇拜者大概认为他们的偶像只不过代表他们的神，并不是神本身，可是谁都在利用偶像作礼拜，并且把它们当作具有‘神性’的东西。埃及人特别严重之处也就在此。在这样迷信的思想背景下，突然摩西从西奈山带下来“不可雕刻偶像”那句话。摩西之后，除非是先受到旧约直接的影响（如基督教）或间接的影响（如西方文化所产生的唯物主义）以外，没有任何另外一个宗教或民族能抛弃崇拜偶像。现代中国传统的宗教（道教、佛教）也不例外。一般的信徒用他们现代化塑料做的、用小电灯泡的偶像。虽然有一些人是‘从哲学上的观点来信’的信徒，连他们都不去说服其他信徒不应该拜偶像。因此，拒绝偶像是圣经旧约独有的道理。

3. 十诫和出埃及记属于公元前 1000 年之前的时代。

那句“不可为自己雕刻偶像”的诫命不但证明圣经是来自上帝的启示、具有独特性，而且同时也证明出埃及记是早期写的，是完全正确的。古代中东的每一个民族，甚至可以说每一个人都是拜偶像的。只有以色列民族的宗教禁止使用偶像，因为摩西的十诫不允许。这个命令是从什么时候开始？考古学回答了我们的。

巴勒斯坦考古学很发达。几十个古代以色列人居住的城市遗迹已经出土了或多或少的部分。有力的例子是米吉多城。那地方被一层一层地很系统地挖掘，最早的一层是属于犹太人从埃及出来、进入巴勒斯坦之前的迦南人的，最晚层是属于约在公元前 500-400 年居住的犹太人。第一到第五层（一层是最晚，五是比它早）都属于以色列人的居住地点（约公元前 1100-400 年）。不论是米吉多城，还是全巴勒斯坦其它古代以色列人所居住的地方，考古学家从来没有发现一个代表耶和華的像。连一个都没有！以色列人很不忠心，常常去拜假神的偶像。在以色列人的城市里常常挖掘出女神的像。这与圣经的报告一样，以色列民道德退步了，常常拜周围迦南人的偶像。这样的崇拜常常和拜耶和華混淆了。但是，第二诫命的影响那么深，以致于拜假神的人都不敢做代表耶和華的像。

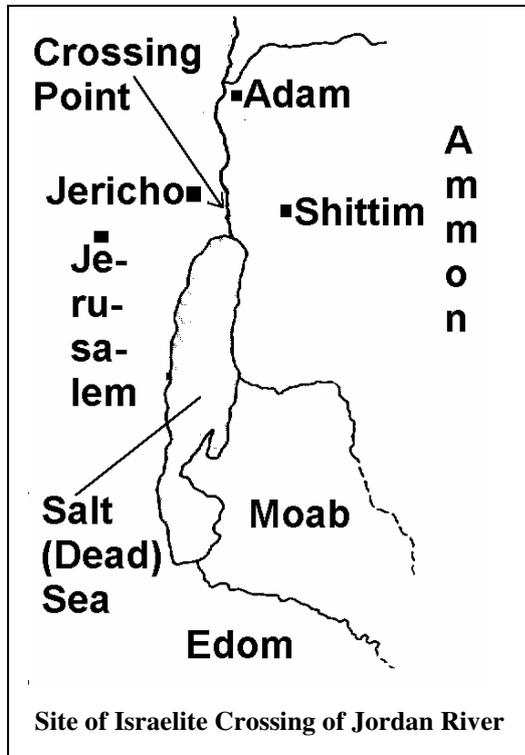
这种情况与周围的民族完全相反。在非以色列民居住的地方挖掘出男神的偶像是很常见的。可是到了公元前 1000 年，以色列人早已不愿意雕刻一个代表真上帝耶和華的偶像。这非常清楚地表示第二诫命是公元前 1000 年之前很早就颁布了的。根据这一点，我们可以说十诫出现得很早，符合出埃及记记载的历史，让我们能够相信旧约圣经的实在历史性。

Lesson 8: The Jews Enter Canaan; The Kingdom of Israel

Before discussing this lesson, please read: Bible: Joshua Chapter 2-3, 6.

The People of Israel Cross the Jordan River (Joshua Chapter 3)

The Israelites' crossing of the Jordan river is very possibly an example of a miracle consisting of God controlling and using the timing of natural phenomena. Here we quote from Archaeology and Bible History:



...the Bible...indicates that the water of the Jordan river was stopped in the vicinity of the cities of Adam and Zarethan (Joshua 3:16). The location of the city of Adam is marked by the site of the present city of Damieh, about 16 miles north of Jericho....

Some think God may have used an earthquake which caused a landslide to stop up the waters of the Jordan. The Bible gives evidence for this possibility, testifying that an earthquake occurred when the Israelites entered Canaan. Concerning that time...Psalm 114:3-4 says: "*the Jordan turned back, the mountains skipped like rams,*" which may well be a poetic description of an earthquake.

At Damieh, the site of Adam, there are high riverbanks which can stop the water when there is a landslide. In 1267 AD the Jordan river was blocked this way. A high cliff overhanging the river fell, blocking it for sixteen hours. In 1927 a similar event occurred, when part of a 150 foot high cliff fell into the Jordan, blocking its waters for twenty-one and a half hours. We cannot know for sure whether God used a landslide caused by an earthquake to cut off the waters of the Jordan. But it is certain that at a relatively specific time He caused the Jordan to stop flowing, allowing the Israelites to cross. In this the miracle of God was not so much in what method He used as in the timing. (Archaeology and Bible History pp. 110, 111; back translated from the Chinese)

Although we cannot definitely confirm that this miracle was brought about by means of an earthquake, at the least we should realize that the history recorded in the book of Joshua is completely realistic and completely possible. This is completely different from baseless legends and myths.

The Israelites Conquer Jericho (Joshua Chapters 2 and 6)

The discussion of the destruction of the city of Jericho can be divided into two parts. The first is the archaeological confirmation of the factuality of the Biblical record. The second is regarding the justice of killing the people of Jericho.

1. The archaeological evidence.

In the past, unbelieving scholars especially enjoyed denying the historical accuracy of the book of Joshua, to the point of laughing at the record of his conquest of Jericho. In the mid-19th century (Marx's time), because archaeology had only just begun to develop, those scholars raised many baseless criticisms. What now seems like the most laughable, but was frequently raised in the past, was to say 'the city of Jericho doubtless was too big for so many Israelites to circle it seven times in one day.' Starting in 1907, the city of Jericho has undergone several archaeological excavations. Now we know that the circumference of the city was about a kilometer [about 0.6 miles]. If for safety's sake they walked some distance from the city wall, their journey would have been a mere two kilometers [1.2 miles]. One the final day, when they circled it seven times, it would have been about 14 kilometers [8.7 miles]. Thus it has long been proven that the 'scholars' who criticized the accuracy of the Biblical record were mistaken. Unfortunately, Marx was influenced by such mistaken ideas, which became part of the reason he rejected Christianity.

The results of archaeological excavations have given proof for several details recorded in Joshua:

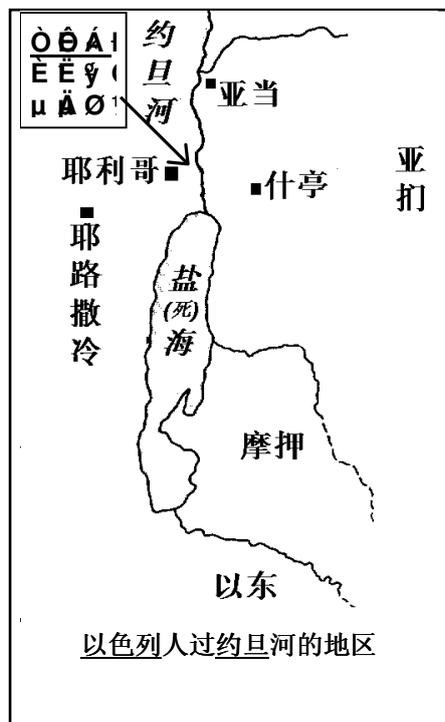
- There were houses on the wall (2:15).
- The city wall fell down (6:20). The bricks fell out away from the city, unlike the circumstances when an attacking army breaks down the walls and they fall into the city. Moreover, most of the wall fell; usually an invading army would only break down a wall at one or two points.
- The city was burned (6:14).

8 课：犹太人进入迦南地；以色列的王国

讨论此课之前请阅读：《圣经》：约书亚记 2、3、6 章。

以色列群众过约旦河（约书亚记 3 章）

以色列民过约旦河很可能是一件上帝控制和利用自然现象的发生时间的神迹例子。这里我们引用《考古学与圣经历史》：



…圣经…表示，约旦河的水被堵塞在亚当和撒拉但城市附近的地区（约书亚记 3:16）。亚当城的位置在今天 Damieh 城所在之处，在耶利哥城北面约 16 英里。。。。

有人以为，可能上帝利用一次地震造成滑坡来截断约旦河水。圣经给出了其可能性的证据，证明地震发生在以色列人进入迦南地的时候。关于那个时候……诗篇 114:3-4 说道，“约旦河也倒流。大山踊跃如公羊”，这些都很可能是诗歌对地震的描写手法。

在 Damieh 城，即亚当城所在之处，有很高的河堤，当发生滑坡时就会堵塞河水。在公元 1267 年，约旦河曾经发生过类似的堵塞。当一座高耸于河水西面之上的山丘倒了下来，就把它截断了 16 个小时。在 1927 年也发生了同样的事，当 150 英尺高的山崖的一部分倒在约旦河中，就把河水截断了 21 个半小时。上帝是否利用地震引起滑坡来截断约旦河水，尚未能证明。然而肯定的是在相当准确的时间里，他使约旦河停止流动，令以色列人能够通过。在此实现上帝目的的神迹，与其说是用了某种方法，不如说是时间上的安排。（《考古学与圣经历史》110, 111 页）

虽然我们不能确认这次神迹是由地震引起的，但是起码要认识到约书亚记记载的历史完全有其实在性、可能性。这与无根据的传说和神话完全不同。

以色列人征服耶利哥城（约书亚记 2 章、6 章）

讨论耶利哥城的毁灭可分为两个部分。第一是考古学证明圣经记载的实在性。第二是关于杀死耶利哥人的公正。

1. 考古学的证明。

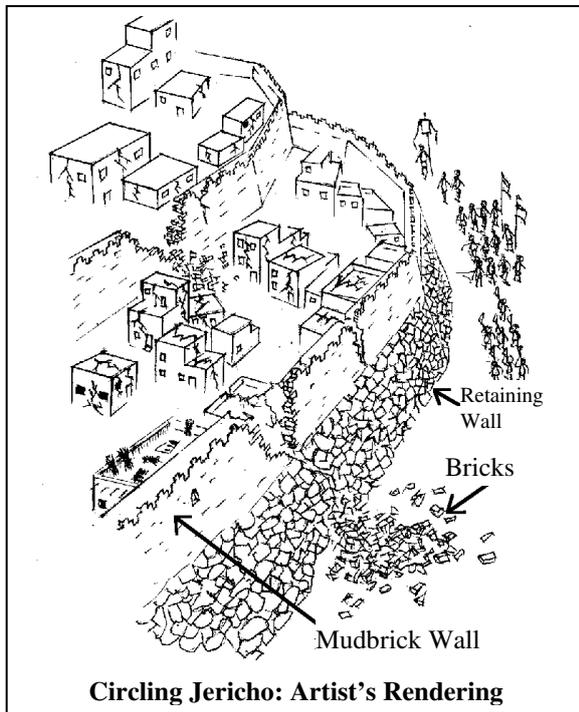
以前非信徒学者特别喜欢否认约书亚记的实在历史性，甚至讥笑他征服耶利哥的记载。19 世纪中期（指马克思时代），因考古学刚开始发展，那些学者提出很多无根据的批评。以前经常提到，现在则会认为是最可笑的是说‘耶利哥城应该太大了，那么多以色列人无法一天围绕它走七次。’从 1907 年起耶利哥城已经经过几次考古学的挖掘。现在我们知道城市的圆周约一公里。为了安全，离城墙远一点绕着它的路途也短于两公里，最后一天七次绕行只等于 14 公里左右。所以批评圣经记载正确性的「学者」，早已证明他们本来是错的。可惜的是马克思受到类似错误概念的影响，成为他拒绝基督教的部分原因。

考古挖掘的结果证明了约书亚记所记载的几个细节：

- 有房子靠着城墙（2:15）。
- 城墙倒下来（6:20）。砖墙往城外边倒下，不象军队进攻撞击城墙时向内倒的情况，并且大部分的城墙都倒了，不象一般的军队进攻时只是推倒一两处的城墙。
- 城市被烧毁了（6:14）

- Aside from metals, the Israelites did not take any valuable items (6:17-19, 24). Because of this, much stored grain was found in Jericho. This is very rarely seen in archaeological excavation.

We quote the conclusion of Dr. Bryant G. Woods, an expert on the archaeology of Jericho:



After the seventh trip around the city on the seventh day, Scripture tells us that the wall 'fell down flat' (Joshua 6:20). The Hebrew here carries the suggestion that it 'fell beneath itself.' Is there evidence for such an event at Jericho? It turns out that there is ample evidence that the mudbrick city wall collapsed and was deposited at the base of the stone retaining wall at the time the city met its end.

Kenyon's work [in the 1950's] was the most detailed. On the west side of the tell, at the base of the retaining, or revetment, wall, she found, 'fallen red bricks piling nearly to the top of the revetment. These probably came from the wall on the summit of the bank [and/or] ... the brickwork above the revetment.'

In other words, she found *a heap of bricks from the fallen city walls!* An Italian team excavating at the southern end of the mound in 1997 found exactly the same thing.

According to the Bible, Rahab's house was incorporated into the fortification system (Joshua 2:15). If the walls fell, how was her house spared? As you recall, the spies had instructed Rahab to bring her family into her house and they would be rescued. When

the Israelites stormed the city, Rahab and her family were saved as promised (Joshua 2:12-21; 6:17, 22-23). At the north end of the tell of Jericho, archaeologists made some astounding discoveries that seem to relate to Rahab.

The German excavation of 1907–1909 found that on the north a short stretch of the lower city wall did not fall as everywhere else. A portion of that mudbrick wall was still standing to a height of over two meters (eight feet). What is more, there were houses built against the wall! It is quite possible that this is where Rahab's house was. Since the city wall formed the back wall of the houses, the spies could have readily escaped. ...

Both Garstang [excavating in the 1930's] and Kenyon [excavating in the 1940's] found many storage jars full of grain that had been caught in the fiery destruction. This is a unique find in the annals of archaeology. Grain was valuable, not only as a source of food, but also as a commodity which could be bartered. Under normal circumstances, valuables such as grain would have been plundered by the conquerors. Why was the grain left at Jericho? The Bible provides the answer. Joshua commanded the Israelites that the city and all that is in it were to be dedicated to the Lord (Joshua 6:17 lit. Heb.).

The grain left at Jericho and found by archaeologists in modern times gives graphic testimony to the obedience of the Israelites nearly three-and-a-half millennia ago. (*Creation Magazine* 21(2) (1999 Mar-May), pp. 38-39)

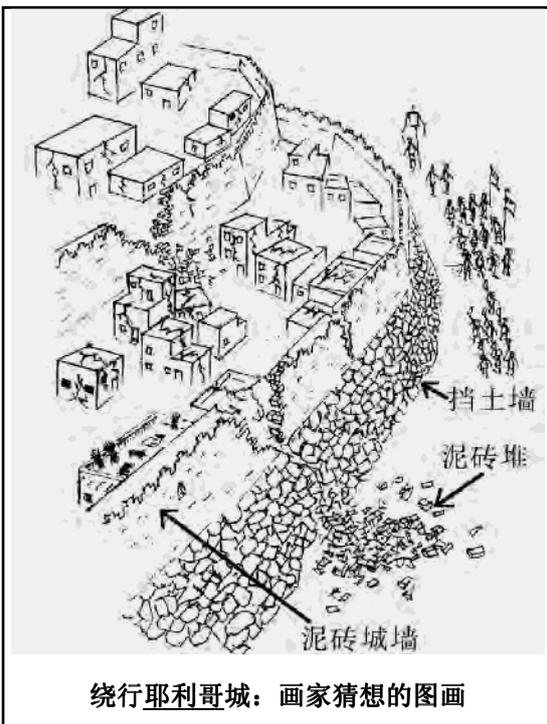
2. The justice of destroying Jericho.

God commanded the Israelites to destroy Jericho and kill the people in the city as a repayment for their evil. History testifies that the city-states of Canaan were constantly at war with one another to obtain land and valuables. The Bible, too, records that the Israelites at first were afraid to enter Canaan because they feared being defeated in war (Numbers 13:28-33). Even worse than their aggressive warfare was the Canaanites' social filth and evil. Leviticus chapter 18 recounts how they continually committed every type of incest, adultery and fornication. God forbade the Israelites to commit these sins, which in addition included:

'Neither shall you give any of your offspring to offer them to Moloch, nor shall you profane the name of your God; I am Yahweh. 'You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination. 'Also you shall not have intercourse with any animal to be defiled with it, nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it; it is a perversion. 'Do not defile yourselves by any of these things; for by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled. 'For the land has become defiled, therefore I have visited its punishment upon it, so the land has spewed out its inhabitants. (Leviticus 18:21-25)

- 除了金属材料以外，城里值钱的东西以色列人没有拿走（6:17-19，24）。因此，在耶利哥城发现了许多在考古学挖掘中很少被发现的储存的粮食。

我们引用耶利哥城专家考古学家 Bryant G. Wood 博士的结论：



在第 7 天完成了第 7 次环城旅行之后，圣经告诉我们，那城墙倒塌且成为平地（约书亚记 6:20）。在这里的希伯来语暗示了城墙是‘到自己的下边塌下来了’。耶利哥城里有任何与上述有关的证据吗？事实上有充分的证据表明，在城市覆灭时，它的泥砖城墙倒塌了，然后在石头作的挡土墙的基础外侧堆积了起来。

Kenyon，[在 20 世纪 50 年代]的发现是最详细的，她是在小山的西端，在挡土墙（或叫护墙）的基础上发现的：

“掉下来的红砖在接近挡土墙的上部堆积起来。这些很可能是从山坡的最高处掉下来的，和/或……那在护墙上的砖结构。”

换句话说，她发现了一堆从城墙掉下来的砖头！1997 年一支意大利的考古队在南端发掘时发现了同样的东西。

根据圣经，喇合的房子被围在防御系统里。假如城墙倒了，她的房子又怎能幸免？回想一下，那两个探子已经告知喇合，叫她把家人带入自己屋子里，就能得救。当以色列人对城市发动强攻时，喇合及

她家人如应许般被救了（约书亚记 2:12-21;6:17, 22-23），而在耶利哥那小山的北端，考古学家有一些惊人的发现，似乎是与喇合有关的。

1907-1909 年在德国人的发掘中发现，在北面，城市下部很短的一段城墙并没有象别的地方那样倒下来。那砖墙的一部分仍旧有超过两米（或八英尺）的高度。而且，靠墙盖了一些房子！很有可能这就是喇合的房子所在。由于城墙构成了那些房子的后墙，那两个探子就可以轻易地逃走。。。。。

[在 20 世纪 30 年代进行挖掘的] Garstang 和[在 20 世纪 50 年代进行挖掘的] Kenyon 发现许多装满粮食[谷物]的储物罐子，就是属于那大火焚城的时间。这在考古史上是一个独特的发现。粮食在那时是宝贵的，不仅是食物的来源之一，而且还是易货贸易的商品之一。在通常情况下，象粮食那么宝贵的东西一定会被侵略者洗劫的。为何它们仍被留在耶利哥呢？圣经给了我们答案。约书亚命令以色列人把那城市和城内所有的东西全都奉献给主（约书亚记 6:17，按希伯来语的原文的解释）。

留在耶利哥并被当代的考古学家发现的粮食，给将近三千五百年前以色列人对上帝的顺服作了鲜明见证。（《从无创世》21(2)（1999 年 3-5 月），38, 39 页）

2. 毁灭耶利哥城的公正。

上帝命令以色列人毁灭耶利哥城、杀死城里的人民，算作报复他们的罪孽。历史证明迦南地的城邦之间经常打仗，是为了夺取土地和财物。圣经也记载以色列人原来害怕进入迦南地，就是因为害怕被被打败（民数记 13:28-33）。比他们的侵略战争更厉害的是迦南地民族社会里的污秽和罪恶。利未记 18 章述说他们通常犯的各种各样的乱伦以及奸淫和淫乱。上帝禁止以色列人犯这些罪，除此也包括：

不可使你的儿女经火[作为祭物]归于[假神]摩洛，也不可亵渎你神的名。我是耶和華。不可与男人苟合，象与女人一样，这本是可憎恶的。不可与兽淫合，玷污自己。女人也不可站在兽前，与它淫合，这本是逆性的事。在这一切的事上，你们都不可玷污自己，因为我在你们面前所逐出的列邦，在这一切的事上玷污了自己。连地也玷污了，所以我追讨那地的罪孽，那地也吐出它的居民。（利未记 18:21-25）

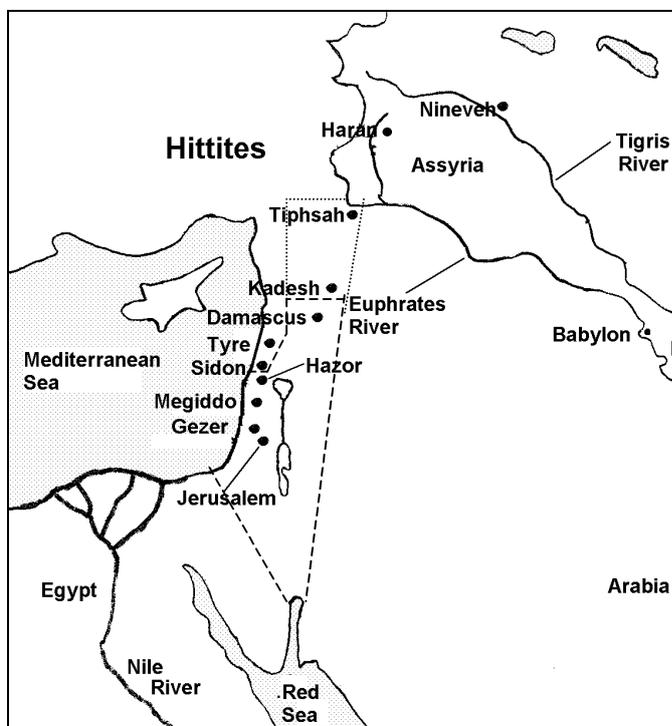
The sins of which the people of Jericho regularly committed included burning their own infants as sacrifices to the god Moloch. God always has authority to cut off human life, and also to commission humans to go and carry out the punishment He has decided. In Genesis 9:6, God commanded all humanity: “Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man.” This continues to be in effect up to the present. By the special guidance of God, the Israelites carried out God’s punishment on the people of Jericho.

But we may ask: Doesn’t God love sinners and hope that they will repent? Yes, that is the case. Therefore God warned the people of Jericho and gave them a chance to repent. In Joshua 2:9-11 Rahab said that her people were afraid of the Israelites, and knew very clearly that Yahweh was with them. But the response of the people of Jericho was to oppose the Israelites and their God. They did not want to repent. Only Rahab and her relatives were willing to repent. As a result, the people who believed and were willing to repent were saved; those who knew about but rejected and opposed God were destroyed.

We must pay attention to this example! Now we have the chance to believe in Jesus Christ, we can repent and be saved. If we reject the truth we know now, later, after we die, there will not be another chance to repent. We will certainly be judged and punished by God. Please come to your senses at once!

Period of ‘Judges’ in Israel, the Kingdom Period, and the Period of the Babylonian Captivity (c. 1400-586 BC)

- c.1400 Israelites cross the Jordan, enter Canaan and conquer Jericho
- c.1375-1050 ‘Judges’ lead the Israelites
- c.1050-1011 Saul is the first king of Israel, rules the united kingdom
- 1011-971 David rules the united kingdom of Israel
- 971-931 Solomon rules the united kingdom of Israel
- 960 The first temple completed
- 931 Israel split in two: the southern kingdom of Judah and the northern kingdom of Israel
- 721 Northern kingdom of Israel destroyed by the Assyrian Empire
- 586 S. kingdom of Judah destroyed by Babylonian Empire, captives taken to Babylon, 1st temple destroyed
- 516 BC Second temple completed
- 70 AD Romans destroy the second temple, Jews are scattered all over the world



The United Kingdom of Israel in Solomon’s Time

After conquering Jericho, Joshua led the Israelites into the interior of Canaan, defeating some peoples who opposed them. After Joshua died, the Israelites lived without a central government for more than 300 years. This is the so-called ‘period of the Judges.’ Many different judges arose and, through God’s calling and strength, led all of Israel or some of the tribes in struggling against the enemies who were oppressing them. Later, Saul, David and Solomon were the first three kings of Israel, ruling the so-called ‘united kingdom’ of Israel. Concerning these three kings, archaeologists have already discovered much evidence for the factuality of the Biblical record. To give two examples, the Bible says:

Then Samuel went to Ramah, but Saul went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul. (1 Samuel 15:34)

Now this is the account of the forced labor which King Solomon levied to build the house of Yahweh, his own house, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. (1 Kings 9:15)

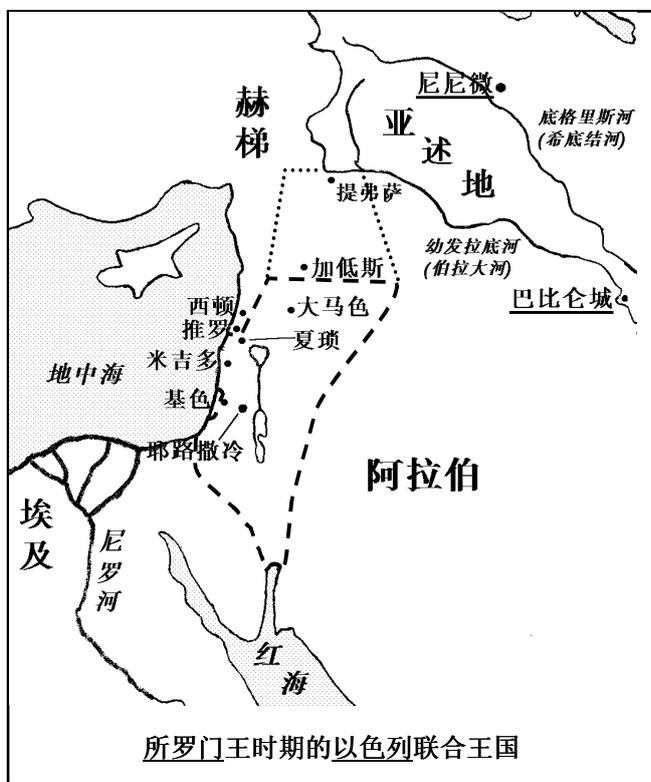
而耶利哥人所犯的罪通常还包括把自己的婴儿烧掉，当作牺牲的祭物献给摩洛神。上帝总是有权利割断人的生命、并委派人去施行他所定的惩罚。在创世记 9:6，上帝对全人类下命令：“凡流人血的，他的血也必被人所流，因为上帝造人，是照自己的形象造的。”那句话到如今仍然有效。以色列人在上帝特别的带领之下，施行上帝对耶利哥人的审判。

可是我们还要问，岂不是上帝爱罪人，希望他们悔改？就是如此。因此上帝警告了耶利哥人并给了他们悔改的机会。在约书亚记 2:9-11 喇合说她的民族都害怕以色列人，并且明明知道耶和华与他们同在。但是耶利哥人的反应是想抵抗以色列人和他们的上帝，他们不想悔改。只有喇合和她的家人愿意悔改。结果，相信而愿意悔改的人就被拯救了；知道却拒绝、反抗上帝的人就被毁灭。

我们要注意这个例子！因为现在我们有机会相信耶稣基督，可以悔改、得救。如果现在拒绝所知道的真理，将来死后就再也没有机会悔改，肯定要受上帝的审判与惩罚。请趁早警醒！

以色列的‘士师’时期、王国时期、流放到巴比伦时期(约公元前 1400-586 年)

约 1400 年	以色列人过约旦河、进入迦南地、征服耶利哥城
约 1375-1050	‘士师’领导以色列人
约 1050-1011	扫罗当以色列最早的一个国王，统治联合王国
1011-971	大卫王统治以色列联合王国
971-931	所罗门王统治以色列联合王国
960	第一圣殿建成
931	以色列国分裂为两部份：犹太南方王国、以色列北方王国
721	以色列北方王国被亚述帝国毁灭了
586	犹太南方王国被巴比伦帝国毁灭了、人民被掳到巴比伦、第一圣殿毁灭了
公元前 516	第二圣殿建成
公元 70	罗马人毁灭第二圣殿，犹太人分散到全球



征服了耶利哥城之后，约书亚带领以色列人进入迦南地的内部、战胜一些反抗他们的民族。约书亚死后，以色列人过着 300 多年没有中央政府的生活。这是所谓‘士师时代’，有很多不同的士师涌现出来，凭着上帝的呼召和能力领导以色列全国或一部分支派与逼迫他们的敌人战斗。后来，扫罗、大卫和所罗门成为以色列最早的三个王，他们统治着以色列的所谓‘联合王国’。关于那三个王，考古学家已经发现很多证明圣经记载的事实。举两个例子，圣经说：

。。。扫罗 [王] 上他所住的基比亚，回自己的家去了。(撒母耳记上 15:34)

所罗门王挑取服苦的人，是为建造耶和华的殿、自己的宫、米罗、耶路撒冷的城墙、夏琐、米吉多，并基色。(列王记上 9:15)

The fortress at Gibeah, Saul's capital, has already been unearthed. It is very crude and rustic. Its construction cannot be compared with that of the surrounding Canaanites of the period, reflecting the fact that the Israelites of the time were still a comparatively simple, agricultural people. In contrast, by the time of Solomon, Israel's economy and technology had already undergone great development. Archaeologists have excavated the Solomonic period city walls, gates and other edifices of the three defensive cities Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer. They are far more advanced than those of Saul's day. Readers interested in the details should refer to The New Unger's Bible Dictionary pp. 1136, 543, 831, 470, and Archaeology and Bible History p. 143.

King David

Under the leadership of King David, the territory controlled by the Israelites was extended. The area conquered by King David included the western part of modern Jordan (the ancient Biblical nations of Ammon, Moab and Edom), the eastern part of modern Lebanon, and the southwestern part of modern Syria, including the capital Damascus (the ancient Biblical nation of Aram). In addition to these military matters, David also wrote many songs by the revelation and inspiration of God. These are recorded in the book of Psalms in the Bible.

God made a special prophecy about David, stating that his descendents would reign as kings forever:

And I [Yahweh God] have been with you [King David] wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth....When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant [i.e. King Solomon] after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever. (2 Samuel 9:9, 12-16)

Four hundred years later, when it seemed that the entire Jewish people was in danger of being destroyed, God repeated this promise again:

For thus says Yahweh, "David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel"....Thus says Yahweh, "If you can break My covenant for the day, and My covenant for the night, so that day and night will not be at their appointed time, then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne...." (Jeremiah 33:17, 20-21)

Note three things in the above which are appointed "*forever*":

- David and Solomon's kingdom, that is, Israel.
- David and Solomon's throne and authority.
- David's descendents. Note: It does not say that Solomon's descendents would be kings forever.

These prophecies have been fulfilled in an amazing way. After passing nearly 2,000 years without a country of their own, the Jews have now recouped their nation, Israel. This event was completely beyond human knowing, and demonstrates that the Biblical prophecies are revelations from the supernatural, immaterial God. But what about the throne of David and Solomon? From 586 BC until now, no descendant of David has been king in Israel.

In fact, this prophecy has attained an even more amazing fulfillment. It refers to Jesus Christ. When He came to Jerusalem around the year 30 AD, at least some of the Jews acknowledged Him, shouting:

And the multitudes going before Him, and those who followed after were crying out, saying,

Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! (Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:10; Luke 19:38)

It is Jesus Christ who has inherited the throne and authority of kings David and Solomon. Although at that time He was eventually rejected by the majority of the Jews, today He is still the king acknowledged by countless Christians, including some who are Jewish. Christians obey the commands of their king, Jesus Christ, that is, His words which are recorded in the Bible. Because He has risen from the dead, He will be king forever and ever. Furthermore, in the future He will return to the earth, ruling the entire world with Jerusalem as capital.

In addition, God's promise said that David's house would be established forever and David's descendant would be king forever. God did not give this promise to Solomon. As a result, according to Jesus's genealogies in the New Testament of the Bible, Jesus Christ is David's descendant, but not through Solomon, but rather through another one of David's sons. In this we can see the 100% accuracy of the Bible. A thousand years before Jesus Christ came, God had already prophesied that He would be the descendant of David, and would exercise David's and Solomon's authority, but would not be Solomon's descendant.

扫罗王的首都基比亚城的堡垒已经出土了，很粗糙和简陋，建筑水平比不上当时周围的迦南人，这反映了当时以色列民族还算是比较单纯的农业民族。不同的是，到了所罗门王时，以色列的经济和技术已经有了很大的发展。考古学家已经挖掘了所罗门王时代夏琐、米吉多、基色三个设防城市的城墙、城门以及建筑物，比扫罗时代发达得多。对细节感兴趣的读者请参看《新 Unger's 圣经百科全书》1136, 543, 831, 470 页；《考古学与圣经历史》143 页。

大卫王

在大卫王的统治之下，以色列人所控制的土地范围扩大了，大卫所征服之地包括现代约旦的西部(即圣经里的亚扪、摩押、以东三个古代国家)，现代黎巴嫩的东部，及现代叙利亚的西南部，包括首都大马色（即圣经里古代的亚兰国）。除了这些战事以外，大卫王通过上帝的启示和感动，也写了很多篇诗歌，记在圣经的诗篇中。

关于大卫王，上帝作出了一个特殊的预言，说他永永远远会有后代作王：

你 [大卫王] 无论往哪里去，我 [耶和華上帝] 常与你同在，剪除你的一切仇敌，我必使你得大名，好像世上大大有名的人一样。。。你寿数满足，与你列祖同睡的时候，我必使你的后裔 [指所罗门王] 接续你的位，我也必坚定他的国。他必为我的名建造殿宇，我必坚定他的国位，直到永远。我要作他的父，他要作我的子，他若犯了罪，我必用人的杖责打他，用人的鞭责罚他。但我的慈爱仍不离开他，像离开在你面前所废弃的扫罗一样。你的家和你的国必在我面前永远坚立，你的国位也必坚定，直到永远。（撒母耳记下 7:9, 12-16)

过了 400 年，当整个犹太民族好像面临灭亡的时候，上帝再一次重申那个诺言：

因为耶和華如此说，大卫必永不断人坐在以色列家的宝座上。。。耶和華如此说，你们若能废弃我所立白日黑夜的约，使白日黑夜不按时轮转，就能废弃我与我仆人大卫所立的约，使他没有儿子在他的宝座上为王。。。 (耶利米书 33:17, 20-21)

以上请注意三个方面是“永远”定的：

- 大卫和所罗门的国家，即以色列。
- 大卫和所罗门的王位和君权。
- 大卫的后代。注意：没有说所罗门的后代会永远持续作王。

这些预言很奇妙地应验了。犹太人经过接近两千年没有自己的国家历史之后，现在已经恢复了他们的国家以色列。这件完全在人的意料之外的事也证明了圣经的预言是超越大自然、非物质的上帝所启示的。可是大卫和所罗门的王位呢？从公元前 586 年至今没有任何大卫的后代在以色列作王。

其实这个预言得到更奇妙的应验。它所指的人就是耶稣基督。他在约公元 30 年来到耶路撒冷，至少有部分的犹太人承认他，呼喊说：

前行后随的众人喊著说：和散那（原有求救的意思，在此是称颂的话）归於大卫的子孙！

那将要来的我祖大卫之国，是应当称颂的！高高在上和散那！

奉主名来的王，是应当称颂的！（马太福音 21:9；马可福音 11:10；路加福音 19:38）

耶稣基督就是那位继承大卫和所罗门王的王位和君权的人。尽管当时他究竟被大部分的犹太人拒绝了，今天他还是成千上万的基督徒、包括一些犹太人所承认的王。基督徒也听从他们的君王耶稣基督的命令，就是他记在圣经里面的话。因为他从死里复活了，他要永永远远作王，并且将来他要回到地球来，以耶路撒冷为首都，掌管全世界。

再者，上帝的诺言说大卫的家庭要坚定到永远、大卫的后代要永远作王。上帝也没有把这个诺言赐给所罗门。结果是，按照新约圣经中耶稣的家谱，耶稣基督是大卫的后代，但却不是通过所罗门，而是通过大卫的另一个儿子生下来的。在此可以看到圣经百分之百的正确性。早在耶稣基督来临的一千年前，上帝已经预言了他会成为大卫的后代、掌大卫和所罗门的国权，但却不是所罗门的后代。

King Solomon

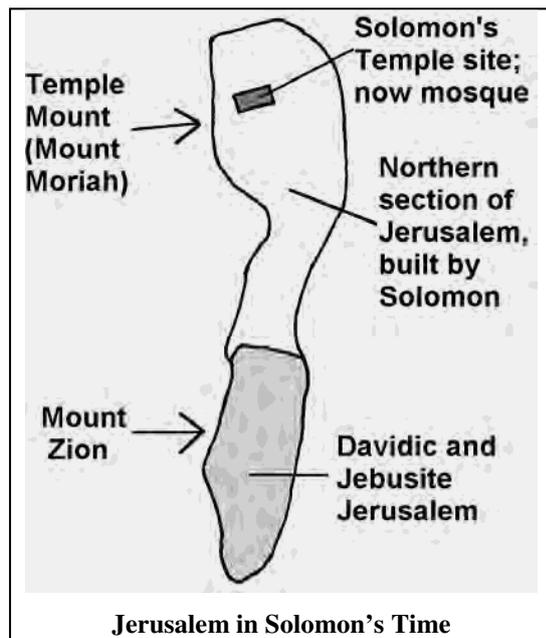
By the time of King Solomon, the territory controlled by the united kingdom of Israel stretched from the Euphrates river all the way to border of the Sinai peninsula. This area included many small kingdoms which acknowledged Solomon as overlord. How did such a tiny people as Israel establish such a large kingdom? Extra-biblical history helps us to understand this phenomenon. In accordance with God's arrangement, the three large surrounding empires, namely Egypt, Assyria in Mesopotamia, and the Hittites in Turkey, were all very weak at that time, to the extent that a Pharaoh of the 21st Egyptian dynasty wanted to establish a marriage alliance with Solomon.

Sadly, King Solomon and his son, King Jeroboam, did not have grateful hearts. They abandoned the true God, Yahweh, and added some idol worship religion. Many Israelites also did the same. As a result, God punished them, allowing Israel to be divided into two nations by a civil war. Moreover, Egypt recovered its power and began to oppress them.

Thereafter, Israel was divided into the so-called southern kingdom of "Judah" and the so-called northern kingdom of "Israel."

After the division of Israel, not only did Egypt recover strength, but Assyria also resumed its imperial expansion. The Assyrians were centered in the northern part of Mesopotamia, in the central part of modern Iraq. Beginning in 883 BC, they constantly expanded the territory under their control, establishing the Neo-Assyrian empire. There are a total of 28 kings of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel recorded in the Bible during the Assyrian empire period (883-612 BC). Of these 28 kings, archaeologists have already found the names of nine kings mentioned in contemporary Assyrian imperial records (*reference*). This is an undoubtable confirmation of biblical history. The Bible records that, by 721 BC, the Assyrian army had conquered the northern kingdom of Israel, destroying the capital, Samaria, and carrying off tens of thousands of people captive. The northern kingdom of Israel became a colony. Outside of the Bible, there are abundant materials in the Assyrian public records confirming these events. Interested readers can consult Archaeology and Bible History, pp. 169-171.

The City of Jerusalem



Jerusalem may be the most sensitive place in the entire world. The contradiction between the Jews and the Palestinians is seemingly insoluble, and the problems of this tiny place are entangling all of the surrounding Arab nations and the distant big nations of the world, including America, Russia, the European Union, and the United Nations. To cite an example, the "September 11th" terrorist attacks in the United States occurred because those Arabs thought that America was biased in its support of Israel and opposed to the Palestinians. Although we can find some so-called 'historical reasons' for these circumstances, the Bible prophesied them long ago. Regarding the period approaching the 'Last Day,' the Bible says that the Jews who had been scattered all over the world will return to Israel (see Lessons 4, 11, and 16), and at that time:

Behold, I [Yahweh God] am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah. And it will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it. (Zechariah 12:2-3)

This prophecy is only partially fulfilled at present, but the current international relations situation makes it easy for us to understand how it will be completely fulfilled in the future. In the Middle East issue, the important problem is not the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, nor the 'West Bank' and 'Gaza Strip' problems. For these problems, the Jews and the Palestinians could probably find a way to mutually compromise. The important question is Jerusalem. Why? Let us review her history.

Jerusalem is an extremely ancient city, with more than 4,000 years of history. The oldest part is on Zion hill. This area seems to have been inhabited in Abraham's time (c. 2000 BC). In the time of Joshua, not long after c. 1400 BC, the Israelites defeated the king of Jerusalem in a battle outside of the city, but they were not able to conquer the city itself (see Joshua 10). The inhabitants of Jerusalem, called Jebusites, continued to live there, in the midst of the Jews, up to King David's time. The ancient city of the Jebusite period has been partially excavated, including some city walls, fortifications, and gates (The New Unger's Bible Dictionary, p. 655).

所罗门王

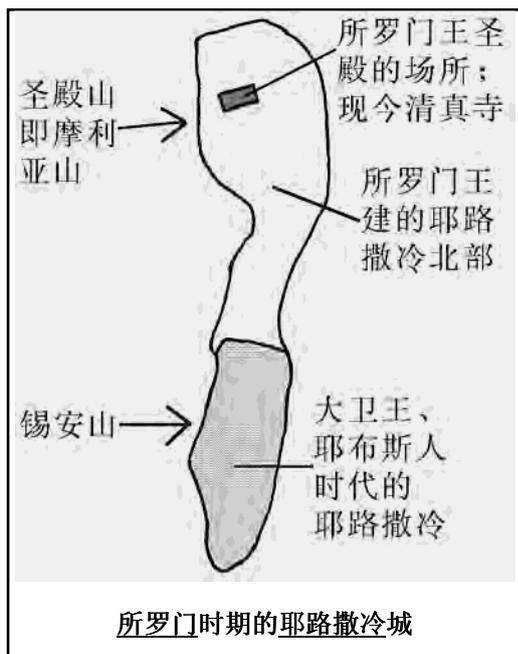
到了所罗门王的时代，以色列的联合王国所统治的境界沿着幼发拉底河（又称伯拉大河）一直延伸到西奈半岛的边境。这地区包括不少承认所罗门的霸权的小王国。那么小的以色列民族怎么能建立那么强大的王国呢？圣经以外的历史学帮我们了解这个现象。按照上帝的安排，周围的三个大帝国，即埃及，米所波大米（又成两河流域）地区的亚述，和土耳其的赫梯人，那时期都很衰弱，以至埃及第21个王朝的法老想和所罗门王订立同盟条约。

可惜，所罗门王和他的儿子罗波安王没有感恩的心，背弃了真神耶和华，增加了一些拜偶像的宗教，而且很多以色列人也是这样。结果，上帝惩罚他们，让以色列被内战分裂为两个国家，而且埃及恢复强大，就压迫他们。

后来以色列分为所谓“犹太”的南方王国和所谓“以色列”的北方王国。

以色列分裂之后，不但埃及恢复强大了，而且亚述也再次开始帝国扩张。亚述民族的中心地区在米所波大米（又称两河流域）地区的北部，属于现代伊拉克的中部。自从公元前约883年起，他们不断地扩大所统治的地区，建立新亚述帝国。亚述帝国时期（公元前883-612年），圣经一共记载了犹太、以色列两个王国28个王的名字。这28个国王之中，考古学家已经发现了9个王在当代的亚述帝国的记载中被提到（*参考*）。这就成为圣经历史不可质疑的确认。圣经记载，到了公元前721年，亚述军队征服以色列北方王国，毁灭首都撒玛利亚、掳去几万人。以色列北方王国就成了殖民地。这几件事情在圣经之外的亚述帝国的公务记录中有很丰富的确认材料，感兴趣的读者请参看《考古学与圣经历史》169-171页。

耶路撒冷城



耶路撒冷城可能算是全世界最敏感的地区。犹太人和巴勒斯坦人之间的矛盾似乎无法解决，并且这个小小的地区的问题牵连到周围所有的阿拉伯国家和遥远的世界大国，包括美国、俄罗斯、欧盟以及联合国。举个例子，在美国发生的“9·11”恐怖分子袭击事件，是因为那些阿拉伯人认为美国偏袒、支持以色列，反对巴勒斯坦人。虽然我们现在能够找到一些这些情况的所谓的‘历史原因’，可是圣经早已预言了。关于接近‘末日’时期，圣经说分散到全球的犹太人要回归以色列（看第4、11、16课），并且当时：

我[耶和华上帝]必使耶路撒冷被围困的时候，向四围列国的民成为令人昏醉的杯；这默示也论到犹太（或译：犹太也是如此）。那日，我必使耶路撒冷向聚集攻击他的万民当作一块重石头；凡举起的必受重伤。（撒迦利亚书 12:2-3）

这句预言，目前只有部分被应验，可是现代的国际关系情况让我们很容易明白，它将如何完全地应验。中东问题中，主要的问题不是建立独立的巴勒斯坦人国家，也不是那些‘约旦河西岸’、‘加沙地带’的问题。这些问题，犹太人和巴勒斯坦人大概能够找到互相妥协的办法。主要的问题是耶路撒冷城。为什么是这样？我们复习她的历史。

耶路撒冷是一个非常古老的城市，有超过四千年的历史。她最早建立的部分是在锡安山上。这地区好像在亚伯拉罕时（约公元前2000年）之前已经有人居住。到了约书亚时，约公元前1400年之后不久，以色列人在城外的战场上战胜了当时耶路撒冷城的王，可是不能征服本城市（看约书亚记 10章）。耶路撒冷的居民，名称耶布斯人，继续住在那儿，在犹太人当中，直到大卫王的时代。耶布斯人时期的古代城市，部分已经出土了，包括一些城墙、防御工事和城门（《新 Unger's 圣经百科全书》655页）。

About 1000 BC, David conquered the city of Jerusalem, making it his royal capital. David and Solomon continued to build Jerusalem, enclosing the northern hill, called the Temple Mount or Mount Moriah. Archaeologists have already found the city wall of this city, and have excavated a supporting rampart (The New Unger's Bible Dictionary, p. 679)

David brought the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh to Jerusalem. Thus Jerusalem, in addition to being a political capital, also became the center of worship for the Jews. Later, Solomon built the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem, completing it in c. 960 BC. The temple was constructed on the so-called Temple Mount, also known as Mount Moriah (2 Chronicles 3:1).

The name Moriah is the same word as the place where Yahweh told Abraham to sacrifice, "*Mount Moriah*" (compare Genesis chapter 22). Possibly it is the same place, but the Bible never directly states this. Many different places in Canaan have the same names. Muslims and Jews alike firmly believe that it is the same place, but we do not have confirmation of this from the Bible or other sources.

The temple erected by Solomon existed for nearly 400 years, finally being destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC. Seventy years later, in 516 BC, the Jews rebuilt the so-called 'Second Temple,' which was the one in existence in the time of Jesus Christ. In 70 AD, the Romans destroyed this 'Second Temple,' and it has never been rebuilt to this day. Relatively conservative believers in Judaism long to rebuild it.

The reason the Jews have not yet rebuilt the temple is because there are two Islamic mosques on the site where the temple formerly was. This is the especially sharp point of contradiction between the Jews and Palestinians today. In fact, Islam's Koran never once mentions Jerusalem. But an Islamic tradition added by others later says that one night the founder of the religion, the prophet Mohammed, went to Jerusalem and ascended to heaven from the Temple Mount (Mount Moriah). Because of this, Jerusalem is regarded as the third most important, most 'holy' place by Muslims, after Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia.

The true God Yahweh promised the Jews that Jerusalem would forever be the place which He would remember and where He would receive the Jews' worship:

...in the house of Yahweh of which Yahweh had said, "My name shall be in Jerusalem forever.".... God had said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; and I will not again remove the foot of Israel from the land which I have appointed for your fathers, if only they will observe to do all that I have commanded them according to all the law, the statutes, and the ordinances given through Moses. " (2 Chronicles 33:4, 7-8)

Because the Jews sinned, God twice punished them, driving them out and exiling them to foreign countries. Moreover He allowed 'Gentiles' (non-Jews) to destroy the temple. The first time, 586 BC, their sin was worshipping false gods and idols. The second time, 70 AD, their main sin was rejecting the king God had sent to them, the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Finally, after World War II, God allowed the Jews to return to their home and the nation of Israel was reestablished. But God has not yet let them rebuild their temple.

Besides this, we need to understand that the origin of the Middle Eastern conflict is the mutual hatred between two peoples who do not know the true God – the Jews and the Palestinians. They regard an arid block of rock as more important than human lives. Christians certainly should not favor either side in this conflict. Unless they repent and believe in Jesus, every person on both sides will face God's judgment and go to hell.

Now we can see a partial fulfillment of the prophecy proclaimed by Zechariah 2,500 years ago. Jerusalem has already begun to be a "*heavy stone*," and every nation which is entangled with it "*will be severely injured*" (see Zechariah 12:3). In 1948-49, 1956, 1967, and 1973, the Arab nations which attacked Israel were severely injured. More recently, even the powerful nation of America was also injured because of her. Of course, these events certainly do not constitute complete fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy, but they enable us to see how this prophecy could be completely fulfilled in our own time. An event like Jerusalem becoming an insoluble problem for the entire world is entirely beyond the ability of humans to foresee, but 2,500 years ago it was already written in the book of Zechariah. Thus the international relations of today show that the Bible is true, is a revelation from God, and that all of the prophecies of the Bible will be fulfilled sooner or later.

约公元前 1000 年，大卫王征服了耶路撒冷城，把它当作他的王室首都。大卫和所罗门继续建设耶路撒冷，包围了北边的小山，名叫圣殿山，又称摩利亚山。考古学家已经找到了这座城的城墙，并且挖掘了城墙的一座支柱堡垒（《新 Unger's 圣经百科全书》679 页）。

大卫把耶和华的约柜带到耶路撒冷去。这样，耶路撒冷除了作为政治的首都以外，也成为犹太人礼拜的中心。后来，所罗门在耶路撒冷建立了耶和华的圣殿，约公元前 960 年完工。圣殿建在所谓的圣殿山上，又称摩利亚山（历代志下 3:1）。

摩利亚这个名字，与上帝命令亚伯拉罕献祭的地方“摩利亚地”一样（对比创世记 22 章）。也许是同一个地方，可是圣经没有直接地这样说。不少迦南的地方是同名的。伊斯兰教徒（即回教徒）和犹太人同样确信地认为是同一个地方，可是我们没有圣经或其它历史的确认。

所罗门所建立的圣殿存在了将近四百年之久，终于在公元前 586 年被巴比伦人毁灭了。过了七十年之后，公元前 516 年犹太人重建了所谓‘第二圣殿’，就是耶稣基督时代所存在的圣殿。公元 70 年罗马人毁灭这座‘第二圣殿’，至今还没重建。比较保守的犹太教徒很渴望重建它。

犹太人至今还没重建圣殿的原因，是因为现在有两座伊斯兰教的清真寺建在圣殿原来的位置上。现代犹太人和巴勒斯坦人特别尖锐的矛盾和斗争之处就在此。其实伊斯兰教的可兰经一次也没有提到耶路撒冷。可是后来的人所增加的伊斯兰教的传统说，有一天晚上他们的教主先知穆罕默德到耶路撒冷去，并且在圣殿山（即摩利亚山）上升上天堂去了。因此，在伊斯兰教徒的认为，耶路撒冷城是全球第三个最重要、最‘神圣’的地方，列于沙特阿拉伯的麦加城和麦地那城之后。

真神耶和華上帝向犹太人许诺他会把耶路撒冷当作他永远被纪念、受犹太人的崇拜的地方：

。。。耶和華曾指著这殿说：“我的名必永远在耶路撒冷。”。。。上帝曾对大卫和他儿子所罗门说：“我在以色列各支派中所选择的耶路撒冷和这殿，必立我的名直到永远。以色列人若谨守遵行我藉摩西所吩咐他们的一切法度、律例、典章，我就不再使他们挪移，离开我所赐给他们列祖之地。”（历代志下 33:4, 7-8）

因为犹太人犯了罪，上帝两次惩罚他们，把他们从以色列赶出去、流放到外国，并且让‘外邦人’（即非犹太人）毁灭了圣殿。第一次，即公元前 586 年，他们所犯的罪是崇拜假神、偶像。第二次，即公元 70 年，他们主要的罪是拒绝上帝差遣给他们的君王，那位弥赛亚，耶稣基督。终于在第二次世界大战之后，上帝让犹太人回到家乡去，以色列就复国了。可是上帝还没让他们重建他们的圣殿。

其次，我们要明白中东斗争基本上的根源是因为两批不认识真神上帝的民族——犹太人和巴勒斯坦人——就彼此仇恨，把一块干燥的石头看得比人的生命还重要。基督徒肯定不要在这场斗争中偏袒任何一方。如果他们不悔改、信耶稣，两方的每一个人最后都要面对上帝的审判、下地狱。

现在我们已经能看到两千五百年前撒迦利亚所发表的预言部分得到了应验。耶路撒冷已经开始成为“一块重石头”，每一个被卷入的国家都“必受重伤”（看撒迦利亚书 12:3）。在 1948-49 年、1956 年、1967 年、1973 年，攻击以色列的阿拉伯人国家都受到重伤；最近，连大国美国也因为受了她受了伤。理所当然，这些事件肯定不算完全应验了撒迦利亚的预言，可是它们使我们可以看到，这预言将如何在我们的时代得到完全的应验。这样的一件事情：耶路撒冷城变成全世界无法解决的问题，本来是完全在人的预料之外，可是早在两千五百年前已经写在撒迦利亚书中。所以今天的国际关系证明了圣经是真实的、是上帝启示的，圣经中一切所有的预言早晚要应验。

Lesson 9: The Prophet Isaiah

Before discussing this lesson, please read: Bible: Isaiah chapters 36-39.

We have said that the following three step proof demonstrates the truth of Christianity:

1. Nature demonstrates the existence, power, and supernatural Nature of God.
2. History and archeology demonstrate that the Bible records are historically accurate.
3. Fulfilled biblical prophecies demonstrate that the Bible is a revelation from God.

Through this three step proof, we can reach a logical conclusion: Christianity is true.

Concerning the evidence from Nature, we have seen that life cannot have arisen by chance. It must have been created by a supernatural God with unlimited intelligence and power. The theory of evolution is a baseless, unscientific myth, a myth fabricated to support atheism. If we strictly apply logical analysis, we will come to this conclusion: a supernatural Creator exists.

Concerning the historical veracity of the Bible, in Lessons 4 to 6 and Lesson 8 we have seen some examples from archaeology and historical research which show that the Biblical records are very accurate, including Abraham's original home Ur, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the interlinked sequence of the ten plagues in Egypt, the miracle of the crossing of the Red Sea, the destruction of Jericho, and the dynasty of Israelite kings. These are merely a representative selection of a small part of the evidences.

Concerning fulfilled prophecy, we have already seen God's promise to bless Abraham, and to bless all the peoples of the world through his descendants. Now we will again study some fulfilled prophecies, coming from the Bible's 'period of the great writing prophets,' 750-500 BC. In order to understand the prophets' meaning and confirm that their prophecies were written before the events occurred, we will also study some of the contemporary history of Israel and other Middle Eastern nations.

History and Prophecy

Who controls history? Modern people frequently boast, "humans control history!" Can it be that humanity really does decide what will happen in the future? Humans cannot even guarantee their own lives, the drawing of their next breath! Many things which people have hoped for and energetically sought after have not, in the end, been realized. Because our strength is so limited, not only are future events not controlled by humanity, they are also basically outside our ability to know. Many or most predictions made by humans come to nothing.

Through the ten plagues, God taught the Egyptians and the Israelites that Nature was created and controlled by Him. Similarly, through prophecy God is teaching us that human history is controlled by Him. Because God, by making use of the free choices of human beings, controls the developments of history, He therefore is able to know future events. He has revealed some of these events to prophets.

Only a small portion of the prophecies listed below could have been guessed by humans (such as the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel). Most could not have been guessed by human beings. In some cases, at the time of the announcement of the prophecy, it even seemed that the events predicted could not possibly occur.

Biblical Passage	Prophecy	Date of Prophecy (Appx.)	Date of Fulfillment	Time between Prophecy and Fulfillment
Genesis 12, 22, 26	All the people of the world will be blessed through Abraham's offspring	2000 BC	begins 30 AD	2,000 years until begins.
Genesis 12, 13, 15, 17	The land of Canaan (Palestine) will belong to Abraham's descendants (Jews) forever.	2000 BC	c. 1400 BC to now	600 years until begins; 4,000 years (from prophecy to now)
Deuteronomy 28	Worldwide scattering of the Jews	1400 BC	70-135 AD	More than 1,400 years
Deuteronomy 30	Scattered Jews will recover an independent nation	1400 BC	1948 AD	More than 3,300 years
Isaiah 7	Northern kingdom of Israel destroyed, the people lose national identity	732 BC	721-670 BC	c. 60 years
Isaiah 39	People of southern kingdom of Judah taken captive to Babylon	700 BC	597-586 BC	More than 100 years
Isaiah 46, 49, 52	Worldwide there will be people worshiping the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ	700 BC	Begins c. 1800AD (some outstanding)	2,500 years until begins

Prophecies discussed in this Lesson:

9 课：先知以赛亚

讨论此课之前请阅读：以赛亚书 36 至 39 章。

我们曾经说过，验证基督教的真理有以下的三步证明：

1. 大自然证明上帝的存在、大能、超自然性
2. 历史学和考古学证明圣经记载有历史真实性
3. 圣经里已经应验了的预言证明圣经是被上帝启示的

按照这三步证明，就可以确认一个逻辑的结论，就是基督教是真理。

关于大自然的证明，我们已经看过生物不可能偶然产生，必然有一位有无限的智慧和能力、超自然的上帝创造了它们。进化论是没有根据、不合科学的神话，是为了支持无神论而编造的神话。如果严格地使用逻辑的分析，我们就会得出结论：有个超自然的创造者存在。

关于圣经的历史真实性，我们在第 4 到第 6 和第 8 课看了一些考古学和历史学研究的例子，它们表明圣经的记载很精确，包括亚伯拉罕的老家吾珥城，所多玛和蛾摩拉的毁灭，埃及的一连串顺序的十个灾难，过红海的神迹，耶利哥城的毁灭，以及以色列民的王朝。这些只不过是选择了一小部分的根据作为代表。

关于被应验的预言，我们已经看到上帝许诺要祝福亚伯拉罕，并通过他的后代祝福全世界的民族。现在我们要再研究一下被应验的预言，是来自圣经‘伟大的写书先知时代’，约公元前 750-500 年。为了明白先知的意思而确认他们的预言是在事件发生之前写的，我们也要研究一些同时代以色列和其它中东国家的历史。

历史与预言

是谁在控制历史？现代人通常自夸“人类控制着历史！”难道人类真的能决定将来要发生的事情吗？人类连自己的生存、自己的下一次呼吸都不能保证！很多人所盼望、努力追求的事，终于实现不了。因为我们的力量是多么有限，将来要发生的事情不但是人类无法控制的，而且基本上是在我们的意料之外。很多或大部分人所作出的预报落空了。通过那十个灾难，上帝曾经教训了埃及人和以色列人。大自然是他所创造的、所控制的。通过预言，上帝同样地在教训我们，人类的历史是他所控制的。因为上帝通过利用人的自由选择，控制着历史的发展，所以他知道未来的事情。而且他把部分的这些事启示给先知们知道。

以下所列举的预言，只有一小部分可能是人能猜出来的(例如以色列北方王国的毁灭)。大部分是没有人能够猜测，甚至在发表预言的时候，所预言的事情好像是不可能发生的。

圣经段落	预言	发表预言年份 (大约)	应验时间	预言和应验之间的 时间
创 12, 22, 26	<u>亚伯拉罕</u> 的后代(指 <u>耶稣</u>)将使全球的人得到祝福	公元前 2000 年	公元 30 年起	两千年才开始
创世记 12, 13, 15, 17	<u>迦南地</u> (指 <u>以色列</u>)会永远属于 <u>亚伯拉罕</u> 的后代(指 <u>犹太人</u>)	公元前 2000 年	公元前约 1400 年起，一直至今	六百年才开始：四千年(从发表预言直到现)
申命记 28	<u>犹太人</u> 分散在世界各地	公元前 1400	公元 70-135	一千四百多年
申命记 30	全球分散的 <u>犹太人</u> 恢复他们独立的国家	公元前 1400	公元 1948	三千三百多年
以赛亚 7	<u>以色列</u> 北方王国毁灭、人民失去国籍身份	公元前 732	公元前 721-670	约 六十年
以赛亚 39	<u>犹太</u> 南方王国的人民被俘虏到 <u>巴比伦</u>	公元前 700	公元前 597-586	一百多年
以赛亚 46, 49, 52	全世界有人崇拜 <u>犹太</u> 人的 <u>弥赛亚</u> ，即 <u>耶稣基督</u>	公元前 700	约公元 1800 起(小部分未实现)	两千五百年才开始

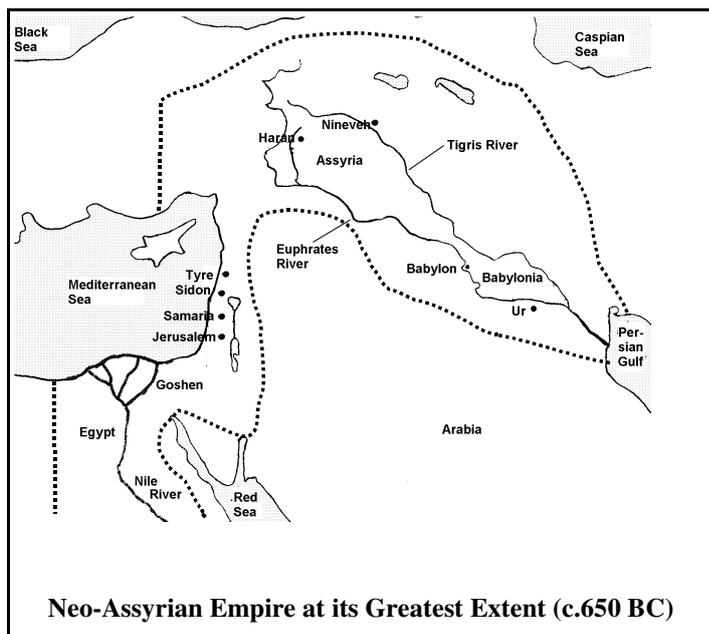
此课所讨论的预言为：

The Prophet Isaiah

c.2000	Abraham
c.1440	Ten plagues, Moses leads Israelites out of Egypt
c.1400	Israelites cross the Jordan, enter Canaan, conquer Jericho
1375-1050	'Judges' lead the Israelites
1050-931	Saul, David and Solomon are first three kings of Israel, ruling the united kingdom
931	Israel divided in two parts: southern kingdom of Judah, northern kingdom of Israel
883-612	Neo-Assyrian empire period
740-680	The prophet Isaiah active
721	Assyrians destroy northern kingdom of Israel and its capital Samaria
715-686	Hezekiah is king of southern kingdom of Judah (or 728-697)
703	Hezekiah recovers from illness, receives embassy from Babylon (or 712): Is. 38-39
701	Sennacherib of Assyria attacks Jerusalem; because his army dies, he retreats to Nineveh; Isaiah chapters 36-37
686-642	Manasseh king S. kingdom of Judah worships idols, forsakes Yahweh (or 697-642)
612	Babylon and its allies attack Nineveh, destroy Assyrian empire

The army of the Assyrian empire invaded Palestine several times, defeating the Jews and other peoples of the region. This is the background for the life of the prophet Isaiah (740-680 BC). Some of the prophecies announced by Isaiah were fulfilled in his own lifetime, but the majority were not fulfilled until a long time after his death. First we will look at some prophecies fulfilled in Isaiah's lifetime.

The Destruction of the Northern Kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians



From the founding of the northern kingdom of Israel, they constantly worshipped idols, forsaking the true God Yahweh. For several hundred years, Yahweh sent prophets to warn them and exhort them to repent, but they paid no attention. Because they were “the chosen people of Yahweh” and bore His name, finally God had to punish them. Around 732 BC, Isaiah received a revelation from God and prophesied the complete destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel:

...within another 65 years Ephraim [northern kingdom of Israel] will be shattered, so that it is no longer a people (Isaiah 7:8)

In 724-721 BC, the Assyrian army invaded, conquered, destroyed the capital Samaria, and carried off tens of thousands

of people. The northern kingdom of Israel became a colony. The policy of the Assyrian empire toward colonies included importing peoples from other areas in order to destroy the national identity of the local inhabitants. They did this to the northern kingdom of Israel, with the result that several decades later (c. 670), the mixed inhabitants of the area no longer regarded themselves as Israelites. This fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 7:8 noted above.

The Assyrian Army would not Succeed in Their Attack against Jerusalem

In great contrast to the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel, Isaiah prophesied that the southern kingdom of Judah would also be invaded by the Assyrians, but would continue to exist:

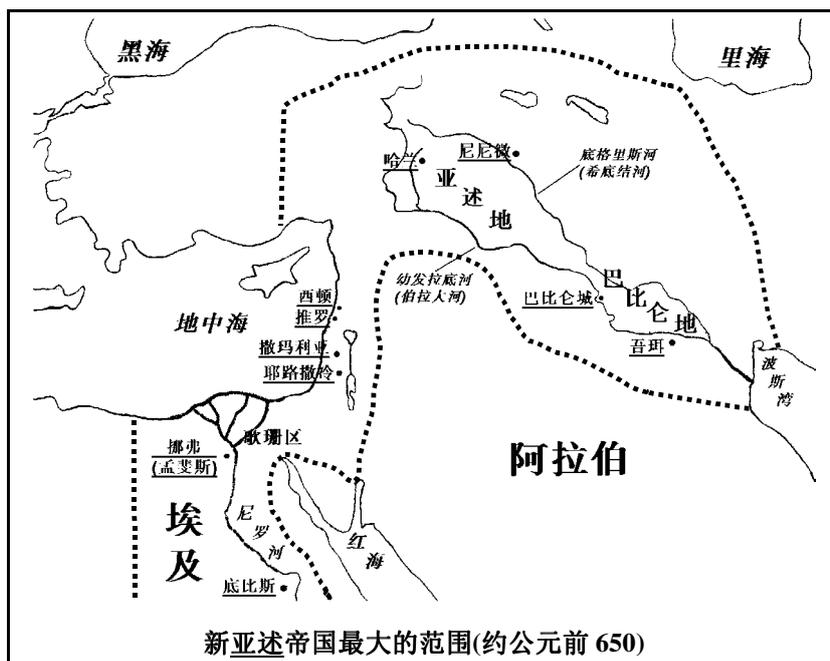
Yahweh will bring on you, on your people, and on your father's house [the southern kingdom of Judah]...the king of Assyria....

以赛亚先知

公元前	事件
约 2000	<u>亚伯拉罕</u>
约 1440	十个灾难、 <u>摩西</u> 带领以色列人出埃及
约 1400	以色列人过 <u>约旦河</u> 、进入 <u>迦南地</u> 、征服 <u>耶利哥城</u>
1375-1050	‘士师’领导以色列人
1050-931	<u>扫罗</u> 、 <u>大卫</u> 、 <u>所罗门</u> 作为以色列最早的三个王，统治联合王国
931	以色列国分裂为两部分， <u>犹大南方王国</u> 、 <u>以色列北方王国</u>
883-612	新亚述帝国时代
740-680	<u>以赛亚</u> 先知的活动
721	<u>亚述人</u> 毁灭以色列的北方王国以及它的首都 <u>撒玛利亚</u>
715-686	<u>希西家</u> 作 <u>犹大南方王国</u> 的国王(或 728-697 年)
703	<u>希西家王</u> 疾病康复、接待 <u>巴比伦</u> 的探访者 (或 712 年)； <u>以赛亚书</u> 38 至 39 章
701	<u>亚述</u> 的 <u>西拿基立王</u> 围攻 <u>耶路撒冷</u> ；因为他军队的死亡，撤退回 <u>尼尼微城</u> 去； <u>以赛亚书</u> 36 至 37 章
686-642	<u>玛拿西</u> 作 <u>犹大南方王国</u> 的国王，拜偶像、背叛 <u>耶和华</u> (或 697-642 年)

亚述帝国军队几次侵略巴勒斯坦，打败犹太人以及其他当地民族，就是以赛亚先知生命的背景(约公元前 740-680)。以赛亚所发表的预言，部分是他自己还活着的时候就应验了，还有一大部分是在他去世很长时间以后才应验的。我们先看一些以赛亚还活着的时候被应验的预言。

关于以色列北方王国被亚述人毁灭



从以色列北方王国建立开始，他们经常拜偶像、弃绝真神耶和华。在几百年间耶和华曾派遣先知警告他们、劝他们悔改，可是他们一直都不理。因他们是“耶和华的选民”、有带着耶和华名字的称号，终于上帝不得不惩罚他们。约公元前 732 年，以赛亚受到上帝的启示，预言了以色列北方王国的完全毁灭：

…六十五年之内，以法莲 [指以色列北方王国] 必然破坏，不再成为国民。(以赛亚 7:8)

公元前 724-721 年，亚述军队侵略、征服、毁灭首都撒玛利亚、掳去几万人。以色列北方王

国就成了殖民地。亚述帝国控制殖民地的政策包括迁入其他地方的国民，想以此破坏当地居民的国籍身份。他们也如此对待以色列北方王国，结果，过了几十年(约 670 年)，当地的混杂居民已经不认为自己属于以色列国民。这就应验了以上以赛亚书 7:8 的预言。

关于亚述军队没有成功地攻占犹大南方王国

与以色列北方王国的灭亡形成很大的对比，以赛亚预言犹大南方王国虽然也要受到亚述军队的侵略，但将仍然存在：

耶和华必使亚述王攻击你的日子临到你和你的百姓并你的父家 [指犹大南方王国] 。……

...the Lord is about to bring on them the strong and abundant waters of the Euphrates, Even the king of Assyria and all his glory...it will sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and pass through, it will reach even to the neck....

Therefore thus says the Lord Yahweh of hosts, "O My people who dwell in Zion [Jerusalem and the southern kingdom of Judah], do not fear the Assyrian who strikes you with the rod and lifts up his staff against you, the way Egypt did. For in a very little while My indignation against you will be spent, and My anger will be directed to their destruction." (Isaiah 7:17; 8:7-8; 10:24-25)

These prophecies about the southern kingdom of Judah were fulfilled in 703-701 BC when the Assyrian empire invaded the southern kingdom of Judah. By 701, the Assyrian army had already conquered most of the cities of the kingdom of Judah and was besieging Jerusalem.

Please review Isaiah chapters 36-37.

Many of the details in these two chapters are evidenced by extra-biblical materials. Interested readers may consult the appendix to this lesson. Here we will only look at one example. Like most ancient peoples, the Assyrians were never willing to admit their defeats in the history they wrote. However, at Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire, a memorial tablet was discovered on which the Assyrian king Sennacherib indirectly admits that he did not conquer Jerusalem and finally had to withdraw:

As for Hezekiah, the Jew who did not submit to my yoke, forty-six of his strong walled cities, as well as the small cities in their neighborhood, which were without number – by constructing rampart out of trampled earth and by bringing up battering rams, by the attack of infantry, by tunnels, breaches {and the use of axes}, I besieged and took. Two hundred thousand one hundred and fifty men, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen and sheep without number I brought out from them, I counted as spoil. {Hezekiah} himself I shut up like a caged bird in Jerusalem, his royal city; the walls I fortified against him, and whosoever came out of the gates of the city, I turned back. (English translation from The New Unger's Bible Dictionary pp.1157-58)

Sennacherib, king of the Assyrian empire did not mention that God killed his army, forcing him to return to his country. It seems that God used a rapid pestilence, probably rodent borne bubonic plague. This is also in keeping with the explanation of the Greek historian Herodotus (484-425 BC). His history also records the withdrawal of the Assyrians from Palestine, which he felt was related to a huge group of mice entering the camp of the Assyrians (see Herodotus's History, Book 2).

The Jews are Exiled to Babylon

Please review Isaiah chapters 38-39.

The events of Isaiah chapters 38-39 occurred before those of chapter 37, in c. 703 BC. This reversed order is because many of the prophecies of chapters 40-66 have to do with the Babylonian captivity.

At the time of chapter 38 (703 BC), Hezekiah had been ill and then recovered. At that time, the Babylonians were rebelling against control by the Assyrian empire. In order to establish relations and unite in opposing Assyria, the Babylonian king Merodach-baladan sent presents to Hezekiah, congratulating him on his recovery. The Babylonian rebellion raised the wrath of the Assyrians. Subsequently, the Assyrian army defeated the Babylonians. The places, personal names, timeframe, and details of international relations recorded by Isaiah are all completely accurate (please refer to Archaeology and Bible History, Evidence that Demands a Verdict, The New Unger's Bible Dictionary, etc.). Against this historical background, the prophet Isaiah prophesied that the Jews would be exiled to Babylon in the future. At that time, considering how strong Assyria was and how weak Babylon was, his ability to prophesy this event was completely beyond the realm of human knowledge.

The Worldwide Worship of the Jews' Messiah, Jesus Christ

Based on all the precise historical material, we can conclude that the history recorded in the book of Isaiah was written in the Neo-Assyrian empire period, that is 740-680 BC (readers interested in understanding the details please see the appendix of this lesson). The prophecies we have just considered, such as the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel and the failure of the Assyrian army's siege of Jerusalem, were fulfilled in the same period in which the prophecies were made. Perhaps we might wonder whether they are not merely history rather than prophecy. Isaiah's prophecy concerning the Babylonian occupation did not occur until a hundred years after his death (beginning in 597 BC). If the reader feels this still is not clear enough and wants to be absolutely certain as to whether or not the prophecies in recorded in the book of Isaiah were written before the events occurred, we must ask two questions:

1. What is the absolutely latest date that the Biblical book of Isaiah could have been edited?
2. Were there any prophecies fulfilled after that time?

…主必使大河翻腾的水猛然冲来，就是亚述王和他所有的威势……必冲入犹大，涨溢泛滥，直到颈项。……所以，主万军之耶和華如此说：“住锡安 [指耶路撒冷以及犹大南方王国] 我的百姓啊，亚述王虽然用棍击打你，又照埃及的样子举杖攻击你，你却不要怕他；因为还有一点时候，向你们发的愤恨就要完毕，我的怒气要向他发作，使他灭亡。（以赛亚 7:17;8:7-8;10:24-25）

这些关于犹大南方王国的预言在公元前 703-701 年应验了，就是亚述帝国侵略犹大南方王国的时候。到了 701 年，亚述军队已经征服了犹大王国大部分的城市，正在围攻还没投降的耶路撒冷城。

请复习以赛亚书 36 到 37 章。

这两章的好多细节都有圣经以外的资料证明。感兴趣的读者请参看此课的附录。在这里我们只看一个例子。象大多数古代民族一样，亚述人不愿意在他们所写的历史中承认自己的失败，可是在亚述帝国首都尼尼微城发现的纪念碑上，亚述的西拿基立王间接地承认了他没有征服耶路撒冷、最后就撤退的历史：

至于希西家，这犹大人，他没有低头服我的轭；我踏破土城，我的步兵推出撞击器猛攻坚固城墙，我攻破缺口、掘隧道、凿壕沟，围攻而夺取他四十六个坚固城墙和附近无数的小村落。我俘获了青年的和老者，男的和女的，合共二十万一百五十人，并有数不清的马、骡、驴、骆驼，大和小的家畜，都成了我的战利品，他本人犹如笼中小鸟，被我困在他自己的王城耶路撒冷。我在城的四周设了守望哨，任何人奔出城门，都无法逃过大难。（《证主圣经手册 - 精简本（简体版）》157 页）

亚述帝国的西拿基立王没有提到上帝杀死他的军队，使他不得不回国去。上帝使用的方法好像是迅速的瘟疫，大概是鼠疫。这也符合古代希腊历史学家希罗多德（约公元前 484-425 年）的解释。他的历史书也记载亚述人退出巴勒斯坦的事件，他也认为那是与一大群老鼠进入亚述人的军营有关（参考希罗多德写的《历史》，第 2 卷）。

关于犹太人被俘虏到巴比伦

请复习以赛亚书 38 到 39 章。

以赛亚书 38 和 39 章所记的事情发生的时间是在 37 章之前，约公元前 703 年。这样颠倒的顺序是因为以下的 40 至 66 章的很多预言是与巴比伦俘虏时期有关。

38 章时（公元前 703 年），希西家王生了疾病，后来康复。同时，巴比伦人也反抗亚述帝国的霸权。为了建立关系、联合反抗亚述，巴比伦王米罗达巴拉但送给希西家一些礼物，恭喜他痊愈了。巴比伦的反抗激起了亚述的愤怒。后来，亚述军队打败巴比伦人。以赛亚书所记载的地点、人名、时间、国际关系的细节是完全精确的（请参看《考古学与圣经历史》，《铁证待判》，《新 Unger's 圣经百科全书》等）。在这个历史背景下，以赛亚先知预言了犹大将来要被掳到巴比伦。那时，看亚述那么强大、巴比伦很衰弱，他却能预言这件事，这完全在人的意料之外。

关于全世界有人崇拜犹太人的弥赛亚，即耶稣基督

我们可以根据所有确切的历史资料来判断，以赛亚书中记载的历史是写于新亚述帝国的时期，即公元前 740-680 年（想了解细节的读者请参考此课的附录）。我们刚看过的那些预言，例如以色列北方王国的毁灭和亚述军队围攻耶路撒冷时的破坏，它们的应验都是发生在同一个时期。我们或者会怀疑那些只是历史而不是预言，但以赛亚关于巴比伦沦陷的预言却在他死后的一百年才实现（开始于公元前 597 年）。如果读者还觉得不够清楚，想完全地确认以赛亚书里面所记载的预言是否是在事情发生之前发表的，我们要看两个问题：

1. 圣经里的以赛亚书最后的编写的准确日期是什么？
2. 在那个时期以后有没有预言应验？

At present, the oldest copy of the book of Isaiah which we possess was found in a cave on the shore of the Dead Sea in Israel in 1948. Expert analysis concludes it comes from 150-100 BC. But that is a copy; even the most extreme doubters cannot deny that the original had to have been written by 200 BC. Actually, a date so late is completely unreasonable; the original was certainly written before 650 BC. But if it actually had not been written until 200 BC, well, let us have a look if there are any prophecies in Isaiah which were fulfilled after that time. The answer is, there are.

In Lesson 4 we saw that Genesis records God's promise to Abraham and his son Isaac:

...in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed....And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed....and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed (Genesis 12:3; 22:18; 26:4)

In the book of Isaiah we find a more specific promise. Isaiah said that in the future there would be non-Jews from every nation and every ethnicity who would believe in Yahweh, the God of the Jews, and believe in the "Messiah" whom God would send, that is, Jesus Christ:

I am Yahweh...I will appoint you [the Messiah] as a covenant to the people, As a light to the nations....I [Yahweh] will also make You [the Messiah] a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth. ...Kings shall see and arise, Princes shall also bow down....Thus He [the Messiah] will sprinkle many nations, Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand. (Isaiah 42:6; 49:6-7; 52:15)

Who could imagine that all over the world there would be people willing to worship the God of the tiny, weak nation of Israel and the Jews' "Messiah," Jesus Christ? In Isaiah's time, the northern kingdom of Israel had already been destroyed and the southern kingdom of Judah had received a crippling blow from the Assyrian invasion. Even worse, in Isaiah's latter years, the southern kingdom of Judah's evil king Manasseh forsook Yahweh and led the entire nation into idol worship. At that time, it seemed that the religion of Yahweh would soon face extinction. Who at that time could have foreseen that it would spread from that tiny nation to every place in the world? This process did not begin until 30 AD, and moreover Christianity did not substantively begin to become a global religion until the missionary movement began around 1800. This was long after the proclamation of the prophecy.

Even if we illogically say that the book of Isaiah was not completed until 200 BC, this prophecy was still written before its definite time of fulfillment. In 200 BC, Israel was a tiny occupied territory, fought over by two great empires, the Seleucid empire on the north and the Ptolemaic empire on the south. Furthermore, at that time the entire world was caught up in idol worship; almost nobody had heard of Yahweh. Who could have foreseen that one day, from the northern edge of Europe to the southern tip of Africa, from North America to South America, in all of Asia, and even in every province of China, there would be countless people worshipping Yahweh's "Messiah," Jesus Christ? Except through God revealing it to His prophets, no one could foresee it.

Perhaps some people will still say, "Those things happened just because people read the prophecies and believed them. They caused the prophecies to be fulfilled." That is meaningless. Things do not happen because somebody once spoke a prophecy. Hitler and the Nazis arrogantly proclaimed that the empire they established would last a thousand years, ever controlling the so-called "lower peoples." Millions of Europeans, including both Germans and people from other nations, believed in him, to the point of being willing to die for him. Regrettably, Hitler's prophesied "Thousand Year Reich" only lasted twelve and a half years! History is able to filter out false prophecies which are not realized. But the prophecies of Isaiah, except those concerning the endtime, were all gradually fulfilled. Why? Because they were all told to him by God.

Isaiah also prophesied the destruction of Babylon, part of the future of the city of Tyre, the long-term history of Egypt, the activities of the Messiah (Jesus Christ), and the return of the modern Jews to Israel. These prophecies are similarly accurate. In the next few lessons, we will study a few more prophecies from Isaiah and other prophetic books, and their fulfillments.

Lesson 9 Appendix: Confirming the Date of Composition of the Book of Isaiah

The army of the Assyrian empire invaded Palestine several times, defeating the Jews and other peoples. This is the background to the life of the prophet Isaiah. Chapters 1-39 in the book of Isaiah record not only prophecies, but also many contemporary historical events. Thus the contents which evidence that it was written in the Assyrian empire period are abundant. Here we will look at a few examples. Isaiah spoke a prophecy and indicated the date as:

In the year that the commander [literally: Tartan] came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him and he fought against Ashdod and captured it, (Isaiah 20:1). Concerning Sargon, unbelieving critics of in the first half of the 19th century went so far as to doubt his existence, because they could not find a name like that in the historical materials which they possessed at that time. Later, archaeology advanced, and in 1843 excavators found the royal palace of king Sargon. They discovered that he had been among the greatest kings of the Assyrian empire (see Archaeology and Bible History p.170; Archer's Introduction to Old Testament p. 173).

我们现今拥有最古老的以赛亚书是 1948 年在以色列的死海岸上的一个山洞里找到的。专家们分析那是来自公元前 150-100 年。但那是一本抄写版；连最过分的怀疑者也无法否认原版至少是写成于公元前 200 年。其实那么晚的时间是十分不合理的，原版一定是写于公元前 650 年之前。但假如真是公元前 200 年才写的，那么我们来看一下在此时以后，有没有以赛亚书中记载的预言被应验。答案是有。

在第 4 课，我们已经看到在创世记记载上帝对亚伯拉罕和他的儿子以撒的承诺：

…地上的万族都要因你得福。…并且地上万国都必因你的后裔得福…。…并且地上万国必因你的后裔得福。(创世记 12:3; 22:18; 26:4)

在以赛亚书我们可以找到一个更具体的承诺。以赛亚说，将来会有从各国家和各民族来的非犹太人要相信耶和華，犹太人的上帝，并相信那位由上帝派遣的“弥赛亚”，即耶稣基督：

我耶和華…必…使你[弥赛亚]作众人的中保，作外邦人的光。…我[耶和華]还要使你[弥赛亚]作外邦人的光，叫你施行我的救恩，直到地极。…君王要看见就站起，首领也要下拜…。这样他[弥赛亚]必洗净许多国民，君王要向他闭口，因所未曾传于他们的，他们必看见；未曾听见的，他们要明白。(以赛亚书 42:6; 49:6-7; 52:15)

有谁能想象全世界都有人愿意敬拜那如此弱小的以色列国的上帝与犹太人的“弥赛亚”耶稣基督?在以赛亚的时代，以色列北方王国已经被毁灭，犹太南方王国也由于亚述的侵略而大伤元气。更厉害的是，在以赛亚的晚年时期，犹太南方王国邪恶的玛拿西王还背弃耶和華，带领整个国家去拜偶像。当时，好象耶和華的宗教很快要面临消亡。在那个时期，谁又能预测它将从这一个小小的国家传到世界各地?这个过程是公元 30 年才开始，可是基督教变成全球性的实质上的实现是直到约 1800 年起的现代传教运动才开始的，这是预言发表很久之后的事了。

就算我们不合逻辑地说以赛亚书是在公元前 200 年写成的，这个预言还是写于它确切地被应验的时间之前。公元前 200 年，以色列只不过是一个被两大帝国，是北边的塞琉古帝国和南边的托勒密帝国，互相争夺的小小的统治区。而且那时拜偶像的风气风行全世界，几乎没有人听说过耶和華，有什么人能预测到有一天甚至在欧洲的最北端，非洲的最南端，从北美到南美，整个亚洲，甚至在中国的每个省都有成千上万的人敬拜耶和華的“弥赛亚”，耶稣基督。除了上帝通过启示让先知们知道以外，没有人能预测得到。

或许会有人硬要说，“那些事之所以会发生是因为人们相信所读过的预言，他们使预言得到应验”。这句话是没有意义的。事情不会由于某人曾经编造一句预言而发生。希特勒和纳粹分子也曾狂妄地宣称他建立的帝国会长达一千年，一直统治那所谓的“低等民族”。千千万万的欧洲人，包括德国和其它国家的人都相信了他，甚至为他舍身。可惜希特勒所预言的“千年帝国”只维持了十二年半！历史是会把没有实现的假预言都过滤出来。然而，以赛亚的所有预言，除了那些有关于末世的以外，都逐一得以应验。为什么呢？因为都是上帝告诉他的。

以赛亚还预告巴比伦城的毁灭，推罗城的部分将来，埃及的悠长历史，弥赛亚(耶稣基督)的行动和现代犹太人的回归以色列，它们都是同样地准确。在几课我们会多学习一点以赛亚书和其他先知书的预言和应验。

9 课附录：确认以赛亚书写作的时期

亚述帝国军队几次侵略巴勒斯坦地，打败犹太人以及其他当地民族就是以赛亚先知生命的背景。以赛亚书 1 到 39 章不仅有预言，也有很多当代的历史事件的记载。因此，证明它是写于亚述帝国时期的内容很丰富。在这里我们看一个例子。以赛亚说出一个预言并注明日期是：

亚述王撒珥根打发他珥探到亚实突的那年，他珥探就攻打亚实突，将城攻取。(以赛亚书 20:1)

关于撒珥根王，19 世纪上半的非信徒批评者甚至怀疑他的存在，因为他们那时所拥有的历史材料中找不到类似的名字。后来，考古学进一步发展，在 1843 年挖掘发现撒珥根王的王宫，发现他原来算是亚述帝国最伟大的王之一（参考《考古学与圣经历史》170 页；Archer 写的《旧约圣经概论》173 页）。虽然古代希腊、罗马等民族的历史学家没有记载他，圣经可靠的历史却记载了他的名字并指出他的时期。

Although ancient Greek, Roman and other peoples' historians had not recorded him, the reliable history of the Bible recorded his name and indicated his time period. Furthermore, the Assyrian dynastic records also show that the term "*commander* [literally: Tartan]" (Assyrian for field marshal) is correct, and that his coming to Ashdod occurred in 712 or 711 BC, during Isaiah's lifetime (see [The New Unger's Bible Dictionary](#) pp. 1131, 1253). The historical records of the book of Isaiah are 100% accurate and clearly come from the period 740-680 BC.

Many details of the Assyrian invasion of Israel described in Isaiah chapters 36-37 have received much confirmation from history outside the Bible and from archaeology. These include:

1. The title of a high Assyrian official: "*Rabshakeh*" is an Assyrian word: "*And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah with a large army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway of the fuller's field*" (36:2).
2. The alliance between the Jews and Egypt: "*Behold, you rely on the staff of this crushed reed, even on Egypt; on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him*" (36:6; see also 30:1-14, 31:1-3).
3. The others cities in Palestine which the Assyrian army had conquered. These have been confirmed by Assyrian records: "*Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? And when have they delivered Samaria from my hand?*" (36:19).
4. The army of Cush (that is, Egypt) coming out to oppose the king of Assyria, and the name of the king of Cush: "*When he heard them say concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, 'He has come out to fight against you,' and when he heard it he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying...*" (37:9).
5. The Assyrian king Sennacherib did not conquer Jerusalem but withdrew (we have already quoted the Assyrian record above with confirms that they did not take Jerusalem): "*Then the angel of Yahweh went out, and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, all of these were dead. So Sennacherib, king of Assyria, departed and returned home, and lived at Nineveh*" (37:36-37).
6. The Assyrian king Sennacherib was later killed by his own sons; also recorded is the name of the next king of Assyria: "*And it came about as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons killed him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son became king in his place*" (37:37).

These details are all have extra-Biblical testimony. This evidence includes Assyrian memorial steles and history written by the Greeks (interested readers please refer to: [The Lion Bible Handbook](#) (concise Chinese edition); [Evidence that Demands a Verdict](#); [History of the Hebrews](#) (Chinese); [The New Unger's Bible Dictionary](#); [Archaeology and Bible History](#)).

Concerning evidence for the text, at present, the oldest copy of the book of Isaiah which we possess was found in a cave on the shore of the Dead Sea in Israel in 1948. Expert analysis concludes it comes from 150-100 BC. Prior to finding this scroll, the oldest complete Hebrew copy of the book of Isaiah known to scholars dated from 900 AD. Amazingly, although the two copies were separated by a thousand years, scholars found that out of 1,292 sentences (verses), there were less than ten places where it was necessary to use the older copy to correct the one made a thousand years later. Some were just the change of a single word, and none of the changes influenced the meaning of the book. From this we can know that the transmission of the copies was extremely careful, guaranteeing their accuracy.

而且亚述王朝记载也证明“他珥探”那个词（亚述语，指至高指挥员）是正确的，并且他来到亚实突城那件事变发生在公元前 712 或 711 年，就是属于以赛亚的时期（参考《新 Unger's 圣经百科全书》1131, 1253 页）。以赛亚书所记载的历史是百分之百正确的，而且很明显地是来自公元前 740-680 年。

以赛亚书 36 和 37 章描写亚述人侵略以色列的很多细节，从圣经之外的历史和考古学已经得到很多确认。这些包括：

1. 亚述高官的称号：“拉伯沙基”是亚述话：“亚述王从拉吉差遣拉伯沙基率领大军往耶路撒冷，到希西家王那里去，他就站在上池的水沟旁，在漂布地的大路上”（36:2）。
2. 犹太和埃及的联盟关系：看哪，你所倚靠的埃及是那压伤的苇杖，人若靠这杖，就必刺透他的手。埃及王法老向一切倚靠他的人也是这样”（36:6；另见 30:1-14, 31:1-3）。
3. 亚述军队已经征服的巴勒斯坦地区其它城市，被亚述人的记载证明了：“哈马和亚珥拔的神在哪里呢？西法瓦音的神在哪里呢？他们曾救撒玛利亚脱离我的手吗？”（36:19）。
4. 古实（指埃及）军队出来对抗亚述王，以及古实王的名字：“亚述王听见人论古实王特哈加说：“他出来要与你争战。”亚述王一听见，就打发使者去见希西家，吩咐他们说：“…”（37:9）。
5. 亚述的西拿基立王没有征服耶路撒冷就撤退了（以上已经引用了亚述人的记载，是确认他们没有攻陷耶路撒冷城）：“耶和华的使者出去，在亚述营中杀了十八万五千人，清早有人起来一看，都是死尸了。亚述王西拿基立就拔营回去，住在尼尼微”（37:36-37）。
6. 亚述的西拿基立王后来被自己的儿子们谋杀，以及下一个亚述王的名字：“一日，在他的神尼斯洛庙里叩拜，他儿子亚得米勒和沙利色用刀杀了他，就逃到亚拉腊地。他儿子撒哈顿接续他作王”（37:38）。

这些细节都有圣经以外的证据证明。这些证据包括亚述的纪念碑和希腊人写的历史书（感兴趣的读者请参看：《证主圣经手册》；《铁证待判》；《希伯来民历史》；《新 Unger's 圣经百科全书》；《考古学与圣经历史》）。

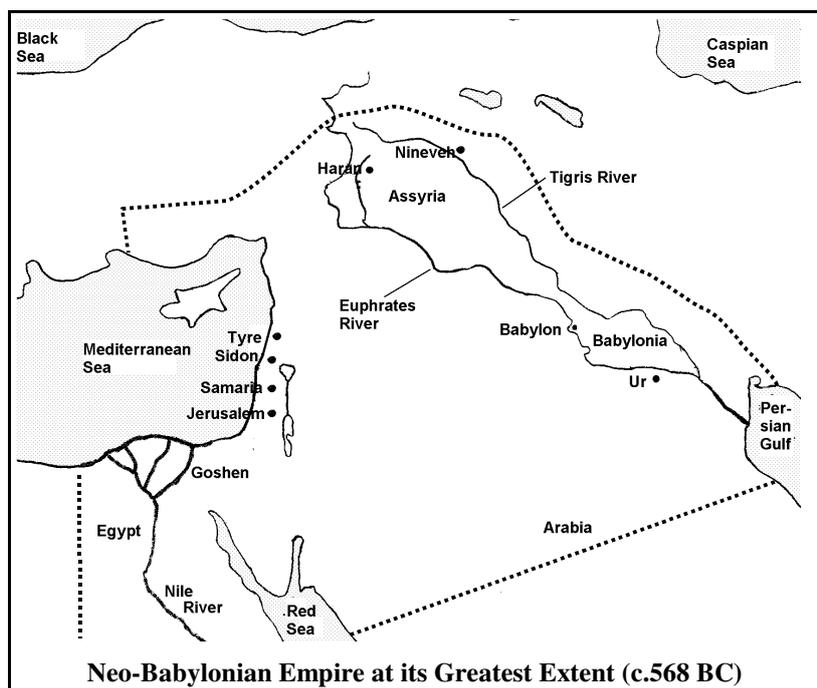
关于抄本的正确性，我们现今拥有最古老的以赛亚书是 1948 年在以色列的一个山洞里找到的。专家们分析那是来自公元前 150-100 年。找到那卷之前，学者所知道的最古老的完整的希伯来文的以赛亚书是来自公元 900 年。很奇妙，虽然这两个版本相隔一千年的时间，学者们却发现在 1,292 个句子（节）中只有少于 10 处的地方需要用最古老的版本来校对一千年之后写的版本，有的只是改动了一个词，而且所有的修改都没有对原书的意思造成影响。我们从中便能得知每一个版本的流传都是十分谨慎，以确保其精确性。

Lesson 10: The Prophets Ezekiel and Jeremiah

Before discussing this lesson, please read: Bible: Ezekiel chaps. 26, 29; Jeremiah chaps 50-51; Isaiah 13.

<u>BC</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>BC</u>	<u>Event</u>
883-612	Neo-Assyrian empire period	586	Jerusalem taken, destroyed; end of the southern kingdom of Judah
740-680	The prophet Isaiah active	586-539	Israel subject to Babylon
625-585	The prophet Jeremiah active	539	Medo-Persian empire conquers Babylonian empire, allows exiles to return to native lands
612	Babylon and its allies attack Nineveh, destroy Assyrian empire	539-331	Persian empire period
612-539	Neo-Babylonian empire period	538	Small groups of Jews begin returning to Israel
605-530	The prophet Daniel active	525	Persian empire conquers Egypt
605	First Babylonian invasion: prophet Daniel exiled to Babylon	517	Jerusalem temple rebuilt
597	Second Babylonian invasion: prophet Ezekiel exiled to Babylon	458	Beginning of rebuilding of wall of Jerusalem
595-570	The prophet Ezekiel active	332	Alexander the Great conquers Tyre
588-586	3rd Babylonian invasion: Jerusalem besieged	275	Babylon is abandoned
		1	Babylon a wasteland

In Lesson 9 above, we have already discussed the historical evidence for the book of Isaiah, as well as part of its contents. In this lesson, we will study the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. (To help the reader understand the historical discussion, please refer to the historical timeline of Israel above and the map of the contemporary Middle East below).



After the time of the prophet Isaiah, the Assyrian empire continued to increase in strength and territory. This included the conquest of Egypt. But the Assyrians did not attack Jerusalem again. This is amazing, and completely in keeping with Isaiah's prophecy. Suddenly, Babylon recovered its independent statehood and, with several allies, defeated Assyria, completely destroying their empire. After defeating Assyria, Nebuchadnezzar conquered all of Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Egypt within the space of forty years, establishing the Neo-Babylonian empire.

King Nebuchadnezzar invaded the kingdom of Judah three times. In 605 BC he came to Jerusalem, forcing King Jehoiakim to

acknowledge him as feudal overlord, and carrying off some of the temple treasures, as well as taking some nobles as hostages. At that time, the prophet Daniel was taken into captivity. The Babylonian Chronicles found by archaeologists also record Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Palestine (see Archaeology and Bible History p.193).

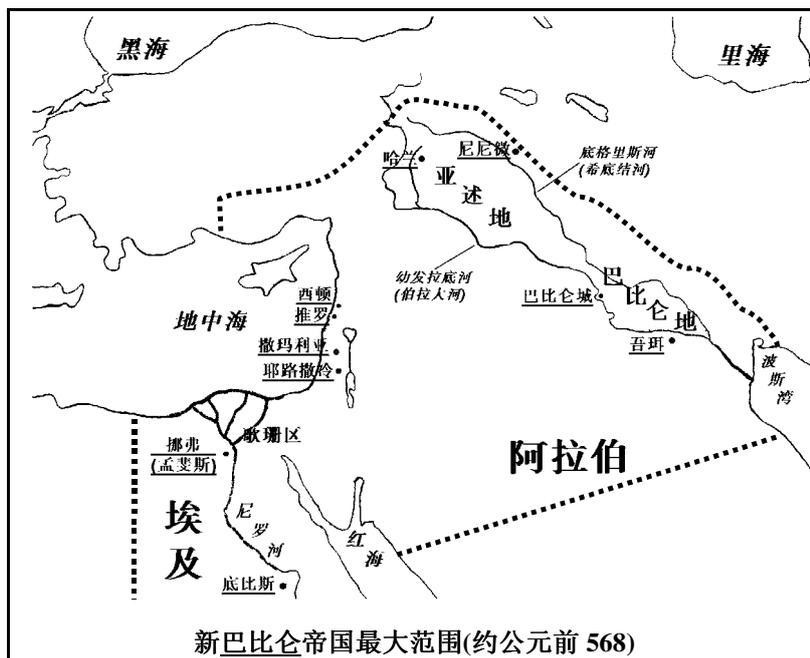
The second time he attacked the kingdom of Judah was in 597 BC. Nebuchadnezzar took King Jehoiachin captive to Babylon, and make Jehoiachin's uncle Zedekiah regent. At the same time he took ten thousand people into exile in Babylon, including the prophet Ezekiel. The Babylonian Chronicle records this attack against the kingdom of Judah. Please note that the material quoted below comes from the historical records of the Babylonians, not from the Bible:

10 课：先知以西结和耶利米

讨论此课之前请阅读：《圣经》：以西结书 26、29 章；耶利米书 50 至 51 章；以赛亚书 13 章。

公元前	事件	公元前	事件
883-612	新亚述帝国时代	586	<u>耶路撒冷</u> 被攻占、毁坏； <u>犹太南方王国</u> 终止
740-680	<u>以赛亚</u> 先知的活动	586-539	<u>巴比伦</u> 征服 <u>以色列</u> 时期
625-585	<u>耶利米</u> 先知的活动	539	<u>玛代-波斯帝国</u> 征服 <u>巴比伦帝国</u> ，宣布 <u>掳民族</u> 可以归国
612	<u>巴比伦</u> 及其同盟者攻取 <u>尼尼微城</u> ，毁灭亚述帝国	539-331	<u>波斯帝国</u> 时代
612-539	新巴比伦帝国时代	538	小部分 <u>犹太人</u> 开始一批一批地回 <u>以色列</u> 去
605-530	<u>但以理</u> 先知的活动	525	<u>波斯帝国</u> 征服 <u>埃及</u>
605	第一次 <u>巴比伦</u> 侵略：先知 <u>但以理</u> 被俘掳到 <u>巴比伦</u>	517	<u>耶路撒冷</u> 的圣殿重建
597	第二次 <u>巴比伦</u> 侵略：先知 <u>以西结</u> 被俘掳到 <u>巴比伦</u>	458	开始重建 <u>耶路撒冷</u> 城的城墙
595-570	<u>以西结</u> 先知的活动	332	<u>亚历山大大帝</u> 征服 <u>推罗城</u>
588-586	第三次 <u>巴比伦</u> 侵略： <u>耶路撒冷</u> 被围攻	275	<u>巴比伦城</u> 被遗弃了
		1	<u>巴比伦城</u> 已经成为荒地

在以上的第 9 课我们已经讨论了以赛亚书的历史证明和部分内容。此课我们要研究耶利米书和以西结书。（为了方便读者理解历史讨论，请参考以上的以色列历史年代表和以下的当代中东地图。）



以赛亚先知时代以后，亚述帝国还继续扩张势力和土地，包括征服了埃及。可是亚述人一直都不再来进攻耶路撒冷。这很奇妙，完全符合以赛亚所说的预言。很快地，巴比伦恢复了独立和国权，联合一些盟国打败了亚述，完全毁灭了他们的帝国。打败亚述以后，尼布甲尼撒王在 40 年内征服了米所波大米（又称两河流域）、巴勒斯坦、埃及全地，建立新巴比伦帝国。

尼布甲尼撒王三次进攻犹太王国。公元前 605 年他来耶路撒冷，强迫约雅敬王承认他为封

建领主，夺走了圣殿的一些财宝，而且带回一些贵族去当作人质。那次，先知但以理也被掳去。考古学家所发现的《巴比伦年代记》也记载那年尼布甲尼撒征服了巴勒斯坦（参考《考古学与圣经历史》193 页）。

第二次进攻犹太王国是公元前 597 年。尼布甲尼撒把犹太王约雅斤掳到巴比伦去，设立约雅斤的叔叔西底家作为统治者。同时还俘掳了一万人，包括先知以西结，到巴比伦去。《巴比伦年代记》记载了这次进攻犹太国的事件。请注意，以下所引用的资料是来自巴比伦人的历史记载，不是出自圣经：

In the seventh year [598 BC]...the king of Babylon mustered his army, attacked the Hatti land [Palestine and Syria] and encamped against the city of Judah. The following year on the second day of the month Addaru [March 16, 597 BC] he seized the city and captured the king. He [Nebuchadnezzar] appointed a king [Zedekiah] of his own choosing, received a heavy tribute, and sent it to Babylon. (from the Babylonian Chronicles; composite translation / back translation)

Although Zedekiah is called “king,” he was probably actually regarded as regent for his nephew. After holding power for a few years, Zedekiah took advantage of an opportunity to rebel by allying with Egypt. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah for the third time, defeated the Egyptian army, captured the temple, and destroyed Jerusalem and the entire kingdom of Judah. The remaining people were exiled to Babylon.

The third invasion and exile forms the historical background for the writing of the prophets Ezekiel and Jeremiah. These two books have very specific historical and archaeological evidences. Interested readers should consult Appendices 1 and 2 of this lesson.

Biblical Passage	Prophecy	Date of Prophecy (Appx.)	Date of Fulfillment	Time between Prophecy and Fulfillment
Genesis 12, 22, 26	All the people of the world will be blessed through Abraham’s offspring	2000 BC	begins 30 AD	2,000 years until begins.
Genesis 12, 13, 15, 17	The land of Canaan (Palestine) will belong to Abraham’s descendants (Jews) forever.	2000 BC	c. 1400 BC to now	600 years until begins; 4,000 years (from prophecy to now)
Deuteronomy 28	Worldwide scattering of the Jews	1400 BC	70-135 AD	More than 1,400 years
Deuteronomy 30	Scattered Jews will recover an independent nation	1400 BC	1948 AD	More than 3,300 yrs.
Isaiah 7	Northern kingdom of Israel destroyed, the people lose national identity	732 BC	721-670 BC	c. 60 yrs.
Isaiah 39	People of southern kingdom of Judah taken captive to Babylon	700 BC	597-586 BC	More than 100 yrs.
Isaiah 46, 49, 52	Worldwide there will be people worshipping the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ	700 BC	Beg.c.1800 AD, some outstanding	2,500 years until begins
Ezekiel 29	Egypt to be weak, never again to control another nation	587 BC	Continues to now	2,500 yrs. (from prophecy to now)
Ezekiel 26	Tyre to be destroyed, its rocks thrown in the sea	586 BC	332 BC	250 years
Jeremiah 29	Jews to return to Israel from Babylon	597-88 BC	517 BC	More than 70 yrs.
Jeremiah 51	Babylon to be totally desolate, never to be rebuilt	593 BC	Begins c. 300 BC	More than 300 yrs.
Jeremiah 33	As long as the earth lasts, there will be Jews	588-86 BC	Continues to now	More than 2,575 yrs. (from prophecy to now)

Prophecies discussed in this lesson:

The Book of Ezekiel

The prophet Ezekiel prophesied 592-571 BC. We was a priest from the tribe of Levi. After being carried into exile in 597, he lived the rest of his life among the Jewish exiles in Babylon. He encouraged his compatriots to obey the Babylonian conquerors, regarding the exile as the judgement of God. Before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple he had already prophesied that this punishment would certainly occur soon. The evidence showing that the book of Ezekiel was written in the period 600-570 BC is very abundant. Interested readers should see Appendix 1 of this lesson.

Prophecies about Egypt

Perhaps the most amazing of Ezekiel’s prophecies are those about the future of Egypt. In Ezekiel’s time, Egypt already had a 2,500 year history. It was a very glorious country, often controlling the adjacent areas. Although it had undergone several periods of decline, it had always recovered to become one of the strongest nations in the Middle East. But Ezekiel prophesied:

指巴勒斯坦与叙利亚地区]，围困了犹大的城，在次年三 / 四月的第二日 [指公元前 597 年] 攻取了那城，也俘掳了国王。他 [指尼布甲尼撒] 任命一个是他自己拣选的国王 [指西底家] 以后，接受厚重的贡物，他们把那些贡物送到巴比伦。(《证主圣经手册—精简本(简体版)》159 页)

虽然西底家称为“王”，他大概原来被认为是他侄子的摄政者。掌了几年的国权以后，西底家趁机反抗巴比伦，跟埃及立了同盟条约。结果，尼布甲尼撒第三次来侵略犹大，他战胜埃及的军队，占领了圣殿，毁灭了耶路撒冷和全犹大王国，并且把剩下的人民掳到巴比伦。

这三次侵略、流放是先知以西结和耶利米写书的历史背景。那两本书都有很具体的历史和考古学证明。感兴趣的读者请参看此课的附录 1、2。

圣经段落	预言	发表预言年份(大约)	应验时间	预言和应验之间的时间
创 12, 22, 26	<u>亚伯拉罕</u> 的后代(指 <u>耶稣</u>)将使全球的人得到祝福	公元前 2000 年	公元 30 年起	两千年才开始
创世记 12, 13, 15, 17	<u>迦南地</u> (指 <u>以色列</u>)会永远属于 <u>亚伯拉罕</u> 的后代(指 <u>犹太人</u>)	公元前 2000 年	公元前约 1400 年起，一直至今	六百年才开始: 四千年(从发表预言直到现)
申命记 28	<u>犹太人</u> 分散到世界各地	公元前 1400	公元 70-135	一千四百多年
申命记 30	全球分散的 <u>犹太人</u> 恢复他们独立的国家	公元前 1400	公元 1948	三千三百多年
以赛亚 7	<u>以色列</u> 北方王国被毁灭、人民失去国籍身份	公元前 732	公元前 721-670	约 六十年
以赛亚 39	<u>犹大</u> 南方王国的人民被俘掳到 <u>巴比伦</u>	公元前 700	公元前 597-586	一百多年
以赛亚 46, 49, 52	全世界上将有人崇拜 <u>犹太</u> 人的 <u>弥赛亚</u> ，即 <u>耶稣基督</u>	公元前 700	约公元 1800 起(小部分未实现)	两千五百年才开始
以西结 29	<u>埃及</u> 很衰弱，永远不再控制别的国家	公元前 587	一直至今	两千五百多年(从发表预言直到现在)
以西结 26	<u>推罗城</u> 被摧毁、石头被扔在海里	公元前 586	公元前 332	两百五十四年
耶利米 29	<u>犹太人</u> 从 <u>巴比伦</u> 回归 <u>以色列</u>	公元前 597-588	公元前 517	七十多年
耶利米 51	<u>巴比伦</u> 会完全荒凉、永远不被重建	公元前 593	公元前 300 之后起	三百多年
耶利米 33	只要地球仍然存在， <u>犹太</u> 民族就会永远存在	公元前 588-586	一直至今	两千五百七十五多年(从发表预言直到现在)

此课所讨论的预言为：

以西结书

先知以西结约公元前 592-571 年说出预言。他是利未支派的一位祭司。597 年被掳去以后，一生都居住在巴比伦地区流放的犹太人中间。他鼓励同胞要服从巴比伦统治者，把流放看作上帝的审判。耶路撒冷和圣殿被毁灭之前，他已经预言这个惩罚一定会很快来临。证明以西结书是属于公元前 600-570 时期的根据很多，感兴趣的读者请看此课附录 1。

关于埃及的预言

在以西结书的预言之中，可能最奇妙的算是预言埃及的将来。在以西结时代，埃及已经有两千五百年的历史，并且也算是很伟大的国家，常常控制附近的地区。虽然它也经历过几次的衰落，但它总能恢复成为中东的一个强大的国家。而以西结却预言说：

...Egypt...will be a lowly kingdom. It will be the lowest of the kingdoms; and it will never again lift itself up above the nations. And I shall make them so small that they will not rule over the nations. (Ezekiel 29:14-15)

Note Ezekiel's two predictions:

1. Egypt would never again be able to defeat or control another country or people.
2. Egypt would be a weak nation.

His first prophecy has been fulfilled. In the past 2,600 years, from the day of Ezekiel's prophecy until now, Egypt in fact never has controlled any other country. This is a complete change from its past glory. Who could have imagined this? Before the time of Ezekiel, Egypt had several times recovered from decline and occupation, and moreover regained control of Palestine and other areas. Who could foresee that Egypt would not rise again? But it in fact did not, and all the way to the present, 2,600 years later, it is still the same, it cannot control or conquer any other nation. The following timeline shows the history of Egypt from Ezekiel's time to the present:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Conqueror</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Conqueror</u>
588 BC	Defeated in Palestine by Babylon	323- 30	Greek Empire
587	Ezekiel's prophecy about Egypt	30BC-AD 639	Roman and Byzantine Empires
568	Babylon invades	639-1250	Several Arab dynasties
525-405	Invaded, controlled by Persia	1250-1798	Marmeluke and Ottoman Turks
405-359	Temporary independence, but weak	1798-1882	Turkish dynasties and Europeans
359-332	Persians regain control	1882-1952	Semi-colony of the British
332-323	Alexander the Great invades, controls	1952-now	Independent, weak nation

The second part of the prophecy has also been fulfilled. In c. 568 BC, King Nebuchadnezzar successfully invaded Egypt. Later, in 525 BC, the Persians defeated Egypt and made it their colony. Except for the fifty years from 405-359 BC, Egypt was ruled by other nations. For nearly 2,500 years it was in a state of slavery. Although in 1952 Egypt finally gained independence, modern Egypt unquestionably not only cannot be considered a powerful nation, but is a weak one. Tiny Israel has defeated it several times. For example, in the 1973 "Yom Kippur" war, if not for the interference of other nations, Israel would have destroyed the entire Egyptian army. After this defeat, Egypt had no better choice than to accept the Camp David peace treaty, accepting American economic aid in return for making peace with Israel.

If God had not told Ezekiel about Egypt's future, how could he have foreseen it?

Prophecies about Tyre

Finally, we will look at Ezekiel's detailed prophecy about the city of Tyre:

Now it came about in the eleventh year [587 or 586 BC], on the first of the month, that the word of Yahweh came to me [Ezekiel] saying, "Son of man, because Tyre has said concerning Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gateway of the peoples is broken; it has opened to me. I shall be filled, now that she is laid waste, therefore, thus says the Lord Yahweh, 'Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. 'And they will destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; and I will scrape her debris from her and make her a bare rock. 'She will be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken,' declares the Lord Yahweh, 'and she will become spoil for the nations. 'Also her daughters who are on the mainland will be slain by the sword, and they will know that I am Yahweh.' "

For thus says the Lord Yahweh, "Behold, I will bring upon Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses, chariots, cavalry, and a great army. "He will slay your daughters on the mainland with the sword; and he will make siege walls against you, cast up a mound against you, and raise up a large shield against you. "And the blow of his battering rams he will direct against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers. "Because of the multitude of his horses, the dust raised by them will cover you; your walls will shake at the noise of cavalry and wagons and chariots, when he enters your gates as men enter a city that is breached. "With the hoofs of his horses he will trample all your streets. He will slay your people with the sword; and your strong pillars will come down to the ground.

"Also they [referring to peoples who would come after the Babylonians] will make a spoil of your [Tyre's] riches and a prey of your merchandise, break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses, and throw your stones and your timbers and your debris [literally: dust] into the water. "So I will silence the sound of your songs, and the sound of your harps will be heard no more. "And I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place for the spreading of nets. You will be built no more, for I Yahweh have spoken," declares the Lord Yahweh.

…埃及…必成为低微的国，必为列国中最低微的，也不再自高于列国之上。我必减少他们，一致不再辖制列国。(以西结书 29:14-15)

要注意以西结的两个预测：

1. 埃及将再不能战胜或统治其它国家或民族。
2. 埃及将会变成一个弱国。

他的第一个预言应验了。两千六百年以来，从以西结预言的那天起直到现在，埃及真是再也没有控制过任何其它国家。对于他们的强大来说这是一个完全的转变。有谁能想到呢？以西结时代之前，埃及曾几次从衰落和被占领的状况恢复过来，并重新在巴勒斯坦和其它地方称霸。又有谁能预知埃及不会重新振兴呢？但它真的没有，直到两千六百年后的今天一直还是这样，不能统治或战胜任何其它国家。以下年代表是从以西结的时期开始的埃及历史：

年份	控制者	年份	控制者
公元前 588	在巴勒斯坦被巴比伦打败	323-30	希腊人的帝国
587	以西结发关于埃及的预言	30-公元 639	罗马和拜占庭帝国
568	巴比伦入侵	639-1250	几个阿拉伯王朝
525-405	被波斯帝国侵略、控制	1250-1798	马穆鲁克和奥斯曼的土耳其人
405-359	暂时独立，还是个弱国	1798-1882	土耳其王朝和欧洲强国霸权
359-332	恢复被波斯帝国控制	1882-1952	英国的半殖民地
332-323	亚历山大大帝侵略、控制	1952-至今	埃及为独立的

那预言的第二个部分也有应验。约公元前 568 年，尼布甲尼撒王成功地占领了埃及。后来，在公元前 525 年，波斯人打败埃及，把它变成他们的殖民地。除了从公元前 405 年至公元前 359 年的五十年之间，埃及都被其它国家所统治，几乎两千五百年来，埃及都处于被奴役状态。虽然埃及最终在 1952 年也得到独立，但是毫无疑问今天的埃及也算不上是强国，甚至算是一个弱国。它曾多次地被小小的以色列打败。例如 1973 年的“赎罪日”战争，要不是其它国家的干涉，以色列早就消灭埃及的整支军队。在失败以后，埃及人只好于 1979 年接受戴维营和平条约，接受美国人的经济援助来维持与以色列之间的和平。

如果不是有上帝告诉以西结关于埃及未来的事情，他又怎能预知呢？

关于推罗城的预言

最后，我们要看以西结关于推罗城很详细的预言：

第十一年 [指公元前 587 或 586 年] 十一月初一日，耶和華的话临到我 [以西结] 说：人子啊，因推罗向耶路撒冷说：“阿哈！那作众民之门的已经破坏，向我开放；她既变为荒场，我必丰盛。”所以主耶和華如此说：推罗啊，我必与你为敌，使许多国民上来攻击你，如同海使波浪涌上来一样。他们必破坏推罗的墙垣，拆毁她的城楼。我也要刮净尘土，使她成为净光的磐石。她必在海中作晒网的地方，也必成为列国的掳物。这是主耶和華说的。她的 [指属推罗的] 城邑的居民必被刀剑灭杀，他们就知道我是耶和華。

主耶和華如此说：我必使诸王之王的巴比伦王尼布甲尼撒率领马匹、车辆、兵马、军队和许多人民，从北方来攻击你推罗。他必用刀剑杀灭你城邑的居民，也必造台、筑垒、举盾牌来攻击你。他必安设撞城锤攻破你的墙垣，用铁器拆毁你的城楼。因他的兵马众多，尘土扬起遮蔽你。他进入你的城门，好象人进入以有破口之城。那时，你的城垣必因骑马的和战车、镗重车的响声震动。他的马蹄必践踏你一切街道，他必用刀杀戮你的居民，你坚固的柱子必倒在地上。

人 [原文：“他们”，指在巴比伦人之后到来的一些民族] 必以你 [推罗] 的财物为掳物，以你的货财为掠物，破坏你的墙垣，拆毁你华美的房屋，将你的石头、木头、尘土都抛在水中。我必使你唱歌的声音止息，人也不再听见你弹琴的声音。我必使你成为净光的磐石，作晒网的地方，你不得再建造，因为这是主耶和華说的。

For thus says the Lord Yahweh, "When I shall make you a desolate city, like the cities which are not inhabited, when I shall bring up the deep over you, and the great waters will cover you, then I shall bring you down with those who go down to the pit, to the people of old, and I shall make you dwell in the lower parts of the earth, like the ancient waste places, with those who go down to the pit, so that you will not be inhabited;" (Ezekiel 26:1-2, 3-6, 7-11, 12-14, 19-20)

The “you” and “she” in this passage refer to the city of Tyre and its inhabitants. “He” refers to Nebuchadnezzar. “They” refers to the peoples of several different nations. According to 26:1, this passage was written in 587-86 BC. We can see at least four predictions:

1. The city would be attacked, besieged and taken by Nebuchadnezzar.
3. Its rocks, timbers and dust would all be scraped up and thrown into the water.
4. It would never be rebuilt, but would become a bare rock used for drying fishnets.
5. It would be covered by water.

All of these have been fulfilled.

The city of Tyre had two parts. The most ancient part, which the Greeks called “Old Tyre” (“Paleotyrus”), also known as ‘Ushu,’ was a well-fortified seaside city. The other part of Tyre was on a small island about a kilometer away from Old Tyre. It too was well-fortified. Ezekiel announced his prophecy in 587 or 586 BC. The fulfillment of the first part of the prophecy came when Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city for thirteen years, 585-572 BC. At that time, Nebuchadnezzar apparently successfully conquered and probably destroyed the mainland city of “Old Tyre” (though some scholars question whether he succeeded in taking it by force and destroying it). However, he did not have a navy, so he was unable to take the island city. Furthermore, he had no reason to throw its rocks and timbers into the sea or scrape up its soil.

Three hundred years later, in 332 BC, the Greek conqueror Alexander the Great came. In order to take the island city of Tyre, he built a causeway from the shore to the island city. Historians record that at that time he sent people to scrap up all the rocks and dirt of the mainland city and threw them into the sea as a foundation for the causeway. Since that time, mainland Old Tyre has never been rebuilt. This fulfilled the second and third parts of the prophecy. Of course, the things thrown into the sea were covered by the waters. If “*the great waters will cover you*” only refers to mainland Old Tyre, this event also completely fulfills the fourth part of the prophecy.

Later, part of the island began to sink into the sea, and finally much of the island sank into the ocean. Today, much of the archaeological research at Tyre is carried out underwater. If “*the great waters will cover you*” also included island Tyre, the fourth part of the prophecy was not fulfilled until this happened.

In 1289, a Muslim army destroyed what remained of island Tyre, and since then it has not been rebuilt. Today, nearly the whole area is a bare rock, and fishermen actually do dry their nets there. If, in addition to mainland Old Tyre, Ezekiel’s prophecy included island Tyre, then this is the complete fulfillment of the third part of the prophecy.

Appendix 1 of this lesson shows that the book of Ezekiel was definitely written before 550 BC. Skeptics, however, might say that the parts concerning Tyre were added later. In fact, the Jews were extremely careful about preserving the exact contents of the Bible, just as we have seen with regards to the book of Isaiah in Lesson 9. If, however, someone still feels that part of the prophecies were added in later, we must ask: how did the writer know that Tyre would never be rebuilt? And how did he know that part of the island would sink and be covered by the water of the sea?

The Book of Jeremiah

Jeremiah was a prophet contemporary with Ezekiel. The history in the book of Jeremiah is from 626 BC to 585 BC. Unlike Ezekiel, Jeremiah remained at Jerusalem and was an eyewitness of its defeat in 586. He constantly warned the people of Israel that unless they repented and abandoned their idol worship, God would not only let the Babylonians attack them, but would also destroy Jerusalem and the temple, and the remaining people would be exiled to Babylon. The book of Jeremiah contains an abundant, detailed record of the history of the period. Interested readers should consult Appendix 2 of this lesson.

Prophecies about Babylon

Very clearly, the book of Jeremiah was written in the Neo-Babylonian period, approximately from 625 BC to 585 BC. At that time, Babylon was flourishing, with splendid construction being undertaken everywhere within and around the city. The famous ‘Hanging Gardens,’ one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, was constructed at that time. In Jeremiah’s time, the population of the city of Babylon was about 500,000. The Babylonian empire was the greatest empire in the Middle East, ruling Mesopotamia, Arabia and Palestine, and controlling Egypt. Moreover, Jeremiah himself predicted its army would be victorious in Palestine and Egypt.

Under these circumstances, we read a surprising prophecy in the book of Jeremiah:

主耶和華如此說：推羅啊，我使你變為荒涼，如無人居住的城邑，又使深水漫過你，大水淹沒你。那時，我要叫你下入陰府，使故事的人一同在地的深處久已荒涼之地居住，使你不再有居民。（以西結書 26:1-2, 3-6, 7-11, 12-14, 19-20）

在這段文字中提到的確“你”、“你們”、“她”，都是指推羅城和它的居民，“他”是指尼布甲尼撒，“他們”指來自幾個不同國家的國民。根據 26:1，這段文字是寫於公元前 587-586 年。我們可以看到最少三處的預測：

1. 尼布甲尼撒會攻擊、圍攻、征服推羅城。
2. 它的石頭，木頭和塵土都會被刮下來；然後扔進海里。
3. 它將不再被重建，而變成一塊用來曬魚網的光禿禿的磐石。
4. 它將會被海水淹沒。

所有這些都應驗了。

推羅城包括兩部分。最古老的城，希臘人把它叫作“老推羅”也稱‘Ushu’，它是一個有堅固設防的海邊城鎮。推羅城的另一部分是在距離老城一公里的一個小島上，它也是一個重設防的地方。以西結是公元前 587 或 586 年宣布他的預言。預言第一部分的應驗是推羅城被尼布甲尼撒圍攻，發生在公元前 585--572 年。尼布甲尼撒那時大概已經成功征服而毀滅了“老推羅”的大陸城市，（可是有些學者還是懷疑他是否強迫地征服它、毀壞它），但是尼布甲尼撒沒有船隊，因此他沒有奪得島上的城市，而他沒有理由要把城的石頭和木頭扔進大海或者把它的泥土刮去。

三百多年以後，在公元前 332 年，希臘征服者亞歷山大大帝來到了，為了奪取島上的推羅城，他從海岸邊築了一條堤道直到小島的城市。歷史學家們記載那時候他派人刮去大陸城市所有的石頭和沙土，通扔到大海里作為堤道的基礎。自那以後，老推羅的大陸城再也沒有被重建過。這也應驗了第二和第三個預言。當然被扔進大海的沙土是被海水淹沒着，如果“大水淹沒你”那句話本來只是指出大陸上的老推羅，這件事也完全應驗了第四個預言。

後來，部分的島嶼開始沉到海中，最後不少的島嶼都沉入了大海。今天很多關於推羅城的考古學研究都是在水底進行的。如果“大水淹沒你”那句話也包括島嶼上的推羅，這件事發的才完全應驗了第四個預言。

在 1289 年，穆斯林的軍隊毀壞了島嶼上剩下來了的的城市，從此就再也沒有被重建過。今天，幾乎全部的地方都只是一塊光禿禿的磐石，而且漁民們的確在上面曬網。如果以西結的預言所指的，除了大陸上的老推羅以外，也包括島上的推羅的話，那這就是第三個預言的完全應驗了。

此課附錄 1 證明以西結書一定是寫於公元前 550 年以前。但是懷疑者或者會說關於推羅的記載是後來有人加上去的。事實上，猶太人對聖經確切內容的保存是十分小心的，正如我們在第 9 課所看到的以賽亞書，但如果有人還是覺得部分預言是後來加進去的，我們就必須問：作者怎麼知道推羅城永遠也不會被重建？他又怎能知道部分的島嶼會下沉被海水淹沒？

耶利米書

耶利米是與以西結同時代的先知，耶利米書里的歷史是公元前 626 年到約 585 年。與以西結不同，耶利米留在耶路撒冷，親自看到它 586 年的失敗。他一直勸告以色列人，除非他們悔改、放棄偶像崇拜，否則上帝不但要讓巴比倫人進攻他們，而且要毀壞耶路撒冷城和聖殿，並把剩下的人擄到巴比倫地。耶利米書對當代歷史敘述得又豐富又詳細。感興趣的讀者請看此課附錄 2。

關於巴比倫的預言

很清楚的是，耶利米書是寫於歷史上的新巴比倫時期，大約是公元前 625 年至公元前 585 年。在那個時期的巴比倫十分強盛，城內城外到處大興土木。那著名的世界古代七大奇觀之一的‘空中花園’（懸掛花園）就是那時建成的。在耶利米時代，巴比倫城市人口估計達到 50 萬，巴比倫帝國是當時中東最強大的帝國，統治着兩河流域，阿拉伯和巴勒斯坦，控制着埃及。而耶利米本身也預計他的軍隊會在巴勒斯坦和埃及取得勝利。

在這樣的形勢下，我們在耶利米書中看到令人吃驚的預言：

Therefore the desert creatures will live there [Babylon] along with the jackals...and it will never again be inhabited or dwelt in from generation to generation. And Babylon will become a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals,...without inhabitants. Thou, O Yahweh, hast promised concerning this place [Babylon]...it will be a perpetual desolation. (Jeremiah 50:39; 51:37, 62)

A hundred years before Jeremiah, Isaiah had also prophesied that Babylon would be completely destroyed and become a wasteland:

And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride, Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation; Nor will the Arab pitch his tent there, Nor will shepherds make their flocks lie down there. But desert creatures will lie down there, And their houses will be full of owls, Ostriches also will live there, and shaggy goats will frolic there. And hyenas will howl in their fortified towers And jackals in their luxurious palaces. Her fateful time also will soon come And her days will not be prolonged. "And I will rise up against them," declares Yahweh of hosts, " and will cut off from Babylon name....I will sweep it with the broom of destruction," declares Yahweh of hosts. (Isaiah 13:19-22; 14:22-23)

Several hundred years later, these prophecies were fulfilled. After the Persian empire took over the Babylonian empire, Babylon was still a great city. In 331 BC, Alexander the Great led the Greek occupation of Babylon. In 323 BC, after completing his conquest of the territory of the Persian empire, Alexander the Great returned to Babylon from the border of India. He intended to make it his capital. But in 323 BC, while he was contemplating the restoration of the city, he suddenly died at the age of 33. After this, Babylon was seized and sacked several times, finally being taken by king Seleucus. At first, king Seleucus made Babylon his capital, but because it had already been so severely damaged, the rulers thought it would be better to found a new city rather than restoring broken old Babylon. So in 275 BC they took most of the population of Babylon and moved the capital 65 kilometers north to the new capital of Seleucia. This was the sign of the end for Babylon. By 1 BC Babylon essentially had become a wasteland. Southern Babylonia gradually became a swampland infested with malarial mosquitoes. In the 19th century, European archaeologists recorded that the Arabs were not even willing to pitch their tents at the site of ancient Babylon, because they regarded it as an accursed place.

Once again, we must ask two questions: could these prophecies have been added later? Could they have been fulfilled by chance? Babylon did not enter a period of clear decay until 275 BC. After that time, it was virtually impossible to have revised the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah. Earlier we put forth the hypothetical case that Isaiah written in 200 BC, because the oldest copies we presently possess are from the period 150-100 BC. In actual fact though, the linguistic style and historical details of the book let us know that it was certainly written several centuries earlier than 200 BC. Obviously the prophecies were written before the events occurred.

The Enduring Existence of the Jewish People

When the Babylonians were besieging Jerusalem, the prophet Jeremiah insisted that the city and all of Israel would soon be a wasteland. Most of the Jews who were still alive had also already despaired. While the Jewish people were in this condition of extreme weakness, he again received God's revelation and boldly proclaimed the prophecy:

And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying, "Have you not observed what this people have spoken, saying, 'The two families which Yahweh chose, He has rejected them'? Thus they despise My people, no longer are they as a nation in their sight. "Thus says Yahweh, 'If My covenant for day and night stand not, and the fixed patterns of heaven and earth I have not established, then I would reject the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, not taking from his descendants rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them. '" (Jeremiah 33:23-26)

Just as we have seen in several preceding lessons, this prophecy has already been amazingly fulfilled. No matter how many Jews the Babylonians killed, they survived and restored their nation. No matter how many Jews the army of the Roman empire killed, then exiled the rest, not permitting them to live in Israel, they still survived. Even though they underwent 2,000 years of living in exile, without their own nation and forgetting their own language, they still regarded themselves as Jews, the descendants of Jacob. Even though they were persecuted everywhere, to the extent that Hitler killed 50% of their population, in the end Hitler and the Nazis were destroyed, and the remaining Jews reestablished their nation. This is not because the Jews were especially strong, but entirely because God controls history to bring about what He has promised.

Worshipping 'Chance'?

All of these prophecies concerning Egypt, Tyre, Babylon, and the Jews very clearly were given before the events occurred. Moreover, they are completely outside the ability of humans to foreknow. The unbelieving critics often say that this was merely 'good luck' or 'chance.' Chance! The 'god' of atheist! The god who, by chance, created life out of a few elements which he randomly picked up and formed into DNA. Then he, starting from simple bacteria, by chance gradually succeeded in creating humans, with their self-consciousness

所以旷野的走兽和豺狼必住在那里 [巴比伦]……世世代代无人居住。巴比伦必成为乱堆，为野狗住处，……并无人居住。耶和華，你曾论到这地方 [巴比伦] 说：……必永远荒凉。(耶利米书 50:39; 51:37, 62)

在耶利米之前一百年的以赛亚也预言了巴比伦将会完全被破坏而变成荒凉之城：

巴比伦素来为列国的荣耀，为迦勒底人所矜夸的华美，必象神所倾覆的所多玛、蛾摩拉一样；其内必永无人烟，世世代代无人居住。亚拉伯人也不在那里支搭帐棚，牧羊的人也不使羊群卧在那里；只有旷野的走兽卧在那里，咆哮的兽满了房屋。鸵鸟住在那里；野山羊在那里跳舞。豺狼必在它宫中呼号；野狗必在它华美殿内吼叫。巴比伦受罚的时候临近；它的日子必不长久。万军之耶和華说：“我必兴起攻击他们，将巴比伦的名号……灭亡的扫帚扫净它。这是万军之耶和華说的。”(以赛亚书 13:19-22; 14:22-23)

几百年之后，这些预言都完全应验了。波斯帝国取代了巴比伦帝国后，巴比伦仍然是一个大城市。在公元前 331 年，亚历山大大帝领导下的希腊占领了巴比伦。公元前 323 年，亚历山大大帝在完成征服整个波斯帝国的领土之后，从印度的边界回到巴比伦去，想把它当作首都。可是公元前 323 年，当他正在考虑城市的修复问题，他突然去世了，享年 33 岁。在此之后，巴比伦城又几经抢夺和洗劫，最后被塞琉古王朝占领。在开始的时候，塞琉古王把巴比伦当作他们的首都，但是因它已经受到那么大的毁坏，统治者觉得建一座新城比修复那残旧的巴比伦城好，所以，在公元前 275 年，他们带走了巴比伦城大部份的人口，把首都迁到往北约 65 公里外的新首都塞琉古城。这成为巴比伦城终结的标志。到了公元 1 年，巴比伦城基本已经变成一个废墟。巴比伦的南部逐渐地还变成一个遍布带有疟疾病毒蚊子的沼泽地。到了 19 世纪，欧洲的考古学家记载连阿拉伯人也不敢在古巴比伦那里扎营，因为他们认为那是一块被诅咒的地方。

我们必须再一次问两个问题：这些预言会不会是后来才加上去的呢？它们是偶然地被应验的吗？直到公元前 275 年，巴比伦才进入明显的衰落期。而在此之后再修改以赛亚书和耶利米书几乎是没有什么可能的。我们在上面曾假设以赛亚书写于公元前 200 年，因为我们现有最老的版本是来自公元前 150 年至公元前 100 年。但事实上，从以赛亚书中的语言风格和它记载的历史细节来看，我们便可以得知那一定是写于公元前 200 年的多个世纪之前。很明显地，那些预言都是写于事件发生之前。

关于犹太民族的长久存在

巴比伦人正在围攻耶路撒冷的时候，耶利米先知断言那城市以及整个以色列很快要变成荒野。大部分还活着的犹太人也已经绝望了。在这种犹太民族最衰弱的情况下，他又受到上帝的启示，却大胆地发表预言：

耶和華的话临到耶利米说：“你没有揣摩这百姓的话吗？他们说：‘耶和華所拣选的二族，他已经弃绝了。’他们这样藐视我的百姓，以为不再成国。耶和華如此说，若是我立白日黑夜的约不能存住，若是我未曾安排天地的定例，我就弃绝雅各的后裔和我仆人大卫的后裔，不使大卫的后裔治理亚伯拉罕、以撒、雅各的后裔；因为我必使他们被掳的人归回，也必怜悯他们。”(耶利米书 33:23-26)

就象我们在前几课已经看到的，这句应许已经得到了很奇妙的应验。不管巴比伦人杀死多少犹太人，他们还是生存、恢复国家。不管罗马帝国的军队杀死多少犹太人、把剩下的流放、不许他们居住在以色列，他们还是生存。尽管他们经过两千年的流浪生活，没有自己的国家、忘记自己的母语，他们还会认为自己是犹太人，雅各的后代。尽管他们到处受逼迫，甚至希特勒杀死了他们百分之五十的人口，终于希特勒以及纳粹党的人灭亡了，剩下来的犹太人复国了。这并不是因为他们犹太人特别强大，完全是因为上帝在掌管历史、施行他的诺言。

崇拜‘偶然’？

无论是对埃及、推罗、巴比伦、或犹太人的预言都很明显是事情发生之前发表的，而且是完全在人的意料之外，非信徒批评家通常会说这只不过是‘好运’或‘偶然’而已。偶然！那位无神论者所相信的‘神’！那位能偶然地随便提取各种元素组成 DNA 来创造生命，又偶然成功地从简单的细菌开

and free will. What a great 'god' this 'Chance' is, who can blindly and completely without purpose accomplish great things!

After all this, the atheist then says that the ability of the biblical prophets to foretell human history also comes from 'Chance,' the false god he worships. Shall we all bow down to this 'god'? Are we so naive as to be willing to believe in this illogical 'idol'? Or are we willing to believe the logical record of the Bible, the truth recorded for us from the only true God?

Lesson 10 Appendix 1: Confirming the Date of Composition of the Book of Ezekiel

First, unlike the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah, the book of Ezekiel does not have any prophecies about the destruction of Babylon. This was because he wanted to encourage the contemporary Jews to submit to the rule of Babylon. In addition, this characteristic also evidences that Ezekiel prophesied in Babylon. As a captive, if he had announced the destruction of Babylon, it certainly would have been regarded as rebellion, and the Babylonians would have killed him.

Second, the way in which Ezekiel refers to King Jehoiachin of the southern kingdom of Judah. After King Jehoiakim was taken captive to Babylon in 597, his uncle Zedekiah ruled in Jerusalem. Although Ezekiel 1:2 was written five years after this, it still refers to Jehoiachin as king. In the past, unbelieving critics took this peculiarity as evidence refuting the accuracy of the book of Ezekiel. But in the first half of the 20th century archaeologists discovered three pottery storage jars sealed with the impression "belonging to Eliakim, the steward of Jehoiachin." This indicates the Jews still regarded Jehoiachin as king (see Archaeology and Bible History p.195). Even clearer, in Babylon, three pottery shards were unearthed which mentioned "Jehoiachin king of the Jews" and recorded the rations which he had received. Archaeologists determined that the shards are from the period 595-570 BC (see Archaeology and Bible History p.195). Both the recognition of Jehoiachin as king and the time period of the shards are 100% in accord with the record of the book of Ezekiel.

Third, the book of Ezekiel records many detailed dates. All of these, except for one, are counted from 597 BC, when the second group of Jews was exiled. Those which can be verified are accurate. Regarding the start of the siege of Jerusalem, Ezekiel 24:1-2 says: "...the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month...write the name of the day, this very day. The king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day." The tenth month of the ninth year of their captivity was 588 BC, which was in fact the start of Nebuchadnezzar's third siege of Jerusalem. Concerning the conquering and destruction of Jerusalem, Ezekiel 40:1 says: "In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was taken..." That is to say that the twenty-fifth year after Ezekiel was taken captive to Babylon was the fourteenth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, which is $597 - 25 = 572$ and $586 - 14 = 572$. This kind of detailed accuracy in the recording of dates does not come from traditions or from 'legends' fabricated hundreds of years later.

Fourth, the book of Ezekiel accurately reflects the international relations of its day, and moreover amazingly predicts the future situation. Please read Ezekiel 29:1-16. This chapter was written in the early in 587 BC (see verse 1). Verses 6-7 point out that the Jews' alliance with Egypt was an encouragement to Zedekiah in opposing Babylon. The result, however, was that after the Egyptians were defeated by the Babylonians in Palestine, the Egyptian army retired from action and Nebuchadnezzar returned to and besieged Jerusalem. Since 586 BC, the Jews have never again had such alliance relations with Egypt. Besides confirming the date of the book of Ezekiel, this also fulfills the prophecy of verse 16, "And it [Egypt] will never again be the confidence of the house of Israel..." When we consider how weak human beings are, and the many alliances which the Jews had had with the Egyptians in the prior 400 years, we can understand how bold the prophecy of verse 16 truly is. But since then the Jews really have never again relied on an alliance with Egypt.

Lesson 10 Appendix 2: Confirming the Date of Composition of the Book of Jeremiah

First, Jeremiah 34:7 says: "when the army of the king of Babylon was fighting against Jerusalem and against all the remaining cities of Judah, that is, Lachish and Azekah, for they alone remained as fortified cities among the cities of Judah." This refers to the conditions of 589 or 588 BC. This detail – that only the fortified cities of Lachish and Azekah had not yet been taken – has received amazing confirmation from archaeology.

The city of Lachish has been thoroughly excavated by archaeologists. In the layer belonging to the time of Jeremiah are the remains of the city destroyed by the Babylonians. In 1935 and 1938, a total of eighteen pottery shards which had been used as writing materials were unearthed. They seem to have all come from the time when Nebuchadnezzar's army was attacking Lachish. These letters were written by a military commander to his superior. The final paragraph of letter number six says: "We are looking for the signals from Lachish...because we cannot see Azekah." This sentence confirms there was a relationship between Lachish and Azekah, as well as showing that they were among the last cities to be conquered by the Babylonian army (see Archaeology and Bible History pp.190-92; The Ancient Near East Vol. I, pp.212-14). These two points are in accord with the record of Jeremiah.

始，渐渐地创造出人类与他们所拥有的自我意识和自由意志。可以如此盲目又毫无意义地成就大事，这位‘偶然’算是多么伟大的一位‘神’！

然后，无神论者又说圣经的先知能预测到人类的历史也是出于‘偶然’，他们所拜的那位假神。这样的一位‘神’，我们都要来跪拜它吗？难道我们真是如此的天真，愿意相信那位不合逻辑的‘偶像’吗？又或者我们愿意相信圣经里合乎逻辑的记载，就是唯一真神留给我们记载的真理呢？

10 课附录 1：确认以西结书写书的时期

第一，与以赛亚书和耶利米书相反，以西结书没有任何关于巴比伦将来的灭亡的预言。这是因为他想鼓励他同时代的犹太人服从巴比伦的统治。另外，这个特点也证明以西结书是在巴比伦地说预言。他作为一个被俘虏的人，如果宣扬巴比伦的毁灭，一定会被认为是反抗，巴比伦人就会杀死他。

第二，以西结书对犹太南方王国的约雅斤王的称呼。约雅斤王 597 年掳到巴比伦以后，他的叔叔西底家在耶路撒冷当王。但是以西结书 1:2 是五年以后（592 年）的事，还是把约雅斤称为王。以前非信徒批评者把这个特点当作否认以西结书的真实性的根据。可是 20 世纪上半页，考古学家发现了三个泥土作的罐柄，它们上面盖着“属于约雅斤的伙食管理员 Eliakim”，这句话表示犹太地的人还认为约雅斤是王（参考《考古学与圣经历史》195 页）。更清楚的是，在巴比伦挖掘出了三片泥土的牌匾提到“犹太地的王约雅斤”而且记载他所收到的贡品。考古学家断定那片牌匾的年代是公元前 595—570 年（参考《考古学与圣经历史》195 页）。把约雅斤称为犹太的王和三片牌匾的时间都百分之百符合以西结书的记载。

第三，以西结书里记载了很多详细的时间。其中除了一个以外，都是从 597 年，第二批犹太人被掳去的那年计算的。其中能断定的都很精确。关于耶路撒冷被围击的开始，以西结书 24:1-2 说：“第九年十月初十日……今日是巴比伦王就近耶路撒冷的日子，你要将这日记下。”他们掳去的第九年十月指公元前 588 年，就是尼布甲尼撒第三次围攻耶路撒冷的开始。关于耶路撒冷的被征服和毁灭，以西结书 40:1 说：“我们被掳掠第二十五年，耶路撒冷城攻破后十四年…”。这是说，以西结书被掳到巴比伦之后第二十五年也等于耶路撒冷攻破之后第十四年，也就是 597 年 - 25 = 572 年，586 年 - 14 = 572 年。这样详细、精确的时间记载不属于传说或几百年以后才编造的‘神话’。

第四，以西结书精确地反映同时期的国际关系，并且很奇妙地预言未来的情况。请看以西结书 29:1-16。这章是公元前 587 年年初写的（看第 1 节）。第 6-7 节指出犹太国和埃及联盟以鼓励西底家王反抗巴比伦。可是结果埃及人在巴勒斯坦被巴比伦人打败以后，埃及的军队就退出了战争，尼布甲尼撒回到耶路撒冷去，就围攻它。公元前 586 年以后，没有任何时期犹太人和埃及有类似的同盟关系。除了确认以西结书写书的日期以外，这也是应验了第 16 节“埃及必不再作以色列家所依靠的”预言。当我们考虑到人类的软弱和以往四百年犹太人和埃及的无数次联盟，我们便会知道 16 节的预言实在很大胆。但是犹太人以后真的是没有再依赖跟埃及的结盟了。

10 课附录 2：确认耶利米书写书的时期

第一，耶利米书 34:7 说：“那时，巴比伦王的军队正攻打耶路撒冷，又攻打犹太所剩下的城邑，就是拉吉和亚西加。原来犹太的坚固城 [设防城] 只剩下这两座。”这指 589 或 588 年的情况。这个细节特征——只有拉吉和亚西加的设防城还没被攻破——已经得到很奇妙的考古学确认。

拉吉城已经被考古学家很彻底地挖掘了。在属于耶利米时代的那一层保存了很多巴比伦人破坏城市的痕迹。1935 和 1938 年，一共掘出十八片被用作书写材料的破碎瓦片，它们几乎全部来自尼布甲尼撒的军队进军拉吉的时候。那些信是一位指挥员写给他的上级的。第四号片最后一段说：“我们正在寻找拉吉城的烽火讯号……因为我们看不见亚西加城。”这句话确认了拉吉和亚西加之间有关系，而且表示它们就是在最晚被巴比伦军队征服的城市中（参考《考古学与圣经历史》190-192 页；《古代近东》第一册 212-214 页）。这两个事实符合耶利米书的记载。

Second, the book of Jeremiah records an alliance between the Jews and Egypt. Jeremiah warned them that this alliance would do them no good:

But now what are you doing on the road to Egypt.....you shall be put to shame by Egypt...Meanwhile, Pharaoh's army had set out from Egypt; and when the Chaldeans who had been besieging Jerusalem heard the report about them, they lifted the siege from Jerusalem. Then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "Thus says Yahweh God of Israel, 'Thus you are to say to the king of Judah, who sent you to Me to inquire of Me:' Behold, Pharaoh's army which has come out for your assistance is going to return to its own land of Egypt. The Chaldeans will also return and fight against this city, and they will capture it and burn it with fire." ' ' (Jeremiah 2:18, 36; 37:5-8)

This situation is completely in accordance with Egypt's then current policy of opposition to Babylon. After the Egyptian army was defeated by Babylon at the battle of Carchemish in 605 BC, Pharaoh still hoped to find a way to regain Egyptian influence or control in Palestine. Indirect evidence for the description in the book of Jeremiah comes from the Lachish ostraca. Letter number three mentions a military leader preparing to go to Egypt, probably to ask the Egyptians to come and help oppose the Babylonians. Jeremiah rebuked this alliance, which showed no trust in God, and predicted its defeat.

Third, Jeremiah records the names and titles of foreigners with complete accuracy. Jeremiah 39:3 reports:

Then all the officials of the king of Babylon came in and sat down at the Middle Gate: Nergal-sar-ezer, Samgar-nebu, Sar-sekim the Rab-saris, Nergal-sar-ezer the Rab-mag, and all the rest of the officials of the king of Babylon. (Jeremiah 39:3)

Jeremiah could only use his mother tongue to record foreign language names and titles, but through modern archaeology and historiography, we can identify these personages. The name "*Nergal-sar-ezer*" is the same as that of Nebuchadnezzar's son-in-law, and probably refers to the same person. Nergal-sar-ezer later became king of Babylon, ruling from 560 to 556 BC. "*Rab-saris*" is a transliteration of a title of a Babylonian official, meaning "first eunuch." Similarly, "*Rab-mag*" means "chief priest" (see The New Unger's Bible Dictionary pp. 917, 1059). Such an accurate record of foreign language names and titles must have come from the relevant time period.

Fourth, Jeremiah 40:33 a prophecy spoken by Jeremiah in Egypt in 586 or 585 BC: "*Thus says Yahweh, 'Behold, I am going to give over Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt to the hand of his enemies, to the hand of those who seek his life, just as I gave over Zedekiah king of Judah to the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, who was his enemy and was seeking his life.'*" Extra-Biblical history confirms that Hophra was Pharaoh 589-69 BC, which accords with the time described in the book of Jeremiah. Concerning the fulfillment of this prophecy, the Greek historian Herodotus reports that Hophra died in a civil war (see Herodotus's Histories, Book 2).

第二，耶利米书记载犹太国跟埃及立了同盟条约，并且耶利米还警告他们这条约对他们并无益处：

现今你为何在埃及路上……你必因埃及蒙羞…法老的军队已经从埃及出来，那围困耶路撒冷的迦勒底人听见他们的风声，就拨营离开耶路撒冷去了。耶和华的话临到先知耶利米说：耶和华以色列的上帝如此说：“犹太王打发你们来求我，你们要如此对他们说：‘那出来帮助你们法老的军队，必回埃及本国去。迦勒底人必再来攻打这城，并要攻取，用火焚烧。’”（耶利米书 2:18, 36; 37:5-8）

这情况完全符合那时埃及抵抗巴比伦的政策。在公元前 605 年发生的迦基米施城战役，埃及军队被巴比伦打败以后，法老还是想想办法恢复埃及对巴勒斯坦地的影响和控制。直接地确认耶利米书所描述的是来自拉吉的书写瓦片。第三号片提到一位将军准备去埃及，大概是要求埃及人去帮助抵抗巴比伦人。耶利米斥责这不信靠上帝的同盟，并且预言它的失败。

第三，耶利米书记载的外国人的名字和称号完全精确。耶利米书 39:3 报告：

耶路撒冷被攻取的时候，巴比伦王的首领尼甲沙利薛、三甲尼波、撒西金、拉撒力、尼甲沙利薛、拉墨，并巴比伦王其余的一切首领都来坐在中门。（耶利米书 39:3）

耶利米只能用他的母语记载外语的称号和名字，可是通过现代的考古学和历史学研究，我们能解释这些人物。“尼甲沙利薛”那个名字跟尼布甲尼撒王的女婿一样，大概是指一样的人。尼甲沙利薛后来作了巴比伦的王，统治期为公元前 560-556 年。“拉撒力”一词是巴比伦官员称号的音译，意思是“众官之首。”同样，“拉墨”是“要员”的意思（参考《新 Unger's 圣经百科全书》917, 1059）。对外语的人名和称号那么准确的记载必然是来自当代。

第四，耶利米书 44:30 记载公元前 586 或 585 年耶利米在埃及说出的预言：“耶和华如此说：我必将埃及王法老合弗拉交在他仇敌和寻索其命的人手中。”圣经以外的历史确认合弗拉当法老是公元前 589-569 年，这符合耶利米书所述说的时间。关于这句预言的应验，古代希腊历史学家希罗多德报告合弗拉在内战时被杀死了（参考希罗多德写的《历史》，第 2 卷）。

Lesson 11: The Prophet Daniel

Before discussing this lesson, please read: Bible: Daniel chapters 1-6.

Daniel was a Jew from the southern kingdom of Judah. He was among those carried into exile in Babylon in 605 BC. He was taken captive in his youth, and lived in Babylon until 530 BC. He was an official in Nebuchadnezzar's court and attained high office. In 539 BC, the allied Medes and Persians under Cyrus conquered the Babylonian empire. King Cyrus founded the Persian empire (539-331 BC). Under Persian rule, Daniel once again served as a high official. Although critics have denied the historical authenticity of the book of Daniel, the past hundred years of archaeological and historical research have confirmed its record. Interested readers should consult the appendix of this lesson.

The book of Daniel includes prophecies fulfilled between 458 BC and 70 AD, as well as some fulfilled even later. The oldest copy of the book of Daniel which we currently possess, according to the dating of the critics, comes from before 100 BC, perhaps as early as 120 BC. This is only a copy; the original must be older. In any case, we will examine prophecies fulfilled after 100 BC. We will focus on four:

1. The four empires which would control Israel after Daniel's time.
2. The coming of the Messiah (Jesus Christ) in 26 AD
3. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple after the Messiah had been put to death.
4. The worldwide scattering of the Jews after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (this prophecy is in the Biblical books of Deuteronomy and the Gospel of Luke).

In Lesson 16, we will look at Daniel's prophecies concerning the return of the Jews to Israel in 1948 AD, and prophecies concerning the endtime.

Biblical Passage	Prophecy	Date of Prophecy (Appx.)	Date of Fulfillment	Time between Prophecy and Fulfillment
Genesis 12, 22, 26	All the people of the world will be blessed through Abraham's offspring	2000 BC	begins 30 AD	2,000 years until begins.
Genesis 12, 13, 15, 17	The land of Canaan (Palestine) will belong to Abraham's descendants (Jews) forever.	2000 BC	c. 1400 BC to now	600 yrs. until begins; 4,000 yrs. (from prophecy to now)
Deuteronomy 28	Worldwide scattering of the Jews	1400 BC	70-135AD	More than 1,400 yrs.
Deuteronomy 30	Scattered Jews will recover an independent nation	1400 BC	1948 AD	More than 3,300 yrs.
Isaiah 7	Northern kingdom of Israel destroyed, the people lose national identity	732 BC	721-670 BC	c. 60 yrs.
Isaiah 39	People of southern kingdom of Judah taken captive to Babylon	700 BC	597-586 BC	More than 100 yrs.
Isaiah 46, 49, 52	Worldwide there will be people worshipping the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ	700 BC	Beg.c.1800 AD, some outstanding	2,500 years until begins
Ezekiel 29	Egypt to be weak, never again to control another nation	587 BC	Continues to now	2,500 yrs. (from prophecy to now)
Ezekiel 26	Tyre to be destroyed, its rocks thrown in the sea	586 BC	332 BC	250 years
Jeremiah 29	Jews to return to Israel from Babylon	597-88 BC	517 BC	More than 70 yrs.
Jeremiah 51	Babylon to be totally desolate, never to be rebuilt	593 BC	Beg. c. 300 BC	More than 300 yrs.
Jeremiah 33	As long as the earth lasts, there will be Jews	588-86 BC	Continues to now	More than 2,575 yrs. (from prophecy to now)
Daniel 2, 7, 8	The four great empires which would control Israel	604-551 BC	539BC—1948 AD	2,500 years
Daniel 9	Time of the appearance of the Messiah (Jesus Christ) in Israel	539 BC	26 AD	565 years

Prophecies discussed in this lesson:

11 课：先知但以理

讨论此课之前请阅读：《圣经》：但以理书 1 至 6 章。

但以理是来自犹太南方王国的犹太人，是公元前 605 年被掳到巴比伦的人质之一。他少年时被俘虏，在巴比伦活到约公元前 530 年。他在尼布甲尼撒的宫殿当官并得到很高的地位。在 539 年，玛代与波斯人的联盟在古列王的领导之下征服了巴比伦帝国。古列王建立了波斯帝国（公元前 539-331 年）。在波斯人统治下，但以理再次当高官。尽管有批评者否认但以理书的历史确实性，但一百年来的考古学和历史学研究已经确认了它的记载。感兴趣的读者请参考此课的附录。

但以理书中的记载包括公元前 458 年至公元 70 年以及更晚的时间应验的预言。我们现在拥有的最古老的但以理书，根据批评者们鉴定，是来自公元前 100 年之前，或者早于公元前 120 年。这只不过算是其中的一个版本，原版当然是更古老了。不过，我们可以来看在公元前 100 年之后得到应验的预言。我们看主要的四个：

1. 但以理时代以后四个统治以色列的帝国
2. 弥赛亚（指耶稣基督）在公元 26 年来到世间
3. 弥赛亚被处死之后，耶路撒冷和圣殿被毁坏
4. 耶路撒冷和圣殿被毁坏之后，犹太人的全球性分散（这个预言写在圣经的申命记和路加福音中）

在第 16 课，我们将会看但以理关于犹太人在公元 1948 年回归以色列的预言和关于末世的预言。

圣经段落	预言	发表预言年份(大约)	应验时间	预言和应验之间的时间
<u>创</u> 12, 22, 26	<u>亚伯拉罕</u> 的后代(指 <u>耶稣</u>)将使全球的人得到祝福	公元前 2000 年	公元 30 年起	两千年才开始
<u>创世记</u> 12, 13, 15, 17	<u>迦南地</u> (指 <u>以色列</u>)会永远属于 <u>亚伯拉罕</u> 的后代(指 <u>犹太人</u>)	公元前 2000 年	公元前约 1400 年起，一直至今	六百年才开始: 四千年(从发表预言直到现)
<u>申命记</u> 28	<u>犹太人</u> 分散到世界各地	公元前 1400	公元 70-135	一千四百多年
<u>申命记</u> 30	分散到全球的 <u>犹太人</u> 恢复他们独立的国家	公元前 1400	公元 1948	三千三百多年
<u>以赛亚</u> 7	<u>以色列</u> 北方王国毁灭、人民失去国籍身份	公元前 732	公元前 721-670	约六十年
<u>以赛亚</u> 39	<u>犹太南方王国</u> 的人民被俘虏到 <u>巴比伦</u>	公元前 700	公元前 597-586	一百多年
<u>以赛亚</u> 46, 49, 52	全世界将有人崇拜 <u>犹太人</u> 的 <u>弥赛亚</u> ，即 <u>耶稣基督</u>	公元前 700	约公元 1800 起(小部分未实现)	两千五百年才开始
<u>以西结</u> 29	<u>埃及</u> 很衰弱，永远不再控制别的国家	公元前 587	一直至今	两千五百多年(从发表预言直到现在)
<u>以西结</u> 26	<u>推罗城</u> 被摧毁、石头被扔在海里	公元前 586	公元前 332	两百五十四年
<u>耶利米</u> 29	<u>犹太人</u> 从 <u>巴比伦</u> 回归 <u>以色列地</u>	公元前 597-88	公元前 517	七十多年
<u>耶利米</u> 51	<u>巴比伦</u> 会完全荒凉、永远不被重建	公元前 593	公元前 300 之后起	三百多年
<u>耶利米</u> 33	只要地球还存在， <u>犹太</u> 民族会永远存在	公元前 588-86	一直至今	两千五百七十五多年(从发表预言直到现在)
<u>但以理</u> 2、7、8	统治 <u>以色列</u> 国的四个大帝国	公元前 604-551	公元前 539-公元 1948	两千五百年
<u>但以理</u> 9	<u>弥赛亚</u> (<u>耶稣基督</u>) 在 <u>以色列</u> 出现的时间	公元前 539	公元 26	五百六十五年

此课所讨论的预言为：

Daniel's 70 'Sevens' and the Coming of the Messiah

Here please read Daniel chapter 7. Note the prophecy he makes here concerning four great empires:

And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another. The first was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it. And behold, another beast, a second one, resembling a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they said to it, "Arise, devour much meat!" After this I kept looking, and behold, another one, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird; the beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great boasts.

These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth.

Thus he [the angel] said: "The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms, and it will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings." (Daniel 7:3-8, 17, 23-24)

In Daniel 2:37 we find that the first empire is Babylon. The second and third empires are Medo-Persia and the Greeks. We know that the Roman empire came after the Greeks. Thus we can make the historical identifications:

- 1. Lion ----- Babylon ----- 625 — 539 BC
- 2. Bear ----- Medo-Persia ----- 539 — 331 BC
- 3. Leopard ----- Greeks (divided into 4) ----- 331 — 63 BC
- 4. Terrifying, extremely strong beast ---- Rome (in Israel) ----- 63 BC --- 70 AD
(in the Mediterranean) ----- 200 BC -- 476 AD

Empire Controlling Palestine	Time
Babylon	605 ↓
539	
Medo-Persia	539 ↓
331	
Greeks (Later divided into 4 parts)	331 ↓
143 (Israel temporarily independent)	
143 (Greek empires continue)	↓
63	
Romans	63 BC ↓
Israel destroyed, Jews scattered	70 AD
Nation of Israel re-established	1948 AD

Although other areas of the world had many different empires during these time periods, God only told Daniel about the empires ruling Palestine. This is because God has chosen to take His truth to the world through the Jews. The Jewish people have never been a powerful people or nation. On the contrary, during most of their history, the Jews have been despised, oppressed, and ruled by other nations. This reveals one of God's principles in dealing with sinners: *"but God has chosen...the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen...that no man should boast before God."* (1 Corinthians 1:27-29). God wants us to know His salvation comes from His own power, not from the strength of a people or nation.

Note the amazing accuracy of Daniel's prophecies. He precisely predicted:

- 1. After the Babylonians would come the Medes and the Persians.
- 2. After the Medes and the Persians would come the Greeks.
- 3. After the death of Alexander the Great, the Greek empire would be divided (see 8:22).
- 4. The essential difference between the Roman empire and the others would be its great power, broad scope, and longevity. It was without precedent in prior history.
- 5. The fourth empire would not be directly overturned by another empire, but would be fragmented into *"ten horns"* ruled by ten kings. This is what actually happened after the Roman empire.
- 6. After this, there would not again be an imperial power ruling Israel. (Although there were many other nations which controlled Palestine after the Roman empire, Israel was not a nation-state.)
- 7. When Israel would again exist as a nation-state, the political power replacing the ancient Roman empire would not be a pure, united empire, but a multi-ethnic alliance.

但以理书描写的四个帝国

请读这里但以理书的第7章。注意在这里他作出对四大帝国的预言：

有四个大兽从海中上来，形状各有不同，头一个象狮子，有鹰的翅膀。我正观看的时候，兽的翅膀被拨去，兽从地上得立起来，用两脚站立，象人一样，又得了人心。又有一兽如熊，就是第二兽，旁跨而坐，口齿内衔着三根肋骨，有吩咐这兽的说：“起来吞吃多肉。”此后我观看，又有一兽如豹，背上有鸟的四个翅膀；这兽有四个头，又得了权柄。其后我在夜间的异象中观看，见第四兽甚是可怕，极其强壮，大有力量。有大铁牙，吞吃嚼碎，所剩下的用脚踏踏。这兽与前三兽大不相同，头有十角。我正观看这些角，见其中又长起一个小角，先前的角中有三角在这角前，连根被它拔出来。这角有眼，象人的眼，有口说夸大的话。

这四个大兽就是四王将要在世上兴起…

那侍立者[天使]这样说：“第四兽就是世上必有第四国，与一切国大不相同，必吞吃全地，并且脚踏嚼碎。至于那十角，就是从这国中必兴起的十王，后来又兴起一王，与先前的不同，他必制伏三王。”（但以理书 7:3-8, 17, 23-24）

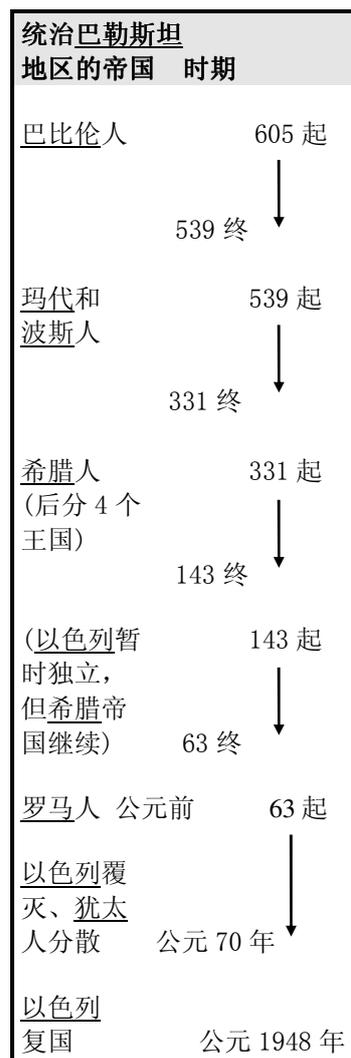
在但以理书 2:37 里我们可以找到第一个帝国是巴比伦帝国。第二个帝国和第三个帝国分别是玛代—波斯帝国和希腊帝国。我们知道在希腊帝国之后是罗马帝国，因此，我们便可以作出历史的鉴定：

1. 狮子-----巴比伦帝国-----公元前 625--539
2. 熊-----玛代—波斯帝国-----公元前 539--331
3. 豹-----希腊帝国（分裂4部份）----公元前 331--63
4. 可怕、强壮的兽---罗马帝国（在以色列）-----公元前 63--公元 70
（在地中海地区）-----公元前 200--公元 476

虽然在这个时期世界其它地方也有许多帝国，但是上帝只告诉但以理统治巴勒斯坦地区的那些帝国。这是因为上帝已经选择了通过犹太人把他的真理带到世界。犹太民族从来也不是一个强大的民族或国家，相反地，在大部分犹太历史中，他们都是被轻视，被压迫，被其他国家统治。这也显明了上帝对罪人的原则中的一条：“上帝却……拣选了世上软弱的，叫那强壮的羞愧；上帝也拣选了世上卑贱、被人厌恶的……使一切有血气的，在上帝面前一个也不能自夸”（哥林多前书 1:27-29）。上帝要我们知道他的救恩是来自他的力量，而不是来自一个民族或一个国家的强大。

注意这里但以理令人惊讶的精确的预言。他准确地预测：

1. 在巴比伦之后的玛代人和波斯人。
2. 在玛代人和波斯人之后的希腊人。
3. 在亚历山大大帝死后希腊帝国的分裂（看 8:22）。
4. 罗马帝国与在它之前几个帝国性质上的区别是它势力之大，面积之广，时间之长，史无前例。
5. 第四帝国将不会被另一个帝国直接推翻，而将会分裂成“十个角”由十个王统治。这正是罗马帝国后来的遭遇。
6. 自此以后，再没有帝国势力统治过以色列国。（虽然在罗马帝国以后还有许多其他国家统治过巴勒斯坦地区，以色列再也没有以一个国家的身份出现过。）
7. 当以色列再次以一个国家存在的时候，代替古罗马帝国的政权的也不会再是一个单纯的、统一的帝国，而是一个多民族的联合政权。



When we examine Daniel’s most amazing prophecy, that concerning the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, the prophecies here will become more clear.

Daniel’s 70 ‘Sevens’ and the Coming of the Messiah

The most amazing prophecy in the book of Daniel is the calculation about the coming of the Messiah. Living several hundred years before the time of Jesus Christ, Daniel was able to forecast the exact time when Jesus Christ began preaching. Please read Daniel 9, the entire chapter. This chapter says:

In the first year of Darius...who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans [539 BC].....then the [angel] Gabriel.... talked with me, and said, “Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place. So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah [literally, anointed one] the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah [literally, anointed one] will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.” (Daniel 9:1, 21-22, 24-26)

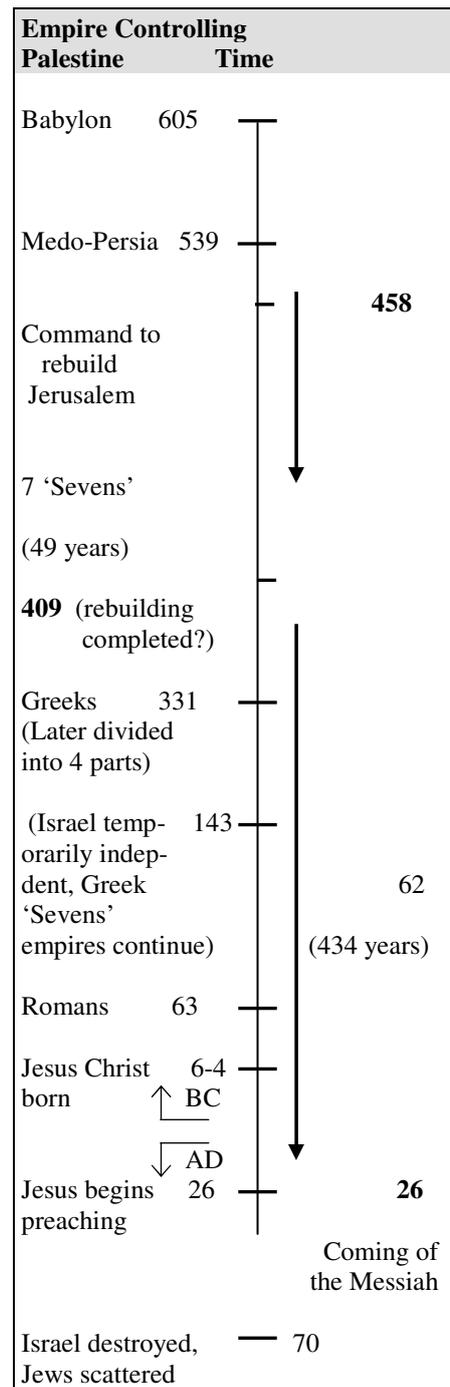
Note that here “Messiah” refers to the anointed one. The literal meaning of both Messiah and Christ is ‘anointed one,’ which means ‘one who has been anointed with oil.’ At that time in Israel, people who were being inaugurated into a position of special service, especially prophets, priests, or kings, were anointed on the head with a special oil at the time of inauguration. Thus “anointed one” refers to prophet, priest and king.

In this passage, every “seven” refers to seven years. There are three sets of “sevens” referring to time periods, with a total of seventy “sevens”:

7	“sevens”	=	49 years
62	“sevens”	=	434 years
1	“seven”	=	7 years
<hr/>			
Total:	70	“sevens”	= 490 years

The seventy ‘seven years’ are counted beginning “from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.” Daniel received this prophecy by revelation from God in 539 BC, which was “the first year of Darius...who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans.” At the time Daniel saw the vision, Jerusalem had been a desolation since 586 BC when King Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed it. At that time Daniel was specifically told the starting point of the seventy ‘seven years’ would be “from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.” When did this occur? Seventy years after Daniel, a Jew named Ezra returned from Babylon to Jerusalem and began to rebuild the city wall of Jerusalem (see Ezra 4:11-13). The time when he returned to Jerusalem is cited as “the seventh year of King Artaxerxes” (Ezra 7:7-8). From extra-Biblical history we know that the seventh year of King Artaxerxes was 458 BC. Therefore the starting point of Daniel’s seventy ‘seven years’ was 458 BC.

Now we can calculate the time of the coming of the Messiah (Jesus Christ) as predicted by Daniel. Beginning from 458 BC, the Messiah predicted to come after seven ‘seven years’ plus sixty-two ‘seven years,’ which is 483 years. Calculating from 458 BC, 483 years later is 26 AD. **And 26 AD is recognized by the majority of scholars as the time when Jesus Christ began preaching.** Very likely, Jesus Christ was crucified in 30 AD, and He preached for three and a half years before that, which means starting in 26 AD. An important thing to point out here is that these dates are not calculated based on the prophecies in the book of Daniel. They are completely based on later, first century AD historical materials and archaeological discoveries, mostly materials outside of the Bible.



当我们看到但以理最令人惊讶的预言：关于弥赛亚即耶稣基督的到来的预言，这里其中的一些预言将会更清楚。

但以理的 70 个“七”和弥赛亚的到来。

但以理最令人惊讶的预言是对弥赛亚到来的预测。生活在耶稣基督时代的几百年以前，但以理能够预测到耶稣基督开始传道的准确时间。请读但以理书第 9 章全部。此章说：

大利乌立为迦勒底国的王元年 [公元前 539 年] …先前在异象中所见的那位 [天使] 加百列……指教我说：“…为你本国之民和你圣城，已经定了七十个七。要止住罪过，除净罪恶，赎尽罪孽，引进永义，封住异象和预言，并膏至圣者。你当知道、当明白，从出令重新建造耶路撒冷，直到有受膏君的时候，必有七个七和六十二个七。正在艰难的时候，耶路撒冷城连街带濠都必重新建造。过了六十二个七，那受膏者必被剪除，一无所有，必有一王之民来毁灭这城和圣所，至终必如洪水冲没。必有争战，一直到底，荒凉的事已经定了。”（但以理书 9:1, 21-22, 24-26）

注意在这里弥赛亚是指“受膏者”。弥赛亚和基督字面的意思都是‘受膏者’，是指‘被膏油涂抹者’的意思。在那个时代的以色列，那些将要在特别的地方就职的人，特别是先知、祭司或君王，就职的时候要用特制的膏油涂抹在他们的头上。因此“受膏者”借代指先知、祭司、君王。

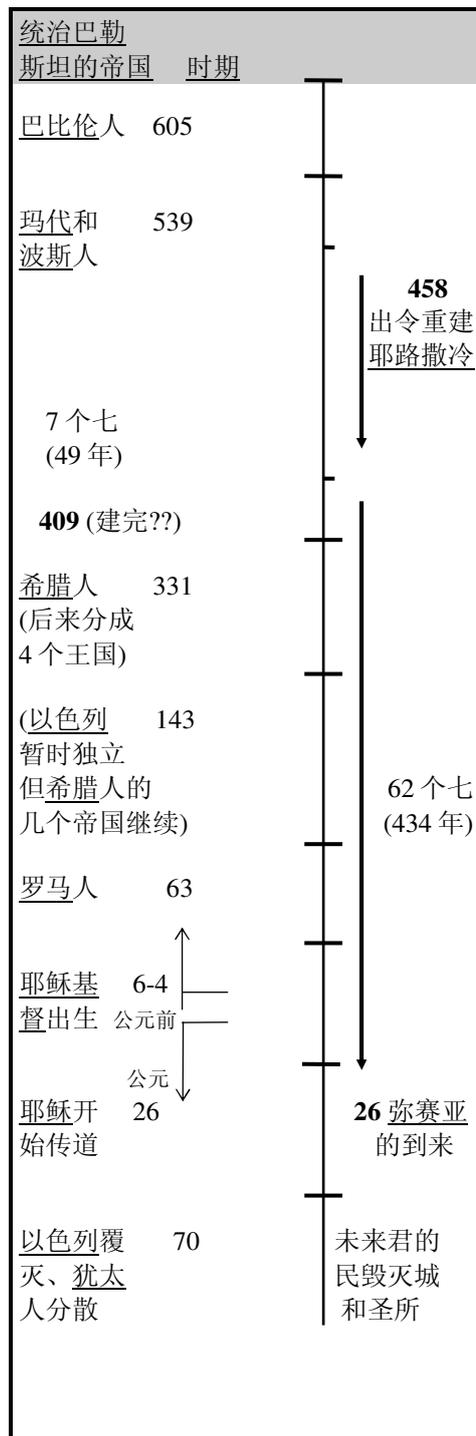
在这一段，每个“七”都是指七年。里面有三个有“七”是指时间的地方，一共有七十个“七”：

7 个“七” = 49 年
62 个“七” = 434 年
1 个“七” = 7 年

一共是：70 个“七” = 490 年

那 70 个‘七年’是以“从出令重新建造耶路撒冷”开始。但以理是在公元前 539 年通过上帝的启示知道这个预言的，那是“大利乌立为迦勒底国的王”第一年。当但以理看到异象的时候，耶路撒冷城自从在公元前 586 年，被尼布甲尼撒毁坏后还是一片荒凉，但以理具体地得知第 70 个‘七年’会“从出令重新建造耶路撒冷”这事件为开始。而那又是发生在什么时候呢？在但以理之后的 70 多年，有位叫以斯拉的犹太人，从巴比伦回到耶路撒冷，而且开始重建耶路撒冷城的城墙（看以斯拉记 4:11-13）。他回耶路撒冷的时间被定为“亚达薛西王第七年”（以斯拉记 7:7-8）。根据圣经之外的史料，我们知道亚达薛西王第七年是公元前 458 年。因此但以理的 70 个‘七年’开始于公元前 458 年。

现在我们来计算但以理对弥赛亚（即耶稣基督）到来的时间的预测。从公元前 458 年开始，预计弥赛亚将会在 7 个‘七年’加 62 个‘七年’即 483 年以后来到。从公元前 458 年开始算起，483 年以后是公元 26 年。而公元 26 年则是大多数学者公认的耶稣基督开始传道的时间。耶稣基督很有可能是在公元 30 年被钉十字架，而他传道的时间是在此之前的三年半，那就是公元 26 年。在这里我们还要指出很重要的一点就是这些时间都不是根据但以理书中的预言来确定的，它们都完全是根据公元一世纪、后期的历史资料和考古学家们的发现而确定的，它们大部分都是圣经以外的材料。



Please remember that the book of Daniel was actually written before 500 BC. Furthermore, a copy we now possess comes from 120 BC, so even unbelieving critics must admit that Daniel's prophecy was written more than a hundred years before Jesus came. Reasonably speaking, we must ask: how did Daniel know future events? It is simply because the true God revealed them to him.

Thus we find that Daniel had predicted the specific year of the coming of the Messiah, namely 26 AD, 500 years before it happened. Indisputably, Jesus Christ is the only person who has ever been widely recognized as the Messiah. Not only this, but Daniel also prophesied what would happen to Jesus Christ. He said: "*Then after the sixty-two weeks [that is, after 26 AD] the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing*" (Daniel 9:26). Daniel prophesied that after the Messiah came – he did not say how long after – he would be put to death. This is just what happened to Jesus Christ. Three and a half years after He began His preaching, He was put to death on a cross. His death was to bear our sins. Because of it, God is able to both justly judge sin and at the same time allow us to not to be punished, because Jesus Christ took our punishment in our place. Because of this, we can be forgiven.

Events after the Sixty-second 'Seven'

Daniel prophesied further about this. Concerning events after the Messiah had been put to death, he prophesied:

...the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.... (Daniel 9:26; please note, the Chinese Union version translation of this verse is not very good; the scripture as quoted here in Chinese has been corrected [English NAS **not** modified])

Although Daniel did not say how long after, it apparently should have been after the Messiah (Jesus Christ) had been cut off (30 AD). This was, in fact, the case. Forty years after Jesus was put to death, in 70 AD, the Roman empire completely destroyed all of Jerusalem and the temple.

Not only Daniel, but also Jesus Christ prophesied about this. Speaking of what was to happen in 70 AD, He warned His disciples:

And while some were talking about the temple, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said, "As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down." And they questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, when therefore will these things be? And what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?" ... But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people, and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (Luke 21:5-7, 20-24)

That is what actually happened. In 66 AD, the Jews rebelled against the Roman empire. Thereupon the Romans quickly sent troops to surround Jerusalem. Amazingly, the Roman army then temporarily withdrew, giving the people in the city, including Christians, a chance to escape. This explains why it was not too late for people inside the city to leave when the city had already been tightly surrounded by the army. At the same time, the rebel army gathered more men and material into the city. Then the Roman army returned to Jerusalem. By 70 AD it had occupied and destroyed the city and the temple. Hundreds of thousands of Jews died, and many of the survivors were sold as slaves. This was the beginning of the great Diaspora of the Jews. After this, the Romans refounded Jerusalem as a Gentile city, including erecting an idol temple on the site of the former temple. In 135 AD, the all of the remaining Jews still living in Palestine were exiled. At that time, after another rebellion by the Jews, the Romans seized all remaining land owned by Jews in Palestine.

Since 70 AD, just as Jesus Christ foretold, Jerusalem has always been trampled under foot by Gentiles (non-Jews). Even today, the Jews still do not truly control all of the city. Since 686 AD, Muslims have occupied the ancient site of the Jewish temple. There they constructed the so-called "Dome of the Rock" mosque (also know as the Mosque of Omar). From this we can see that the times of the "*Gentiles*" which Jesus prophesied are not yet finished.

The thorough evidence above testifies to the accuracy of Biblical prophecy. They were all written several centuries before the events occurred. Here, however, we will look at another prophecy, the most ancient prophecy concerning the scattering of the Jews. In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses warned the Jews of the terrible consequences of not obeying God. He listed several punishments, the final one of which would be worldwide Diaspora:

请记住但以理书事实上是写于公元前 500 年之前。而且我们现有的抄本是来自公元前 120 年，所以连非信徒批评者也不得不承认但以理的预言是写于耶稣基督到来的一百多年前。按道理来看我们要问，但以理怎么知道未来的事情？是因为真神上帝给他启示而已。

因此，我们发现但以理在弥赛亚到来的 500 年以前已经预计到这件事发生的具体年份，那就是公元 26 年。无可争辩，耶稣基督是唯一的一位被大众认为是弥赛亚的人。这还不算，但以理还预言了将要发生在耶稣基督身上的事。他说：“过了六十个七”（指公元 26 年以后）“那受膏者必被剪除，一无所有”（但以理书 9:26）。但以理预言，那位弥赛亚到来之后，但没有说再过多久之后，他就会被杀掉。这正是发生在耶稣基督身上的事，在他开始传道三年半以后，他被钉死在十字架上。他的死是为了担当我们的罪，因此上帝既可以公义地审判罪又使我们免除了惩罚，因为耶稣基督代替我们受了惩罚，我们也因此可以得到赦免。

第 62 个“七”之后发生的事情

但以理甚至对此作出了进一步的预言。关于弥赛亚被杀掉之后的事，他预言：

…那受膏者必被剪除，一无所有，必有一位未来君的民来毁灭这城和圣所…（但以理书 9:26；请注意，此节中文和合本可能翻译得不太好，这里引用的经文已经改正了。）

虽然但以理没有说这是多久之后的事，但看来应该是弥赛亚（耶稣基督）被剪除的那年（公元 30 年）之后，而事实也是如此。在耶稣基督被杀的四十年之后，在公元 70 年，罗马帝国完全毁坏了整个耶路撒冷城和它的圣殿。

不仅是但以理，耶稣基督对此也有预言。当耶稣基督谈到那件将在公元 70 年发生的事，他警告他的门徒：

有人谈论圣殿是用美石和供物妆饰的；耶稣就说：“论到你们所看见的这一切，将来日子到了，在这里没有一块石头留在石头上，不被拆毁了。”他们问他说：“夫子！什么时候有这事呢？这事将到的时候，有什么预兆呢？”……“你们看见耶路撒冷被兵围困，就可知道它成荒场的日子近了。那时，在犹太的，应当逃到山上；在城里的，应当出来；在乡下的，不要进城。因为这是报应的日子，使经上所写的都得应验。当那些日子，怀孕的和奶孩子的有祸了！因为将有大大灾难降在这地方，也有震怒临到这百姓。他们要倒在刀下，又被掳到各国去；耶路撒冷要被外邦人践踏，直到外邦人的日期满了。”（路加福音 21:5-7, 20-24）

这正是以后所发生的事。在公元 66 年，犹太人反抗罗马帝国，于是罗马帝国很快地派兵围困了耶路撒冷。后来，令人惊讶地，罗马帝国的军队居然作出了暂时的撤退，这便给了城中的人们，包括基督徒，逃走的机会。这也解释了为什么虽然耶路撒冷已被军队重重围困，但是对于城中的人们要离开也不算太迟。同时，叛军聚集了更多的人和物资进耶路撒冷。于是，罗马帝国的军队回师耶路撒冷，而到了公元 70 年就占领、毁坏了该城市和圣殿。几十万个犹太人死了，许多生还的也被卖作奴隶，这就是犹太人大分散的开始。在此之后，罗马人把耶路撒冷重新建设成一座外邦人的城市，包括在耶和華圣殿原来所在的地方建造了偶像的殿。在公元 135 年，剩下来还居住在巴勒斯坦地区的犹太人完全地被驱逐了。那时，罗马人在犹太人的又一次反抗之后，没收了所有犹太人在以色列拥有的剩余的土地。

自从公元 70 年以来，正如耶稣基督预言的那样，耶路撒冷一直被外邦人（非犹太人）践踏。甚至直到今天，犹太人仍然没有真正地控制整个城市，从公元 686 年起，伊斯兰教徒就一直占据着犹太人的圣殿的旧址，建造了那座称为‘石顶’的清真寺（‘Dome of the Rock’，有名奥玛清真寺）。由此我们便可以看到耶稣基督所预言的“外邦人”的时代还没有完结。

以上充足的证据，证明圣经里面的预言的准确性。它们都是在事件发生的几个世纪以前写好的。但我们在这里还要再看一个预言，是关于犹太人分散的最古老的预言。在申命记里，摩西警告犹太人不服从上帝的严重后果。他列举了许多惩罚，最后的一条就是世界性的分散：

Moreover, Yahweh will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known. And among those nations you shall find no rest, and there shall be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there Yahweh will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul. ... And Yahweh will bring you back to Egypt in ships, by the way about which I spoke to you, 'You will never see it again!' And there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer. (Deuteronomy 28:64-65, 68)

This prophecy was written before 1400 BC. Even if we doubt this, we have copies of portions of Deuteronomy dating from 300 BC, and a partial copy which includes chapter 28 dating from 150 BC. Although the Jews had been exiled to Babylon, they were not scattered to every place on the earth until 70 AD. Moreover, before that time there is no record of large numbers of Jews being sent to Egypt as slaves. The historian Josephus records that in 70 AD the Romans sent tens of thousands of Jewish survivors as slaves to the mines in Egypt. Besides being sent to the mines, Josephus also records that many were sold as slaves. So many were sold as slaves that the market was glutted. Thus the prophecies made by Moses in 1400 BC, by Daniel in 539 BC, and by Jesus in 30 AD were fulfilled.

Careful readers will note that we have not discussed the Daniel's final period of 'seven years,' that is, the seventieth 'seven.' That period belongs to the endtimes and will be discussed in Lesson 16.

Lesson 11 Appendix: Confirming the Date of Composition of the Book of Daniel

Probably no book in the entire Bible has such a severe attack by unbelieving critics as the book of Daniel. In the past, the critics' favorite so-called 'historical error' in Daniel was its record of the name of the last king of Babylon. Extra-Biblical history very clearly states that the name of the last king of the Babylonian empire was Nabonidus, but Daniel says the last king was named "*Belshazzar*," as in 5:29: "*Then Belshazzar gave orders, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a necklace of gold around his neck, and issued a proclamation concerning him that he now had authority as the third ruler in the kingdom.*" Why does Daniel call the last king of Babylon "*Belshazzar*"? And why does it say this king made Daniel "*the third ruler*" instead of the 'second ruler' as the reader would expect? Later, archaeologists discovered that the last king, Nabonidus, was often absent from Babylon, living in the city of Teman in the Arabian desert. Nabonidus appointed his son Belshazzar as regent, and therefore Belshazzar was also considered king. Clay tablets (commonly used by the Babylonians as writing material) have been unearthed which show that Belshazzar had this status. Therefore, not only is the book of Daniel not mistaken in saying Belshazzar was the Babylonian empire's last "*king*," but the detail about his making Daniel "*the third ruler in the kingdom*" is also completely correct (see [Archaeology and Bible History](#) pp. 200-201).

Another detail confirming the accuracy of the book of Daniel is chapter four's record of Nebuchadnezzar's boast: "*The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?'*" (Daniel 4:30). Modern archaeologists have discovered that Nebuchadnezzar rebuilt many of Babylon's buildings and added a new section on the west side of the river. Concerning this point, the famous critic Pfeiffer has very unconvincingly written "presumably we shall never know how the writer of Daniel knew" that Babylon was built and rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar (see [Archaeology and Bible History](#) pp. 196-97). Because Pfeiffer believed that the book of Daniel was written after 170 BC in Palestine, he could not understand its historical accuracy!

The language used in the book of Daniel gives us another very convincing proof that it was written **before** 300 BC. The main languages used in the book of Daniel are Hebrew and Aramaic. We have documents in Hebrew and Aramaic coming from after 250 BC. The Hebrew and Aramaic used in Daniel are not like these late documents, but like the language of 600 to 300 BC. The Persian language terms in Daniel, especially governmental terms, certainly come from before 300 BC. In 332 BC, Alexander the Great led the Greeks in conquest of Palestine and the entire Persian empire. Persian language governmental technical terms quickly became obsolete. The result was that, by the time the Jews translated the Old Testament of the Bible into Greek (c. 250-150 BC), the meaning of many of the Persian technical terms in the book of Daniel had been forgotten, and the translators could only guess at their meanings. Through modern archaeology, we are now able to understand the correct meanings of these terms. They come from the period of the Persian empire.

Regarding the Greek language, after 300 BC the Jews used more and more words borrowed from Greek. But in the book of Daniel there are only two or at most three Greek loanwords. They are all special terms for musical instruments. Documents in the Assyrian language dating from **before** 600 BC record that Greek musicians and musical instruments had already come into Mesopotamia at that time. Moreover, other historical sources testify that Nebuchadnezzar made use of Greek immigrants. Not surprisingly, by Daniel's time, there were two or three Greek technical terms for musical instruments in use in Babylon. If, however, the book of Daniel actually came from **after** 165 BC, where are all the Greek words? A document in Hebrew and Aramaic from such a late period should have many Greek loanwords (see Archer's [Introduction to Old Testament](#)).

耶和華必使你們分散在萬民中，從地這邊到地那邊，你們在那里侍奉你和你列祖素不認識木头石頭的神。在那些國中，你們必不得安逸，也不得落脚之地，耶和華却使你們在那里心中跳動，眼目失明，精神消耗。……耶和華必使你坐船回埃及去，走我曾告訴你不得再見的路，在那里你必賣己身與仇敵作奴婢，却無人買。（申命記 28:64-65, 68）

这个预言写于约公元前 1400 年，就算我们对此还有疑问，我们已经拥有来自公元前 300 年的申命记的部分版本以及来自约公元前 150 年的 28 章的部分抄本。虽然犹太人被掳到巴比伦，但他们直到公元 70 年才真正分散到世界各地。再者，在此之前没有任何记录记载大量的犹太人被送到埃及作奴隶。历史学家约瑟夫斯（Josephus）记载，公元 70 年罗马人把成千上万幸存的犹太人送到埃及去作奴隶矿工。除了被送去作矿工的以外，约瑟夫斯也记载很多犹太人被卖作奴隶。被卖的人数那么多，市场一时塞满了如此之多的奴隶。由此，摩西在公元前 1400 年，但以理在公元前 539 年，耶稣在公元 30 年所作的预言被具体应验了。

细心的读者会注意到我们还没有讨论但以理的最后一个‘七年’的时期即第七十个“七”。那时间就是属于末世时期，在以下的第 16 课讨论。

11 课附录：确认但以理写书的时期

全本圣经里面，大概没有另一操卷书象但以理书一样受到非信徒批评者那么厉害的攻击。以前，批评者最喜欢提到但以理书所谓的‘历史错误’是对巴比伦帝国最后一个王的名字的记载。圣经以外的历史书很清楚地指出巴比伦帝国最后一个王是拿波尼度，可是但以理说最后一个王是一个叫“伯沙撒”的人，例如 5:29：“伯沙撒下令，人就把紫袍给但以理穿上，把金链给他戴在颈项上，又传令使他在国中位列第三。”为什么但以理把巴比伦最后一个王称为“伯沙撒？”为什么又说这个王把但以理任命为“第三”而不是读者所预期的‘第二’？后来，考古学家发现巴比伦帝国最后一个王拿波尼度长时间离开巴比伦，居住在阿拉伯沙漠里的提玛城。拿波尼度任命他儿子伯沙撒作为领导统治者，因此伯沙撒也被认为算是王。被挖掘出来的一些泥土碑（是通常巴比伦人用来书写的材料）也证明伯沙撒有这个地位。所以，不但但以理书说伯沙撒是巴比伦帝国最后一个“王”是没错的，而且说他使但以理“在国中位列第三”这个细节也是完全正确的（参考《考古学与圣经历史》200-201 页）。

另一个确认但以理书准确性的细节是在第 4 章记载的尼布甲尼撒的夸口：“他说：‘这大巴比伦不是我用大能大力建为京都，要显我威严的荣耀吗？’”（但以理书 4:30）。现代考古学家发现尼布甲尼撒重建了巴比伦城很多的大楼，并且增加了河西面的新区。关于这点，有名的批评者 Pfeiffer 无说服力地写道“推测上，我们永远不会知道但以理书的作者怎么知道”巴比伦城是尼布甲尼撒所建立和重建的（参考《考古学与圣经历史》196-197 页）。因为 Pfeiffer 断言但以理书公元前 170 年以后在巴勒斯坦地区写的，他很难解释它的历史精确性！

但以理书中所使用的语言向人们提供了另一种非常有说服力的证据，告诉我们但以理书是写于公元前 300 年之前。但以理书主要用的语言是希伯来语和亚拉姆语。我们有来自公元前 250 年之后的希伯来语和亚拉姆语文件。但以理书所用的希伯来语和亚拉姆语都不象那些晚期的文件，而象公元前 600 至 300 年的语言。但以理书中的波斯语词汇，特别是与政治有关的词汇，肯定是来自公元前 300 年之前。公元前 332 年，亚历山大大帝率领希腊人控制巴勒斯坦以及波斯帝国，波斯语的政治术语马上淘汰了。结果是，到了犹太人把旧约圣经翻译成希腊语（约公元前 250-150 年）时，很多但以理书中的波斯语术语的意思已经被忘记、翻译者只能猜想它们的意思。通过现代考古学，现在我们能够理解这些词真正的意义，它们是来自波斯帝国时期。

关于希腊语，公元前 300 年之后的犹太人使用了越来越多来自希腊语的外来词。可是但以理书中只有两个或最多三个希腊语外来词，都是特殊的乐器的名称。属于公元前 600 年之前的亚述语文件记载，当时希腊人音乐家和乐器已经进入米所波大米地区，并且其它历史材料证明尼布甲尼撒时代的巴比伦人任用移居国外的希腊人。怪不得，到了但以理的时期，在巴比伦有两三个来自希腊语的乐器术语被使用。可是如果但以理书本来是来自公元前 165 年之后，那么，希腊语的词飞到哪里去？属于那么晚的希伯来语或亚拉姆语文件该有很多来自希腊语的外来词。（参考 Archer 写的《旧约圣经概论》）。

To help the reader understand this phenomenon, please compare English loanwords in Mandarin Chinese. Books written in 1850 during the Qing dynasty might perhaps have one or two loanwords from English, used to describe people, foreign nations, or items used by foreigners. But by the year 2000 there are very, very many English loanwords (media, copy, pager, etc.). We can use the proportion of foreign loanwords to distinguish Chinese books written in 1850 and 2000. In the same way, the lack of Greek words in the book of Daniel demonstrates that it was written before 300 BC.

There are many other details showing the book of Daniel was written in the Babylonian and Persian periods. For example, Daniel accurately records the change in the details of the death penalty. This changed from burning alive under the Babylonians to the lion's den under the Persians. From historical research we now know that the Persians changed the death penalty because in ancient Persian religion fire was a sacred symbol. In the past, critics also denied that the policy of the Persian government under the rule of King Cyrus (called "*King Gulie*" in the Union version Bible translation) was to return Jews who had been exiled by the Babylonians. However, the 'Cyrus cylinder' discovered by archaeologists explicitly states that King Cyrus had a policy of repatriating exiled peoples (see [Archaeology and Bible History](#) pp. 203-04). Clearly, the unbelieving critics are wrong and the book of Daniel is completely historically accurate.

In spite of this, the critics still insist that at least half of the book of Daniel was not added until after the time of Daniel. They say it was written in 165 BC. They say this because there are many highly specific prophecies in the book of Daniel which were fulfilled 325-165 BC. Because the critics from the outset are absolutely unwilling to believe and refuse to believe in God, naturally they deny the possibility of miracles. Therefore they assert that the prophecies in the book of Daniel were written after the events occurred. They do not diligently research the history, but carelessly jump to conclusions, then refuse to acknowledge any evidence contrary to their viewpoint.

为了帮助读者理解这个现象，请对比国语中来自英语的外来词。写于清朝 1850 年的中文书或许会有一两个来自英文的外来词，用来描述人、外国或外国人使用的加工品。可是到了 2000 年，来自英语的外来词就多得多（媒体、拷贝、call 机等等）。就象我们能用含外来语的比率来区分 1850 年和 2000 年写的中文书，同样但以理书缺乏希腊语词也证明它是写于公元前 300 年前。

还有很多其它的细节证明但以理书是巴比伦、波斯帝国时代写的。例如，但以理正确地记载了死刑变更的细节。那时的死刑从巴比伦的火刑变为波斯的狮子坑刑。经过历史学研究，现在我们知道波斯人之所以改变死刑，是因为在古波斯的宗教里，火是神圣的象征。过去，批评者们也否认居鲁士王（和合本圣经翻译本里称为“古列王”）统治下的波斯政府曾遣返被巴比伦流放的犹太人。然而，那些考古学家们发现了‘居鲁士圆柱’却肯定地指出居鲁士王有遣返被流放人民的政策（参考《考古学与圣经理史》203-204 页）。明显地，非信徒批评者们是错误的，而但以理书中的历史十分精确。

虽然如此，批评者们还是坚持说，但以理书至少有一半是但以理时代之后才写进去的。他们说那是写于公元前 165 年。他们这样说的原因是在但以理书中的许多十分具体的预言都在公元前 325 年至公元前 165 年得以应验。因为批评者们一开始就决绝不愿意、就拒绝相信上帝，他们当然否认预言的可能性，所以他们便宣称但以理书中的预言都是写于事情发生之后。他们不去认真地研究历史，草率地作出了判断，后来也拒绝接受与他们观点相反的证据。

Lesson 12: Jesus Christ's Nature and Coming

Before discussing this lesson, please read: Bible: Matthew Chapter 1; Luke Chapters 1-2; John 10:22-39.

From the beginning of this course, we have expounded a three step proof of the truth of Christianity:

1. Nature demonstrates the existence, power, and supernatural Nature of God.
2. History and archeology demonstrate that the Bible records are historically accurate.
3. Fulfilled biblical prophecies demonstrate that the Bible is a revelation from God.

In Lesson 1, we saw that Nature, and especially biology, evidences the existence of a supernatural Creator. Even the simplest single-celled bacteria is extremely complex and could not have been produced by chance. Moreover, a single-celled organism could not have evolved by chance into a complex organism. So we can conclude that evolution is a myth without scientific basis. If we want to have a logical explanation for the Natural world which we see, we can only say: it was created by a supernatural God. As the Bible says:

Because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the [God's] creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.
(Romans 1:19-20)

In Lessons 4 through 11, we have seen that the Bible accurately records specific history. We have seen the precise sequencing of the first through ninth plagues in Egypt. We have researched the methods God may have used to part the Red Sea and dry up the Jordan river, enabling the Israelites to pass through. We have studied the evidence of archaeology for Joshua's conquest of Jericho. We have found that archaeologists have already excavated the citadel of Saul, Israel's first king, and the fortified cities of Solomon, her third king. In the public records of ancient Egypt, Assyria and Babylon, the Jews and their kings are mentioned. In addition, these records confirm many details of the Biblical accounts of the Israelites' being conquered, exiled, and sending tribute. Among these are the names and times of reign of many Jewish kings, the destruction of Samaria and Jerusalem, the captivity of the Jews in Babylon – even the clay tablet ration tickets of exiled King Jehoiachin have been unearthed in Babylon! From these we can conclude that the history in the Bible is accurate and reliable, and moreover that the major prophetic books, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, were all written in the time period when the author was prophesying, and all are from before 500 BC.

Finally, we have seen many notable prophecies which have been fulfilled. Among them are:

- The religion of Yahweh (Christianity) proclaimed throughout the world: now every place in the world and every province in China has Christians.
- The "scraping" and desolation of Tyre. Now ancient Tyre really is a "bare rock."
- The decline and fall of Babylon, after millennia of prosperity. Although many cities contemporary with her remain to this day, Babylon had been a wasteland for 2,000 years.
- The permanent decline of Egypt, which had been powerful for such a long time. The Bible explicitly predicted this nation which in ancient times had several millennia of glorious history would become the poor, oppressed people which they have been for 2,500 years.
- The sequence of four great empires which would control Palestine to the time of the coming of the Messiah, namely, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome.
- Precisely predicting that the Messiah (Jesus Christ) would begin preaching in 26 AD.
- The worldwide scattering of the Jews after their rejection of the Messiah, as well as their suffering of oppression and eventual return to Israel. The prophecy of return received partial fulfillment in 1948.

These prophecies were written long before the events occurred. Some extant copies of prophetic books come from a hundred years before Jesus Christ, not to mention the originals, which had to have been written hundreds of years earlier. Obviously these prophecies could not possibly have come from mere human intellect. Moreover, so many prophecies were very specific, making it hard to believe their fulfillment was due to 'Chance.' 'Chance' is the most popular false god of modern society, but are we really so foolish as to worship that idol? Clearly the writers of the Bible received revelation from the one true God, revelation from the God who knows the future and controls human history.

So the Bible is true. But what meaning does all this have for today's Chinese?

First, because the Bible is true, our life has intrinsic meaning and purpose. We are not the product of random collisions among atoms, but the carefully designed creation of the omniscient God.

Second, love is real. God Himself is love, and He loves us. We can reciprocate His love for us. Moreover, our love for other people is also real. If we were merely matter soon to die, our love for others would perhaps be nothing more than animal instinct, or some kind of disguise for selfishness. But in fact, genuine love between human beings is this: the concern of one immortal soul for another immortal soul, a relationship which reflects the love of the eternal God.

12 课：耶稣基督的本性和到来

讨论此课之前请阅读：《圣经》：马太福音 1 章；路加福音 1 至 2 章；约翰福音 10:22-39。

从这个课程的一开始，我们就已阐明了基督教真理的三步证明：

1. 大自然证明上帝的存在、大能、超自然性
2. 历史学和考古学证明圣经记载有历史真实性
3. 圣经里已经应验了的预言证明圣经是被上帝启示的

在第 1 课，我们看到了大自然，特别是生物学，证明了那位超自然的上帝存在。就连最简单的单细胞细菌也十分复杂，不可能偶然地产生。再者，一个简单机体不可能偶然地进化成一个复杂的机体。所以我们可以下结论说进化论其实是一个没有科学根据的神话。如果要为我们所看到的自然世界作个合理的解释的话，只能说：它是被超自然的上帝创造的。就如圣经所说：

上帝的事情，人所能知道的，原显明在人心里，因为上帝已经给他们显明。自从 [上帝] 造天地以来，他的永能和神性是明明可知的，虽是眼不能见，但藉着所造之物就可以晓得，叫人无可推委。(罗马书 1:19-20)

在第 4 课至第 11 课，我们已经看到圣经对具体历史作了准确的记录。我们看到了在埃及发生的第一至第九个大灾难的精确顺序；研究了上帝大概用什么方法分开红海、截断约旦河，使以色列人能通行；学习了考古学对约书亚征服耶利哥城的证明，等等。我们发现考古学家们已经挖掘出了以色列第一个王扫罗的堡垒和它的第三个王所罗门的设防城。在古埃及、亚述、巴比伦的公文记载中提到了犹太人和他们的王，并且这些国家的记载也确认了许多关于以色列人被征服、被俘掳和纳贡等在圣经中记载的细节。其中包括不少犹太人国王的名字和统治时期，撒玛利亚城和耶路撒冷城被毁坏，以色列民被俘掳到巴比伦的事件，甚至在古巴比伦地区还出土了被俘掳的约雅斤王在泥土牌匾上写的口粮收据！我们也可以由此推出圣经中的历史是准确和可靠的，而且主要的先知书，以赛亚书、耶利米书、以西结书和但以理书，都是在作者说预言的那个年代写的，都是来自公元前 500 年前。

最后，我们更看到了许多著名的预言得以应验。其中包括：

- 耶和华的宗教（基督教）的世界性传播：现在世界各地、中国的各省也有基督徒
- 推罗城的被“刮净”和荒废，而现在古推罗地区果然只有一块“光石”
- 繁盛多时的巴比伦的衰亡，虽然有些和它同时期的城市一直延续存在到今天，但巴比伦两千年来却都只是一个废墟。
- 长期强大的埃及的永久衰落，圣经准确地预言了：那个在古代有几千年光辉历史的国家将变为现在这个两千五百年来一直贫穷的、被压迫的民族
- 分别统治巴勒斯坦地区直到弥赛亚到来的四大帝国的顺序，即巴比伦、波斯、希腊、罗马
- 准确地预言弥赛亚（耶稣基督）在公元 26 年开始传道
- 在拒绝弥赛亚之后犹太人的世界性分散，以及他们受迫害，并且他们最后要回归以色列。回归的预言从 1948 年起也已经得到了部分的应验。

这些预言都是写于事情发生的很久之前。甚至一些现在仍然存在的圣经先知书的版本也来自耶稣基督之前的一百年，更不用说原版应该是几百年以前写成的。很明显，这些预言是根本无法单单依靠人的悟性得出的。再者，如此多的预言都是十分具体的，令人难以相信它们的应验是出于‘偶然’。‘偶然’是现代最流行的一个假神，但我们真的是如此愚蠢以至去敬拜那位偶像吗？那些写圣经的人很明显是得到唯一真神的启示、那位既知道未来又控制人类历史的上帝的启示。

所以圣经是真实的。但这一切对于今天中国的人们又有什么意义呢？

首先，因为圣经是真实的，所以我们生命的存在具有它本来的意义和目的。我们不是一些原子碰撞偶然产生的产品，而是全智的上帝仔细设计的创造。

第二，爱是真实的。上帝本身就是爱，他爱我们。我们可以回报他对我们的爱。而且，我们对他人的爱也会是真实的。假如我们只不过是快要死亡的物质体，那么我们对他人的爱可能只算生物的本能，或者只是一种自私的伪装。然而，人与人之间真正的爱是如此：一个永不灭亡的灵魂在关心另一个永不灭亡的灵魂，并且这种关系反映了永恒上帝的爱。

Third, there is an absolute standard for good and evil. God's own holiness defines what is 'good,' and everything opposed to His nature is evil. From the Bible's standard we can learn how to deal with human relations.

Fourth, we ought to fear God's judgment. Our souls are immortal. So if we refuse to repent, refuse to believe in Jesus Christ, God will punish every one of our sins in hell, forever. The judgement of God is not according to humanity's constantly changing standards, but according to the truth which He has written for us in the Bible, the eternal standard.

Fifth, we can obtain eternal life. If we are willing to repent and believe in Jesus Christ, God will forgive our sin and accept us as His children. While we are still living on this earth, we can have interaction with Him, His Holy Spirit will be with us, and we can receive His help. After our body dies, we will go to heaven, and receive a new body which will never grow old, decay or die.

What more could we want? A meaningful life, and love; the ability to accurately distinguish 'right' and 'wrong'; escape from the judgment of God; God's help to do what we ought to do; a perfect relationship with God; and, in the future, receiving a new, immortal body. Is this too perfect, hard to believe? But God has already given us the Bible, and it is full of true prophecies which have already been fulfilled, giving us faith to believe that Christianity is true.

The gate to eternal life is Jesus Christ. In the next section, we will learn more about the prophecies about Him in the Old Testament of the Bible, as well as about His coming and actions.

God's Nature and His Acts toward Humanity

Up to now we have mainly been studying the first part of the Bible, the Old Testament. Now let us review the concept of God which we see in the Bible. God's nature is a pure spirit. He is not a material entity, much less is He a psychological concept which exists in the minds of humans. He is a supernatural spirit, and does not belong to the material world or to human society. He is not a part of the material world; He is eternal. He exists outside of time, so He can see the future. His characteristics can be summed up in the three points below:

He is all-powerful ,	so He is able to be	the Creator of humanity.
He is holy ,	so He must be	the Judge of humanity.
He is loving ,	so He is willing to be	the Savior of humanity.

Please re-read Genesis 1-3.

In Lesson 2, we said that God is a spirit who used His power to create the physical realm of this universe. Afterwards, He also created humanity. We are very special because we have both a physical body and a soul. Because humans have a soul, we have self-consciousness and are able to make free choices. After God made humans, He gave them only one simple rule, which was not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This rule gave Adam and Eve an opportunity to use their free will to show love toward God. God is loving, and He wants us all to love Him (although He does not need our love). Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, to sin. They ate the fruit which God had forbidden them to eat. Afterwards, the holy God punished them. They could not have communion with God anymore, they feared God and hid themselves. Not having a relationship with God is spiritual death. Moreover God changed the composition of their bodies, so that they would have to die one day. This is physical death. At the same time, the loving God gave them a promise: in the future He would send someone to defeat the devil ("*the serpent*"):

And Yahweh God said to the serpent, "...And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel." (Genesis 3:14-15)

Many years later, most people had forsaken God and chosen to lead selfish, sinful lives. So the holy God used a flood to destroy the entire earth. Only eight people who believed in Him were spared, Noah and his family.

Not long after, most people again had rejected God, making many idols and not worshipping God. This of course included ancient China's many idols and so-called 'gods.' In the book of Romans it is recorded:

For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. (Romans 1:21-23)

In this seemingly hopeless situation, the loving God called a man named Abraham to leave his home and become the ancestor of the Jewish people. God promised to make his descendants a great people and give them the land of Israel. Moreover, all the world was to be blessed through him: "*And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed*" (Genesis 12:3). God's purpose was to use the Jews to teach other people truth about Himself (especially to use them to write the Bible), and to send the Savior of the World, Jesus Christ, to the earth as a Jew. Abraham responded to God with faith: "*Then [Abraham] believed in Yahweh; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness*" (Genesis 15:6). Because of his faith, the loving God forgave Abraham's sin, justifying him. Today we are saved in the same way, by choosing to believe and receive the truth which God tells us in the Bible.

第三，善良与邪恶有着绝对的标准。上帝自身的圣洁定义了什么叫做「好」，而一切与他的本性对立的都是邪恶的。我们可以从圣经里的标准得知我们应该怎样处理人际关系。

第四，我们应该惧怕上帝的审判。我们的灵魂是永久不灭的，所以如果我们拒绝悔改、拒绝相信耶稣基督，上帝会在地狱惩罚我们的每一个罪，直到永远。上帝的审判不是按照人类常变的标准，而是按照他为我们写在圣经中的真实的、永恒的标准。

第五，我们可以得到永生。如果我们愿意悔改、相信耶稣基督，上帝会赦免我们的罪、接受我们作他的儿女。当我们还在地球上生活时，我们也可以与他沟通，有他的圣灵与我们同在，得到他的帮助。当我们身体死亡以后，我们将会到天堂去，得到一个新的、永不衰老、不朽坏、不死的躯体。

我们还想要得到什么呢？有意义的生命和爱；有正确辨别「对」与「错」的能力；避免了上帝的审判；有上帝帮助我们去做应该做的事；与上帝有完美的关系；将来，还会得到一个新的、不死的躯体。这是不是太完美了，以致令人难以置信呢？但上帝已经给了我们圣经，里面充满真实的已经应验的预言，使我们有信心相信基督教是真实的。

通往永生之门是耶稣基督。在下一部分，我们将会知道更多旧约圣经关于他的预言，和他的到来及作为。

上帝的本性及对于人类的行动

直到现在我们几乎都只是学习旧约，圣经的第一部分。现在让我们复习一下我们从圣经可以看到的关于上帝的概念。上帝的本性是单纯的灵，他不是物质的实体，更不是存在于人脑的精神上的概念。他是一个超自然的灵，不属于物质世界，也不属于人类社会。他不是物质世界的一部分，他是永恒的。他存在于时间之外，他可以看到未来。他的特点可以总结为以下三大点：

他是 全能 的，	所以他 能够	作人类的 创造者 。
他是 圣洁 的，	所以他 必然	是人类的 审判者 。
他是 慈爱 的，	所以他 愿意	作人类的 拯救者 。

请再读创世记 1 至 3 章。

第 2 课我们说上帝是一个灵，用他的能力创造了宇宙这个物质世界。然后他又创造了非常独特的人类，因为我们既有物质身体又有灵魂。因为人类拥有灵魂，所以我们有自我意识、能作自由的选择。上帝造人之后，他只给了人一条简单的规定，就是不可去吃分别善恶树上的果子。这条规定给了亚当和夏娃运用自由意志表达对上帝的爱的机会。上帝是慈爱的，他要我们都爱他（虽然他并不是需要我们的爱）。亚当和夏娃选择了违背上帝、犯罪。他们吃了上帝禁止他们吃的果子。然后，圣洁的上帝便对他们作出了惩罚。他们再也不能与上帝沟通，他们也害怕上帝，因此躲了起来。不能与上帝沟通便是灵性的死亡。而且上帝还改变了他们的身体构造，以致他们有一天必然死亡，这便是身体的死亡。同时，慈爱的上帝给了他们第一个承诺：将会派遣一个人战胜魔鬼（“蛇”）：

耶和華上帝对蛇说：“…我又要叫你和女人彼此为仇；你的后裔和女人的后裔也彼此为仇。女人的后裔要伤你的头，你要伤他的脚跟。”（创世记 3:14-15）

许多年以后，大部份的人都背弃了上帝，选择过自私、罪恶的生活。于是圣洁的上帝用洪水毁灭了全世界，只剩下相信他的八个人即挪亚和他的家人。

不久以后，大部份人再一次拒绝上帝，制造了许多偶像而不敬拜上帝。当然这也包括古代中国很多偶像与所谓的‘神’。在罗马书有记载：

因为，他们虽然知道上帝，却不当作上帝荣耀他，也不感谢他。他们思念变为虚妄，无知的心就昏暗了。自称为聪明，反成了愚拙；将不能朽坏之上帝的荣耀变为偶像，仿佛必朽坏的人和飞禽、走兽、昆虫的样式。（罗马书 1:21-23）

在如此令人失望的情况下，慈爱的上帝呼召一位名叫亚伯拉罕的人离开他的故乡，去作犹太民族的始祖。上帝承诺将会使他的后裔成为伟大的人、赐给他们以色列的土地，而且全世界的人都能通过他们而得到祝福：“地上的万族都要因你得福”（创世记 12:3）。上帝的目的是要用犹太人来教导其他人关于他自己的真理（特别是用他们去编写圣经）、派遣救世主耶稣基督以一位犹太人的身份来到地球上。亚伯拉罕以信心对上帝作出回应：“[亚伯拉罕]信耶和華，耶和華就以此为他的义”（创世记 15:6）。因为他的信心，慈爱圣洁的上帝赦免了亚伯拉罕的罪、称他为义。甚至今天我们得救也是通过同样的方法，就是选择相信和接受上帝在圣经中所告诉我们的真理。

Later Abraham's descendents, the Jews, moved to Egypt and became a great people. Then the Egyptians oppressed them and did not allow them to leave Egypt. The Jews cried out to God, and the loving God heard their prayer and sent Moses to rescue them. The all-powerful God performed many miracles in Egypt; the holy God punished the Egyptians. As a result, the firstborn of those who did not believe God and did not sprinkle the Passover lamb's blood on their doorpost died. The Jews who believed God, and apparently some non-Jews as well, sprinkled the blood on their doorposts, thereby avoiding the punishment. The events of the Passover show how God will treat those who refuse to believe Him, and also shows that He will forgive those who are willing to believe in Him. As we will see below, the blood of the Passover lamb symbolizes the blood of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. He came to take the place of humanity in bearing God's punishment of sin.

Afterwards, God gave the Ten Commandments through Moses, letting us know that even so-called 'good people' all have sin. God commands us to worship Him; do we worship Him? God commands us to honor our father and our mother; have we obeyed and loved our parents? God commands us to always tell the truth; have we ever told a lie to keep out of trouble, or cheated on a test? God commands us not to take what does not belong to us; have we ever taken anything from the factory, office or school which we should not have taken? The tenth commandment is "You shall not covet." This requires us not to covet not only in our actions, but not even in our thoughts and attitudes, otherwise we are sinning against God. Have we ever lusted, envied, been greedy or vengeful? If so, we are sinners whom the holy God must punish. Only if God forgives us can we escape the punishment of eternal hell.

The Bible's promised Messiah, Jesus Christ, can save us from sin's punishment. In the Bible, the phrase "Son of David" often appears, as well as Daniel's "Son of Man." These refer to the Messiah. Remember, 'Christ' means 'Messiah.' Now we will look at prophecies concerning the Messiah in the first part of the Bible, the Old Testament, and their fulfillment in the second part of the Bible, the New Testament.

Messiah: Both God and Human, Fully God and Fully Human

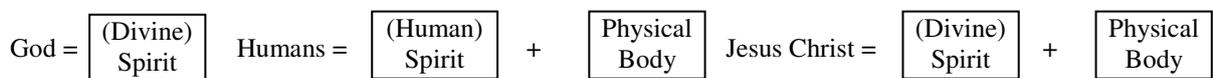
Micah was a prophet who lived between 750 BC and 686 BC. In Micah 5:2 it says: "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity." This means the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, as we will see below. What we want to see here is that the Messiah is eternal. Although Micah views Him as a man who will come in the future (in fact, he came 700 years after Micah's time), the Messiah already existed before any created thing existed. This means the Messiah was God come to earth in a body, because only God is eternal.

King David (1050-970 BC) also wrote prophecies about the Messiah. In Psalm 110:1, 4 he says: "Yahweh says to my Lord: 'Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.' ...Yahweh has sworn and will not change His mind, 'Thou art a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.'" By the time of Jesus Christ, the Jews has long already regarded this Psalm as referring to the Messiah. "Yahweh," of course, refers to God. "[M]y lord" and "Thou" refer to the Messiah. Note that David said the Messiah was an eternal priest, showing that He Himself was eternal. Only God is eternal. Moreover, although the Messiah is David's descendent, David is still willing to call Him "Lord." Calling one's own descendant Lord completely violates the tradition of respect for parents and ancestors. It is unheard of. In addition, when David, in the other Psalms he wrote, uses the word "Lord," he clearly refers to God. Therefore we can conclude that David regarded the Messiah as God, because in Psalm 110 David calls Him "Lord."

This is stated more clearly in the New Testament of the Bible. When John wrote about Jesus Christ he said:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.... He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. (John 1:1-3, 10)

Note that John said the "Word" (referring to Jesus Christ) is God, already existed with God at the beginning of the universe, and created all things. This phrase is just like Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Clearly, John is asserting that Jesus Christ is God. How can this be? Obviously, Jesus Christ was an ordinary person with an ordinary body, a body which eventually died on the cross. The solution to this contradiction is recorded in the gospel of John: "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). "[T]he Word became flesh" means that God took on a flesh and blood body. To understand this, we must recall the nature of God and the nature of humans:



后来亚伯拉罕的后裔，指犹太人，搬到埃及，成为一个很大的民族。于是埃及人压迫他们，并且不让他们离开埃及。犹太人呼求上帝，慈爱的上帝听到了他们的呼求，于是派摩西去援救他们。全能的上帝在埃及行了许多奇迹；圣洁的上帝惩罚了埃及人。结果那些不相信上帝、没有把逾越节羔羊的血涂在门楣上的人的长子都死了。相信上帝的犹太人，好象也包括一些非犹太人，把血涂在门楣上，他们就避免了惩罚。逾越节的事件其实也显示了上帝如何对待那拒绝相信他的人，以及他将会赦免那愿意相信他的人。正如我们将会在下面看到，逾越节羔羊的血象征着弥赛亚耶稣基督的血，他来代替人类承担上帝对罪的惩罚。

后来，上帝通过摩西传十诫，让我们知道就算是所谓‘好的人’也犯罪。上帝要我们敬拜他，我们做到了吗？上帝要我们孝敬父母，我们是不是听从父母、爱他们？上帝要我们总是讲真话，我们是否曾经说谎来逃避责任，或考试作弊呢？上帝叫我们不要拿不属于我们的东西，我们有否拿过工厂、办公室或学校里我们不应该拿的物品？第十条诫命是“不可贪恋。”这要求我们不单是在行动上，就连我们的思想、态度也不可贪恋，否则就是得罪上帝。我们是否曾有过淫念、妒忌、贪婪、怀恨呢？如果有，我们便是圣洁上帝必须惩罚的罪人。除非上帝赦免我们，我们才能避免永恒地狱的惩罚。

圣经承诺弥赛亚，即耶稣基督，能救我们脱离罪的惩罚。圣经里面的预言经常出现“大卫的子孙”，还有在但以理书的“人子”，这些都是指弥赛亚。要记得，「基督」的意思就是「弥赛亚」。现在我们来看看圣经的第一部分，旧约圣经中关于弥赛亚的预言以及它们在圣经的第二部分，新约圣经中的应验。

弥赛亚：既是上帝也是人，完全的上帝和完全的人

弥迦是生活在公元前 750 年至 686 年的一位先知。在弥迦书 5:2 写到：“伯利恒 以法他啊，你在犹太诸城为小。将来必有一位从你那里出来，在以色列中为我作掌权的；他的根源从亘古、从太初就有。”这些字句是指弥赛亚将会出生于伯利恒，在下面我们也将会看到。在这里我们要知道的是弥赛亚是永恒的。虽然弥迦把他看作是将来才到来的人（事实上，是弥迦时代的 700 年以后），但是弥赛亚在所有一切被造物还没有存在的时候已经存在了。这便说明弥赛亚是上帝的化身来到地球，因为只有上帝才是永恒的。

大卫王（公元前 1050—970 年）也写了一些关于弥赛亚的预言。在诗篇 110:1, 4，他说：“耶和華对我主说：‘你坐在我的右边，等我使你仇敌作你的脚凳。’……耶和華起了誓，决不后悔，说‘你是照着麦基洗德的等次永远为祭司。’”到了耶稣基督时代，犹太人早已认为这篇诗歌指的是弥赛亚。“耶和華”当然是指上帝。“我的主”和“你”都是代表弥赛亚。注意：大卫说弥赛亚是一位永恒的祭司，显示他是永恒的。只有上帝是永恒的。再者，虽然弥赛亚应该算是大卫的后裔，然而大卫却愿意称他为“主”。称自己的后裔为主完全违反了尊敬父母和祖先的传统，这真是闻所未闻。再者，当大卫在他所写的其它诗篇中提到他的“主”时，他所指的很明显是上帝。因此，我们便可得知大卫看弥赛亚为上帝，因为在诗篇 110 篇大卫把弥赛亚当作他的“主”。

在新约圣经写得更清楚。当约翰写到耶稣基督时，他说：

太初有道，道与上帝同在，道就是上帝。这道太初与上帝同在。万物是藉着他造的；凡被造的，没有一样不是藉着他造的。……他在世界，世界也是藉着他造的，世界却不认识他。（约翰福音 1:1-3, 10)

注意：约翰说那位“道”（指耶稣基督）是上帝，在宇宙开始的时候已经与上帝一同存在，而且创造万物。这句话与创世记 1:1 正好作了个对比：“起初上帝创造天地。”约翰很明显地断言耶稣基督是上帝。这怎么可能呢？很明显，耶稣基督也是普通的人，有普通的身体，那身体最终在十字架上被钉死。这个矛盾的解决又是记载在约翰福音：“道成了肉身，住在我们中间，充充满满地有恩典，有真理”（约翰福音 1:14）。“道成了肉身”是指上帝取一个血肉之躯。要理解这一点，我们要记住神性和人性：

上帝 =

(神性的) 灵

 人 =

(人性的) 灵

 +

物质的 身体

 耶稣基督 =

(神性的) 灵

 +

物质的 身体

God is the only divine spirit. Because Jesus Christ has the spirit of God, He is 100% God. The definition of a human being is a spirit with a body. Because Jesus Christ had a spirit and a body, He is 100% human. The difference between Jesus and ordinary people is that Jesus did not have an ordinary human spirit, but a divine spirit, the spirit of God. (The use of the term 'spirit of God' here is not to be confused with the Holy Spirit. Jesus's spirit of God was the spirit of God the Son).

Someone might ask: 'If the spirit of God was in the body of Jesus Christ, how could He at the same time be in heaven? Why did Jesus pray to God while He was on earth?' This touches on the mystery of the trinity. There is only one God, and God is one, but He exists in three Persons, 'Father, Son and Holy Spirit.' God the Son became a person on earth, Jesus Christ. At the same time, God the Father remained in heaven.

Jesus Christ Himself made the ultimately authoritative proclamation of His divinity. He boldly said: "*I and the Father are one,*" and as a result, "*The Jews took up stones again to stone Him* (John 10:33). The Jews wanted to stone Him because they were very clear that Jesus was calling Himself God: "*...we...stone You...because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God*" (John 10:33). In the New Testament of the Bible we see many places which say that Jesus Christ was both a human being and God, but the above ought to suffice.

In fact, it was necessary that Jesus be fully human and fully God. Only in this way would He be able to save humanity by bearing our sin. In addition to this, Jesus becoming a human being made Him able to understand our human life, to sympathize with our weakness and our problems. Jesus became a man because He loved us so very much. He was the glorious God; He had never experienced our human limitations and suffering. Because of love, He humbled Himself and became a man, became an infant unable to speak. That the true God was willing to humble Himself in this way lets us know He truly loves us, pities us, understands us. He invites us sinners, who frequently offend Him, to come to His bosom:

For thus says the high and exalted One who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite. ... I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and to his mourners, creating the praise of the lips. Peace, peace to him who is far and to him who is near," says Yahweh, "and I will heal him." (Isaiah 57:15, 18-19)

The Birth of the Messiah

Since Jesus was a real human being, His coming was at a specific time, which is recorded in history. The gospel of Matthew records Jesus Christ's genealogy. It seems that Matthew traces Jesus's genealogy through His adoptive father Joseph, even though Joseph was not Jesus's physical father. Matthew also tells the story of Jesus's birth:

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. To Abraham was born Isaac; ...and to Jesse was born David the king. And to David was born Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah;.....was born Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. ... Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her, desired to put her away secretly. But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins." Now all this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us." And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took her as his wife, and kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him." And when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he began to inquire of them where the Christ was to be born. And they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet, 'and you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a ruler, who will shepherd my people Israel.'" (Matthew 1:1-2, 6, 16, 18-25; 2:1-6)

Jesus's birth fulfilled prophecies given centuries before in the Old Testament of the Bible.

First, from the standpoint of His mother, Jesus was a human being, so He was Eve's descendent. This fulfilled the promise of Genesis 3:15 that one of Eve's descendents would defeat Satan. One the cross, Jesus Christ shattered the power of the devil in the lives of believers, so now we are able to live holy lives, triumphing over the devil's temptations. When Jesus comes again, He will completely destroy Satan's works, casting him into hell forever.

上帝是唯一的神性的灵。因为耶稣基督有上帝的灵，所以他是百分之百的上帝。人的定义是一个灵加上一个身躯。因为耶稣基督既有灵又有身体，所以他也是百分之百的人。耶稣与普通人的区别是耶稣拥有的不是一般的人类的灵，而是那神性的灵，是上帝的灵。（在此，‘上帝的灵’不是指圣灵。耶稣具有的‘上帝的灵’是指圣子的灵。）

有人或者会问：‘如果上帝的灵在耶稣基督身上，那他又怎能同时也在天堂呢？为什么耶稣在地球上还向上帝祈祷？’这便涉及到三位一体的奥秘。只有一位上帝，上帝是一体的，但他以「圣父，圣子，圣灵」三个位格而存在。圣子变成地球上的人即耶稣基督，同时圣父可留在天堂。

耶稣基督本身也作出了对自己的神性的最后权威的宣告。他大胆地说：“我与父原为一”，结果是“犹太人又拿起石头来要打他”（约翰福音 10:30-31）。犹太人想用石头打死他，因为他们很清楚这是耶稣自称是上帝：“我们……拿石头打你，是……为你是个人，反将自己当作上帝”（约翰福音 10:33）。在新约圣经中我们可以看到很多地方说明耶稣基督既是上帝也是人，但上面讲的应该足够了。

事实上，耶稣作为完全的人和完全的上帝是十分必要的，只有这样，他才可以拯救人类，担当我们的罪。除此以外，耶稣成为一个人，使他能够理解我们人类的生活，能体恤我们的软弱和困难。耶稣变成一个人是因为他非常爱我们。他本身是伟大的上帝，从来没有受到我们人类的限制和困苦。因为爱，他就谦卑自己，变成一个人、一个不能说话的婴儿。真神上帝愿意这样谦卑，让我们知道他真的爱我们、怜悯我们、理解我们。他邀请我们这些经常得罪他的罪人来到他的怀抱里：

因为那至高至上，永远长存（原文是住在永远），名为圣者的如此说，我住在至高至圣的所在，也与心灵痛悔谦卑的人同居；要使谦卑人的灵苏醒，也使痛悔人的心苏醒……我看见他所行的道，也要医治他；又要引导他，使他和那一同伤心的人再得安慰。我造就嘴唇的果子；愿平安康泰归与远处的人，也归与近处的人；并且我要医治他。这是耶和華说的。（以赛亚书 57:15, 18-19）

弥赛亚的出生

既然耶稣是一个真实的人，那么他的来到是有具体的时间、被历史所记载的。马太福音记载了耶稣基督的家谱。看来马太是追溯耶稣的养父约瑟的族谱，尽管约瑟不是耶稣的生父。马太也叙述了耶稣出生的故事：

亚伯拉罕的后代、大卫的子孙、耶稣基督的家谱：亚伯拉罕生以撒，……耶西生大卫王。大卫从乌利亚的妻子生所罗门；……生约瑟，就是玛利亚的丈夫。那称为基督的耶稣，是从玛利亚生的。……耶稣基督降生的事记在下面：他母亲马利亚已经许配了约瑟，还没有迎娶，马利亚就从圣灵怀了孕；她丈夫约瑟是个义人，不愿意明明地羞辱她，想要暗暗地把她休了。正思念这事的时候，有主的使者向他梦中显现，说：“大卫的子孙约瑟，不要怕！只管娶过你的妻子马利亚来，因她所怀的孕是从圣灵来的；她将要生一个儿子，你要给他起名叫耶稣，因他要将自己的百姓从罪恶里救出来。”这一切的事成就，是要应验主藉先知所说的话，说：“必有童女怀孕生子，人要称他的名为以马内利。”（以马内利翻出来，就是‘神与我们同在’。）约瑟醒了，起来，就遵著主使者的吩咐把妻子娶过来；只是没有和她同房，等她生了儿子（有古卷：等她生了头胎的儿子），就给他起名叫耶稣。

当希律王的时候，耶稣生在犹太的伯利恒；有几个博士从东方来到耶路撒冷，说：“那生下来作犹太人之王的在哪里？我们在东方看见他的星，特来拜他。”希律王听见了，就心里不安，耶路撒冷合城的人也都不安。他就召齐了祭司长和民间的文士，问他们说：“基督当生在何处？”他们回答说：“在犹太的伯利恒；因为有先知记著，说：‘犹大地的伯利恒啊，你在犹太诸城中，并不是最小的；因为将来有一位君王要从你那里出来，牧养我以色列民。’”（马太福音 1:1-2, 6, 16, 18-25; 2:1-6）

耶稣的出生应验了在那时几个世纪以前旧约圣经里的预言。

首先，从他母亲的角度来看，耶稣是属于人类，所以他是夏娃的后裔。这应验了创世记 3:15 中的承诺，有一位夏娃的后裔将会打败撒旦。在十字架上，耶稣基督已经摧毁了魔鬼在信徒身上的力量，所以现在我们能够过圣洁的生活、胜过魔鬼的试探。耶稣再来时将会完全摧毁撒旦的作为，把他永远地打进地狱。

Secondly, as a Jew, Jesus Christ was Abraham's descendent. This fulfilled the promise to Abraham in Genesis 22:18 (and other places): *"And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."* This amazing promise did not begin to be fulfilled until after Jesus Christ came and the Christian gospel began to be preached to the world. The greatest blessing is spiritual, and only applies to true believers. Besides this, in Lesson 4 we have seen that Christianity has brought great benefit to the world's science, society and morality. The most important is, through Abraham's descendent Jesus Christ, not only Jews but everyone can receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life. We no longer need to become Jews in order to be saved.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is King David's descendent. This is not only by adoption into Joseph's line. He probably was also descended from David on His birth mother Mary's side (see Luke 3:31, 34; it is very possible that Luke trace's Mary's descent). The prophets Jeremiah and Isaiah wrote several hundred years after the time of King David and several hundred years before the coming of Jesus Christ. They predicted:

"Behold, the days are coming," declares Yahweh, "When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land." (Jeremiah 23:5)

There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will accomplish this. (Isaiah 9:7)

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. And the Spirit of Yahweh will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh. ... Then it will come about in that day that the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, who will stand as a signal for the peoples; and His resting place will be glorious. (Isaiah 11:1-2, 10)

Note that Jesse was David's father, so David was considered *"the stem of Jesse."* The Messiah was to be a *"shoot"* which sprung from this *"stem,"* which is to say that He would be a descendant of David. Moreover, He would not be an ordinary person. He would eternally sit on the throne of David, ruling over his kingdom, from then on and forevermore. Part of the third passage above refer to the first coming of Jesus Christ in 26 AD, while the rest refers to His future second coming. But all of it very clearly states that the Messiah would be the offspring of David.

Even more miraculous that the physical descent of the Messiah is His virgin birth. In Isaiah we read:

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)

Jesus Christ's birth was a miracle. The ovum of a woman, although it had not been fertilized with the sperm of a man, still became an embryo, she became pregnant. This was completely miraculous, unlike today's 'cloning' technology. If he were a clone, Jesus would have had to have been a female. We must remember that what we regard as 'Natural' laws are created by God. God is not limited by the natural laws which He Himself created and controls. God transcends the natural laws and can change them whenever He wishes. So it is not strange that God used such an amazing method to enter the world.

Finally, the Bible predicted that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2 says: *"But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity."* Bethlehem was David's birthplace, so it was regarded as the ancestral home of David's descendants. Although Joseph and Mary were from Nazareth, God used the faraway Roman emperor to bring about Jesus's birth in Bethlehem:

Now it came about in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all were proceeding to register for the census, everyone to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. And it came about that while they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:1-7)

From the historical references in the gospels of Matthew and Luke, we can estimate the year of Jesus's birth. Five hundred years after Jesus, a Christian monk began counting years from the year of Jesus Christ's birth. This method spread over the Western world. In the 20th century it finally became the worldwide standard. Thus the year 2000 should be the 2000th year since the birth of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, the monk's calculations had a small error. With the advance of historical research, we now believe Jesus was born between 6 BC and 3 BC, very possibly in 6 BC.

Therefore we know that the birth of Jesus Christ was a definite historical fact which occurred in Bethlehem about 2,000 years ago. This fulfilled prophecies, announced hundreds of years before these events, that a unique person would enter the world. This man was fully God and at the same time fully human. He is the Messiah. He is Jesus Christ.

第二，作为一个犹太人，耶稣基督是亚伯拉罕的后裔。这便应验了创世记 22:18（也在别处对亚伯拉罕的承诺：“地上万国都必因你的后裔得福。”这个奇妙的承诺直到耶稣基督到来之后、基督教的福音开始向世界传播才开始应验。最大的祝福是灵性上的，只对真正的信徒有效。然而，在第 4 课，我们看见基督教也对世界的科学、社会和道德带来了益处。最重要的是，通过亚伯拉罕的后裔耶稣基督，不只是犹太人，而是所有的人都可以得到罪的赦免和永生。我们不再需要先成为犹太人才能得救。

第三，耶稣基督是大卫王的后裔。这不仅是因为他被收养进约瑟的家谱。他的生母玛利亚大概也是大卫王的后代（可以参看路加福音 3:31, 34；路加记载的很可能是追溯玛利亚的族谱）。耶利米先知和以赛亚先知写书于大卫王后的几百年和耶稣基督到来的几百年之前。他们预测说：

耶和華说：“日子将到，我要给大卫兴起一个公义的苗裔；他必掌王权，行事有智慧，在地上施行公平和公义。”（耶利米书 23:5）

的政权与平安必加增无穷；他必在大卫的宝座上治理他的国，以公平公义使国坚定稳固，从今直到永远。万军之耶和華的热心必成就这事。（以赛亚书 9:7）

从耶西的本（原文是嫩）必发一条，从他根生的枝子必结果实。耶和華的灵必住在他身上，就是使他有智慧和聪明的灵，谋略和能力的灵，知识和敬畏耶和華的灵。……到那日，耶西的根立作万民的大旗，外邦人必寻求他，他安息之所大有荣耀。（以赛亚书 11:1-2, 10）

注意：耶西是大卫的父亲，所以大卫算是“耶西的本”。那位弥赛亚要算是从这个“本”发出的“一条”，意思是说，他是大卫的后裔。再者，他将不会是一个普通人，他将会永远坐在大卫的宝座上，治理他的国，从今直到永远。上面三段话，部分是指出耶稣基督公元 26 年第一次到来，另一部分指出他在将来要再来。但它们全部都很清楚地叙述弥赛亚一定是大卫的子孙。

比弥赛亚的血缘身份更神奇的是他被处女所生。在以赛亚书我们可以看到：

因此，主自己要给你们一个兆头，必有童女怀孕生子，给他起名叫以马内利（就是“上帝与我们同在”的意思）。（以赛亚书 7:14）

耶稣基督的出生是一个神迹：一个女人的卵子，虽然没有男人的授精，还是变成胚胎，她就怀了孕。这完全是神迹，跟今天的‘克隆’技术不一样。假如是克隆，耶稣便一定是一个女人。我们要记得，我们所认为的「自然」法则上帝创造的。上帝不会受他自己创造和掌管的自然法则所限制。上帝超越自然法则，只要他愿意，他可以改变它们。所以上帝用如此奇妙的方法进入世界并不奇怪。

最后，圣经预言弥赛亚出生于伯利恒，这个靠近耶路撒冷小城今天依然存在。弥迦书 5:2说：“伯利恒 以法他啊，你在犹太诸城为小。将来必有一位从你那里出来，在以色列中为我作掌权的。”伯利恒是大卫王的出生地，所以那地方被认为是大卫后裔的祖籍地。虽然约瑟和玛利亚都是来自拿撒勒城，但上帝也利用遥远的罗马帝国的皇帝来实现耶稣要在伯利恒出生的事：

当那些日子，该撒亚古士督有旨意下来，叫天下人民都报名上册；这是居里扭作叙利亚巡抚的时候，头一次行报名上册的事。众人各归各城，报名上册。约瑟也从加利利的拿撒勒城上犹太去，到了大卫的城，名叫伯利恒，因他本是大卫一族一家的人，要和他所聘之妻马利亚一同报名上册。那时马利亚的身孕已经重了，他们在那里的时候，马利亚的产期到了；就生了头胎的儿子，用布包起来，放在马槽里，因为客店里没有地方。（路加福音 2:1-7）

我们从路加福音和马太福音中的各种历史记录便可以估计出耶稣出生的年份。耶稣之后五百年有一位基督教修士以耶稣基督出生那年为起点计算年份，这种计算方法在西方世界广为流传，到了 20 世纪，它终于变成了一个世界标准。因此公元 2000 年应该是从耶稣基督出生后的两千年。可惜，修士的计算原来有小错误。随着历史研究的进步，我们现在认为耶稣出生的年份应该是在公元前 6 至 3 年之间，很可能就是公元前 6 年。

所以，我们知道耶稣基督的出生是大概两千年前发生在伯利恒的一件确凿史实。这便应验了在此事几百年之前所宣告的预言：有一位独特的人将要出世。那就是完全的上帝同时也是完全的人，是弥赛亚，是耶稣基督。

Lesson 13: Jesus Christ's Miracles and Teaching

The Messiah Begins to Preach

A few years after Jesus was born, His family returned to the small town of Nazareth in the north of Israel. When Jesus was still a child, it seems that no one knew He was the Messiah. There was nothing special in the appearance of His body, and the Bible does not record that He performed any miracles before He began preaching. The Bible says He never committed any sin, but looking from the outside, it would have been hard for the people around Jesus to discern that He was completely sinless. Probably they simply felt that Jesus was a good person. In the book of Isaiah there is a relevant prophecy:

Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of Yahweh been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. (Isaiah 53:1-2)

So Jesus lived quietly to about the age of thirty. Later, God raised up John the Baptist, to prepare the people of the world to know that Jesus was the Messiah. He warned the Jews that the Messiah would come very soon. To enable them to believe in Jesus, they had to understand that God has holy wrath toward sin, to understand the awful punishment for sin in hell, and to understand their own sin. Then they had to confess their sins, ask God for forgiveness, and sincerely repent. Matthew describes John the Baptist's activity:

Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight!'" Now John himself had a garment of camel's hair, and a leather belt about his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea, and all the district around the Jordan; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance; and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I say to you, that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. And the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. And His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?" But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him. And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." (Matthew 3:1-17)

Besides the Bible, the ancient Jewish historian Josephus also records the activities of John the Baptist, providing an independent confirmation of many of the details in the Bible (see Josephus's Antiquities of the Jews 18:5:2 (equivalent to 18:116-119)).

The Old Testament of the Bible also predicted the coming of John the Baptist:

A voice is calling, "Clear the way for Yahweh in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. ...Then the glory of Yahweh will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of Yahweh has spoken." (Isaiah 40:3, 5)

"Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says Yahweh of hosts. (Malachi 3:1)

John the Baptist was the messenger who prepared the way for the coming of the Messiah. His preparation was not the construction of actual roads on the ground, but the changing of people's hearts. People must admit that they themselves are sinners, otherwise they will pay no attention to the Messiah who came to bear the iniquity of the world. Today, we Chinese are the same; after we die, we will face judgment. What we must do today is the same as what the Jews of John the Baptist's day did, which is confess our sins and plead for God's forgiveness. Then we can receive Jesus Christ as our Savior. That way we will no longer need to fear God's judgement.

Besides predicting the forerunner of Jesus Christ's ministry, the Bible also predicted the time when He would begin His ministry. After John the Baptist's witness which proclaimed that the Messiah had come, Jesus began His preaching ministry. Not long after receiving John the Baptist's baptism, He began performing miracles. When did this happen? In Luke we can see that John the Baptist began his activity:

13 课：耶稣基督的神迹与教导

弥赛亚的开始传道。

耶稣出生的几年后，他的全家又回到以色列北部的小镇拿撒勒。当耶稣还是小孩子的时候，几乎没有人知道他就是弥赛亚。他的外貌身形并没有什么与众不同，而且在他开始传道之前圣经并没有记载他行过任何神迹。圣经说他从来没有犯过任何罪，但从表面看来，耶稣周围的人们却很难判断他是完全无罪的。他们很可能只是觉得耶稣是一个好人。在以赛亚书中有对此的预言：

我们所传的（或译：所传与我们的）有谁信呢？耶和华的膀臂向谁显露呢？他在耶和华面前生长如嫩芽，像根出於乾地。他无佳形美容；我们看见他的时候，也无美貌使我们羡慕他。（以赛亚书 53:1-2）

所以耶稣在约 30 岁之前一直都生活得十分平静。后来上帝就兴起施洗者约翰来，为了让世人知道耶稣就是弥赛亚做准备。他提醒犹太人说弥赛亚很快就要来到。为了让他们相信耶稣，他们必须明白上帝对罪有圣洁的愤怒，明白在地狱对罪严重的惩罚，并明白他们自己所犯的罪，然后，他们必须承认自己的罪，求上帝的赦免，而且诚实地悔改。马太描写了施洗者约翰的作为：

那时，有施洗的约翰出来，在犹太的旷野传道，说：“天国近了，你们应当悔改！”这人就是先知以赛亚所说的，他说：“在旷野有人声喊着说，预备主的道，修直他的路！”这约翰身穿骆驼毛的衣服，腰束皮带，吃的是蝗虫、野蜜；那时，耶路撒冷和犹太全地并约旦河一带地方的人，都出去到约翰那里，承认他们的罪，在约旦河里受他的洗。约翰看见许多法利赛人和撒都该人也来受洗，就对他们说：“毒蛇的种类！谁指示你们逃避将来的愤怒呢？你们要结出果子来，与悔改的心相称。不要自己心里说：‘有亚伯拉罕为我们的祖宗。’我告诉你们，神能从这些石头中，给亚伯拉罕兴起子孙来。现在斧子已经放在树根上，凡不结好果子的树就砍下来，丢在火里。我是用水给你们施洗，叫你们悔改，但那在我以后来的，能力比我更大，我就是给他提鞋也不配，他要用圣灵与火给你们施洗；他手里拿著簸箕，要扬净他的场，把麦子收在仓里，把糠用不灭的火烧尽了。”当下，耶稣从加利利来到约旦河，见了约翰，要受他的洗。约翰想要拦住他，说：“我当受你的洗，你反倒上我这里来吗？”耶稣回答说：“你暂且许我，因为我们理当这样尽诸般的义（或译：礼）。”於是约翰许了他。耶稣受了洗，随即从水里上来；天忽然为他开了，他就看见神的灵仿佛鸽子降下，落在他身上。从天上有声音说：“这是我的爱子，我所喜悦的。”（马太福音 3:1-17）

除了圣经之外，古代犹太的历史学家约瑟夫斯（Josephus）也记载了施洗者约翰的作为，为圣经中许多的细节提供了独立的证据（参考约瑟夫斯的《上古犹太史》18:5:2（等于 18:116-119））。

在旧约的圣经中也预言到施洗者约翰的到来：

有人声喊着说，在旷野预备耶和華的路（或译：在旷野，有人声喊着说：当预备耶和華的路），在沙漠地修平我们神的道……。耶和華的榮耀必然显现，凡有血气的必一同看见；因为这是耶和華亲口说的。（以赛亚书 40:3,5）

万军之耶和華说：“我要差遣我的使者在我前面预备道路。你们所寻求的主必忽然进入他的殿；立约的使者，就是你们所仰慕的，快要来到。”（玛拉基书 3:1）

施洗者约翰是为弥赛亚到来铺路的使者。他所作的准备不是真的在地上建路，而是要改变人们的内心。人们必须承认他们是罪人，否则他们就不会理那位来承担世人罪孽的弥赛亚。今天我们中国人也是一样，当我们死后都要面对审判。今天我们需要做的跟施洗者约翰时代的犹太人要做的一样，就是承认我们的罪，请求上帝的赦免。然后，我们就可以接受耶稣基督作我们的救主。这样，我们便不用再害怕上帝的审判。

圣经除了预言耶稣传道的先驱者，还预言了他开始传道的的时间。施洗者约翰的见证宣告弥赛亚的到来，接着耶稣便开始传道。耶稣在接受了施洗者约翰的洗礼之后不久，他便开始公开施行神迹。这是何时发生的呢？在路加福音我们可以看到施洗者约翰开始的行动：

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. (Luke 3:1-2)

When we combine these time details with John 2:20, we can calculate that Jesus Christ probably began his ministry in 26 AD. Earlier we saw that Daniel predicted the time of the coming of the Messiah: “*So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress*” (Daniel 9:25). Seven ‘seven years’ plus sixty-two ‘seven years’ equal 483 years. The “*issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem*” probably happened in 458 BC. Starting from 458 BC and adding 483 years yields 26 AD. Thus the prophecy concerning the time of the coming of the Messiah was clearly fulfilled. (Please review the details in Lesson 11).

Thus we can see that the beginning of the ministry of Jesus fulfilled several prophecies in the Old Testament of the Bible. John the Baptist was the forerunner announcing that the Messiah was about to come to Israel. The time of his announcing also indicates the time when Jesus began His ministry, and that very probably fulfilled the precise prophecy of Daniel made several hundred years earlier.

Jesus Christ’s Miracles

After Jesus began His ministry, He performed many supernatural miracles which proved He really was the Son of God. Here we will discuss several representative examples. Please read the three paragraphs of Matthew 8:23-9:8 and the one paragraph of Luke 7:11-17. Each of these four events manifests a different aspect of Jesus Christ’s authority.

The first passage, (Matthew 8:23-27): Jesus Christ’s authority over Nature, over climate. Jesus only had to speak a single word and He was able to control the winds of the air and the waves of the sea. These were created, physical matter and/or energy. Jesus’s use of a method which transcends nature to control these things shows that He Himself transcends nature.

The second passage, (Matthew 8:28-34): Jesus’s authority over demons. The “*demons*” mentioned in this passage are spiritual beings which are able to enter into people. The Bible does not specifically state the origin of these unclean spirits, but it seems that they were originally angels. Later, because they rebelled and rejected God’s authority, they became so-called “*unclean spirits*” or demons. They are definitely created beings, not some kind of ‘gods.’ They absolutely are not the spirits of dead people, and have nothing to do with the ghosts and monsters of Chinese tradition. Satan is their leader. However, Satan cannot be considered as God’s opposite or counterpart. Satan is merely a created spirit and cannot be compared to the eternally self-existent God.

In this event, Jesus Christ, the true God, displayed His authority and control over non-human spiritual entities. Jesus’s spirit is God, He Himself is the Creator. So He also had authority to control evil spirits.

The third passage, (Matthew 9:1-8): Jesus’s authority over sickness and the forgiveness of sins. Since Jesus had such supernatural power, it is not strange that He could heal sickness. Even some of the prophets of the period of the Old Testament of the Bible had cured people through the power of God. However, the surrounding scribes (experts in the Old Testament of the Bible) were amazed to hear Jesus, on His own authority, pronounce the forgiveness of the paralytic’s sins. Forgiving the sins which people have committed is God’s unique authority. Jesus’s healing of the paralytic was a miracle which showed God’s power and demonstrated that God approved of Jesus’s granting of forgiveness.

The words Jesus spoke to the paralytic may be profitably compared to the words which the Old Testament Biblical prophet Nathan used when he announced that God had forgiven King David’s sin. After King David sinned:

Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against Yahweh.” And Nathan said to David, “Yahweh also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.” (2 Samuel 12:13)

Nathan only dared, by revelation from God, to say that “*Yahweh*” had forgiven David’s sin. He absolutely did not dare to announce forgiveness based on his own authority. But Jesus could forgive human sin by His own authority.

In addition, in this passage we once again see the doctrine of ‘justification by faith.’ In the same way as Abraham “*believed in Yahweh; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness*” (Genesis 15:6), Jesus forgave the sin of the paralytic, regarding him as a righteous and holy person, because of the paralytic’s faith.

The fourth passage, (Luke 7:11-17): Jesus’s authority over death. The greatest form of supernatural power is bringing the dead back to life. Not only did Jesus Himself rise from the dead, He was also able to raise other people from the dead. Two other occasions can be seen in Luke 8:40-56 and John 11:1-44.

该撒提庇留在位十五年，本丢彼拉多作犹太巡抚，希律作加利利分封的王，他兄弟腓力作以土利亚和特拉可尼地方分封的王，吕撒聂作亚比利尼分封的王，亚那和该亚法作大祭司。那时，撒迦利亚的儿子约翰在旷野里，神的话临到他；（路加福音 3:1-2）

当我们把这些时间细节和约翰福音 2:20 结合在一起，我们就可以计算出耶稣基督很可能是在公元 26 年开始传道。我们在上面看到但以理预测弥赛亚到来的时间：“你当知道、当明白，从出令重新建造耶路撒冷，直到有受膏君的时候，必有七个七和六十二个七。正在艰难的时候，耶路撒冷城连街带濠都必重新建造”（但以理书 9:25）。七个七年和六十二个七年等于 483 年。那“出令重新建造耶路撒冷”很可能是发于公元前 458 年。公元前 458 年起，再加上 483 年，就是指公元 26 年。因而，对弥赛亚到来的时间的预言就明显的被应验了。（请复习第 11 课的细节。）

因此我们便看到耶稣传道的初期应验了几个旧约圣经中的预言。施洗者约翰是宣告弥赛亚将到以色列的先驱者。他宣告的时间也说明了耶稣开始传道的的时间，这也很可能是应验了几世纪之前但以理的明确的预言。

耶稣基督的神迹

耶稣开始传道以后，他行了很多超自然的神迹，证明他真的是上帝的儿子。在这里我们要讨论几个有代表性的例子。请看马太福音 8:23-9:8 的三段和路加福音 7:11-17 的一段。这四件事，每一件都显示了耶稣基督权力的不同方面。

第一段（马太福音 8:23-27）：耶稣基督对于大自然气候的权力。耶稣只是说一句话，就控制了空间的风和海里的水，而它们是被创造、物质的东西或力量。耶稣用这种超物质的方法来控制它们表示他本身是超越物质的。

第二段（马太福音 8:28-34）：耶稣基督对于鬼的权力。关于此段提到的“鬼”，它们是属灵的而且能附着人。圣经没有很清楚地讲那些污鬼的来源，可是好像它们原来是天使，后来由于反抗、违背上帝的权威，变了所谓的“污鬼”或魔鬼。它们肯定是被创造的，不算什么‘神’。这些决不是死人的灵，而且跟中国传说的鬼怪也没有关系。魔鬼撒旦是它们的首领。但撒旦绝对算不上是上帝的对立面或劲敌，撒旦只不过是一个被创造的灵，无法与自有永有的创造者相比较。

在这件事上，真神耶稣基督显示他的权力也控制人类之外属灵的实体。耶稣的灵就是上帝，他本身是创造者。所以他的权威也控制污鬼。

第三段（马太福音 9:1-8）：耶稣基督对于疾病和赦罪的权力。耶稣基督有那么超自然的力量，怪不得他能治病。连旧约圣经时代的一些先知，也曾经凭着上帝的能力治过病。周围的文士（即旧约圣经专家）见到耶稣凭着自己的权力宣布瘫子的罪得到了赦免，就很惊奇。赦免人所犯的罪是上帝的特权。耶稣医治那人的瘫痪是个神迹，表明了上帝的力量，证明上帝批准了耶稣的赦罪。

耶稣对瘫子说的话，跟旧约圣经先知拿单宣布上帝赦免大卫王的罪使用的话可作个有益的比较。大卫王犯了罪之后：

大卫对拿单说：“我得罪了耶和華了！”拿单说：“耶和華已经除掉你的罪，你必不至于死。”（撒母耳记下 12:13）

拿单只敢凭着上帝的启示说“耶和華”赦免大卫的罪，他绝对不敢凭着自己的权力宣布赦免。可是耶稣能够凭着自己的权力赦免人类的罪。

此外，在这段我们再一次看到‘因信称义’的真理。就像亚伯拉罕“信耶和華，耶和華就以此为他的义”（创世记 15:6）一样，耶稣赦免瘫子的罪，使他算为公义和圣洁的人，这是通过瘫子的信心。

第四段（路加福音 7:11-17）：耶稣基督对于死亡的权力。最高超自然的能力是使死人复活。耶稣基督不单自己复活了，而且能使别的人复活。另外两次可以在路加福音 8:40-56 和约翰福音 11:1-44 看到。

Jesus Christ performed miracles both because He had compassion on people and to verify that He was the Messiah, the Son of God. The writers of the gospels, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, chose to record a small, representative portion of the many miracles which Jesus Christ performed. They wrote down the events which they had personally witnessed (Matthew, John) or indirectly heard of from eyewitnesses (Mark, Luke). They were written down within ten to sixty years after the events (40-90 AD). Some scholars think they were finished within forty years after the events (by 70 AD). The authors did not gain fortune, fame or status, but rather faced the most severe persecution and endured the most painful executions. Their only motive was to accurately proclaim the truth.

Jesus Christ's Teaching

The teaching of Jesus Christ recorded in the gospels is very abundant. Here we will only touch on a small part of it. Please read Matthew chapter 5, which is part of the so-called 'Sermon on the Mount.'

As soon as we read this chapter we realize that the standard of God proclaimed by Jesus Christ is very different from human moral standards. We can make a comparison between the so-called 'Beatitudes' preached by Jesus and the common human viewpoint:

The People Jesus Said are Blessed:

poor in spirit
mourners (probably mourning their own sin)
gentle
hungry and thirsty for righteousness
merciful
pure in heart
peacemakers
persecuted for righteousness

The People Society Says are Blessed:

self-confident
happy, full of respect and admiration for themselves
active, ambitious
seeking money, status, fame
take care of themselves first
not too naïve, too idealistic
winners in fights
avoid suffering

It is obvious that the viewpoint of Jesus is very different from that of humanity, which is because Jesus knows very clearly "*it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment*" (Hebrews 9:27), so He is concerned with whether or not we obey God's righteous, holy, loving character. In general, humans are concerned with their physical life and do not think about death and what comes after death. Even if we occasionally think that there might be a future judgment, most of us think that we are a 'good person.' Even if there really is a God, 'good people' like us need not fear His judgment! But in fact, God's standard is much higher than we think.

The second part of the Sermon on the Mount directly compares human beings' standards with God's. Here Jesus used many quotations from the Old Testament, explaining for us the actual meaning of these commandments. Please read the passages from Matthew chapter 5 referenced below:

	<u>You have heard that it was said:</u>	<u>But I say to you:</u>
vv. 21-26	You shall not commit murder Note: " <i>Raca</i> " means good for nothing; " <i>You fool</i> " means idiot or scoundrel	You may not be angry with, despise, or hate someone
vv. 27-30	You shall not commit adultery Note: " <i>tear...out</i> " your right eye and " <i>cut...off</i> " your right hand means believers must avoid any situations, habits, relationships, ambitions, or employment which tempt or have a bad influence, such as impure movies or dissolute friends. It absolutely doesn't mean we should cut off part of our body. Such a fanatical error is worthless for controlling temptation.	You may not allow lust or mental adultery in your heart (it amounts to regarding a woman as a piece of meat)
vv. 31-32	If you divorce, you must do so according to the legal regulations Note: " <i>except for immorality</i> " means if fornication is discovered during the period between betrothal and marriage. It does not mean that one can divorce or remarry because of adultery occurring after marriage.	You should never divorce
vv. 38-42	Take revenge Note: " <i>slaps...cheek</i> " in the original language refers to an open-handed slap on the face, probably as an insult. Note: this command refers to the personal life of the believer. It has no relationship to the protection of society by government	Forgive and help those who are bad to you
vv. 43-47	Love your neighbor, hate your enemy Note: " <i>hate your enemy</i> " is not from the Old Testament Bible. It was probably the common saying of the people.	Love your enemy
v. 48	People are not perfect; sometimes they cannot control themselves	Your moral behavior must be perfect, just as holy and loving as God the Father is

耶稣基督行神迹既是因为怜悯人类又是因为要证实他真是弥赛亚，上帝的儿子。福音书的作者，凭着上帝的圣灵的感动，从耶稣基督所行的好多神迹之中选择了有代表性的一小部分记载下来。他们写下了亲眼所看过的（马太、约翰）或直接地从见证人所听到的（马可、路加）事情，都是写于事件之后 10 至 60 年（公元 40 至 90 年），甚至有学者认为是到事件之后 40 年（公元 70 年）为止就写完了。作者们并没有得到什么钱财、名声或地位，反而面对最厉害的逼迫，并且承受最痛苦的死刑，他们唯一的目的是准确地传播真理。

耶稣基督的教训

福音书里所记载的耶稣基督的教训很丰富，在这里我们只尝试看一小部分。请看马太福音第 5 章，是所谓‘登山宝训’的第一部分。

一看这章就会感到耶稣基督所宣告的上帝的标准与人类道德标准很不同。可以用耶稣讲的所谓‘八福’跟人类一般的看法来作个比较：

耶稣说有福的人：

虚心(心灵贫穷)
哀恸(哀痛，大概是因自己的罪)
温柔
饥渴慕义(爱慕公义如饥如渴)
怜恤他人
清心(内心纯洁)
使人和睦
为义受逼迫

社会说有福的人：

自信
快乐，自尊(自我感觉良好、自我肯定)
积极，主动(野心勃勃)
爱慕得到金钱、地位、名声
先关心自己的事
不要太单纯、太理想
斗争中的胜利者
避免苦难

可见耶稣基督与人类的看法很不同，是因为耶稣很清楚，“按着定命，人人都有一死，死后且有审判”（希伯来书 9:27），所以他关心的是我们是否服从上帝的公义性、圣洁性和慈爱性。总的来说，人类关心他们物质的生活却不去想死和死后的情况。就算我们偶尔想到将来可能会有个审判，我们一般人还会认为自己算是‘好人’：就算真的有一位上帝的话，我们‘好人’也不用怕他的审判！但是事实上，上帝的标准比我们所想像的高得多。

‘登山宝训’第二部分直接地比较人和上帝的标准。在此，耶稣引用了不少旧约圣经的话，而且对人们解释那些命令真正的意思是什么。请看以下来自马太福音第 5 章指出的圣经段：

	你们听见有话说：	只是我告诉你们：
21-26 节	不可谋杀 注意：“ <u>拉加</u> ”指废物的意思；“ <u>魔利</u> ”指笨蛋或坏蛋的意思	不可心里动怒、看不起人、恨人
27-30 节	不可奸淫 注意:把眼睛“ <u>剜出来</u> ”和把右手“ <u>砍下来</u> ”，是指信徒要避免个人生活里使他受试探或不良影响的情况、习惯、关系、欲望、或工作的情况，例如不纯洁的电影或放荡的朋友，绝对不是指砍掉身体的肢体；这样狂热的错误对于控制试探一点好处都没有	不可允许心里动情欲，想像淫乱 (就算把女人当作一块肉)
31-32 节	若离婚的话，要按照法律的规则 注意：“ <u>若不是为淫乱的缘故</u> ”是指在已经订婚了但还没结婚的间中，发现对方淫乱的情况，并不是说因为结婚之后发生奸淫就可以离婚或再婚	完全不要讲离婚
38-42 节	要报复人 注意：“ <u>打.....脸</u> ”原文指用手背批人的脸，大概是指一种侮辱 注意：这诫命是对信徒的个人生活提出的，与政府维持社会安全的关系没有关系	要原谅、帮助对你不好的人
43-47 节	爱你的邻居、恨你的仇敌 注意：“ <u>恨你的仇敌</u> ”那句话不是来自旧约圣经，应该是当时人们普遍的说法	爱你的仇敌
48 节	人不是圣人，有时控制不了自己	道德行为必须完全， 象父上帝一样圣洁、慈爱

Above we can see that God's standard and human standards have at least three major differences:

1. Humans just look at outward behavior and do not pay much attention to inner motives. God's judgment is not only according to external appearance, but also according to the thoughts and motives of the heart. Hatred or lust are in and of themselves sin, and sooner or later our thoughts will influence our actions.
2. Everyone regards himself as a 'good person,' so we all often wrathfully desire that someone who has offended us receive a 'fair' payback or punishment. God regards us all as such miserable sinners that, if we want 'fairness,' we ought to desire our own punishment as well.
3. Humans are always trying to find a way to excuse our own sins, including lowering the standard. God's standard is absolute, it is "perfection." He has granted us free will and a moral conscience, leaving us "*without excuse*" (Romans 1:20).

This chapter also gives us a very severe warning, urging us to flee God's punishment and avoid going to hell. Jesus told a story to let us know how terrible hell is. Please read Luke 16:19-31.

The rich man's problem was not that he was wealthy, but that he was selfish and greedy, and did not have compassion on others. In verse 30 he admits that his surviving brothers, who were living the kind of life he had lived while he was on earth, should "*repent*." The rich man had not believed the Bible and had lived a selfish, sinful life. Probably the people around him did not feel that he was especially bad, but God condemned him and punished him. Concerning this punishment, note that it is:

1. The people in hell have perception, consciousness, feeling: "*And in Hades he lifted up his eyes.....and said*"
2. Eternal, with no way to repent: "*none may cross over from there [hell] to us [paradise]*"
3. Extremely painful: "*I am in agony in this flame*"
4. Completely fair: "*remember that during your life you received your good things*" but did not pity the poor. Furthermore, the rich man was a Jew. All his life he had the witness and warning of the Old Testament of the Bible. The testimony which had urged him to repent had been more than sufficient: "*If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.*"

Dear friend, you, like the rich man, already know the truth about God, judgment, and hell. I hope you will at once repent and believe in Jesus Christ!

以上我们能看到上帝的标准与人类的标准至少有三个大方面很不同：

1. 人只看表面的行为，不太关心内心的目的。上帝判断的不仅是根据外貌，也是根据人内心的思念和目的。恨人或情欲本身是罪，并且迟早使我们的思想影响我们的行为。
2. 人人把自己当作‘好人’，所以通常我们都会愤怒地要求得罪我们的人受到‘公平的’报复或惩罚。上帝认为我们都是那么糟糕的罪人，假如要求‘公平’，就应该要求我们自己也受到惩罚。
3. 人总是想办法为自己的错辩护，包括把标准降低一点。上帝的标准是绝对的，是“完全”的。他赐给人类自由意志和良心，叫我们“无可推诿”（罗马书 1:20）。

此章也对我们提出了很严重的警告，劝告我们逃避上帝的惩罚，免得下地狱。耶稣又讲了一个故事让我们明白地狱是多么可怕。请读路加福音 16:19-31。

那位财主的问题不是他的富有，而是他的自私、贪财、不怜悯他人。在 30 节他也承认他还活着的弟兄，正在过着他以前在世时所过的生活，必须“悔改”。财主原来因不相信圣经而过着自私、罪恶的生活。大概周围的人并不感到他有怎么特别坏，可是上帝定他的罪，惩罚他。关于那个惩罚，要注意它是：

1. 地狱里的人有知觉、意识、感情：“他在阴间……举目……说”
2. 永恒的、不会改变的：“要从那边[地狱]过到我们这边[乐园]，是不能的”
3. 非常痛苦的：“我在这火焰里，极其痛苦”
4. 完全公平的：“你该回想你生前享过福”但是没有怜悯穷人。而且，财主是犹太人，一直有旧约圣经的证明和警告，劝他悔改的根据已经足够多了：“若不听从摩西和先知的话，就是有一个从死里复活的，他们也是不听劝”。

亲爱的朋友，您象那个财主一样已经知道关于上帝、审判、地狱的真理。希望您及时悔改，相信耶稣基督！

Lesson 14: The Death of Jesus Christ

The Messiah: His Betrayal, Arrest, and Sacrifice

After Jesus's three and a half years of ministry, He was betrayed by one of His disciples, unjustly condemned by the Jewish leaders, and put to death on a cross. Amazingly, many of the details of these events had been predicted hundreds of years before the time of Jesus Christ. Please read Matthew chapters 26-27.

We have already seen how Daniel predicted the time of the coming of the Messiah. He also predicted that the Messiah would be put to death: "...the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing..." (Daniel 9:26). Although it was hard for the Jews to accept, the Old Testament of the Bible clearly prophesied that the Messiah would suffer and die.

Many prophecies were fulfilled by this event, but we will only look at three sets of prophecies from the Old Testament Bible. The first is regarding Judas Iscariot, the disciple who betrayed Jesus. Matthew writes:

Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests, and said, "What are you willing to give me to deliver Him up to you?" And they weighed out to him thirty pieces of silver. And from then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Him. ...

And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up, accompanied by a great multitude with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I shall kiss, He is the one; seize Him." And immediately he went to Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. And Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you have come for." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him. ...

Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to that yourself!" And he threw the pieces of silver into the sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood." And they counseled together and with the money bought the Potter's Field as a burial place for strangers. (Matthew 26:14-16, 47-50; 27:3-7)

Judas was a very greedy man. In the gospel of John we see that he was the treasurer for Jesus's group of disciples, "he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it" (John 12:6). It seems that Judas originally thought that Jesus would become a king of this world, and he himself would be a high official under Jesus. But at that time Jesus did not intend to become a king ruling the earth, but was set to be crucified. Perhaps it was when Judas realized this that he lost hope and decided to betray Jesus. He sought out the religious and civil leaders and sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. This was equivalent to four months wages for a day laborer. Several days later, he led a group of soldiers to the garden where Jesus was praying. The soldiers arrested Jesus, and the leaders condemned him to death.

But when Judas saw what had happened, he felt very remorseful. With a guilty conscience, he tried to return the money, but the hypocritical chief priests, although they did not care about sin, were unwilling to take back the money. So Judas threw the money into the temple. Regrettably, in the end Judas did not decide to return to God and ask for his forgiveness, but instead ended his own life. Although the priests did not care about Judas's suicide and Jesus's being condemned to death, they knew that according to the regulations of the Bible the thirty pieces of silver could not be put back into the temple treasury. So they bought a field from a potter to use as a place of burial for unclaimed corpses of travelers. Some scholars think they used a legal fiction to regard the field as having been bought in Judas's name, and thus belonging to Judas.

The details of Judas's betrayal of Jesus had already been amazingly predicted several hundred years earlier by a prophet named Zechariah. He predicted that the leaders of the Jews would value God Himself at thirty pieces of silver. That was Jesus Christ, who was fully God and fully human. Zechariah also predicted that the thirty pieces of silver would be thrown "to the potter in the house of Yahweh":

And I said to them, "If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind!" So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages. Then Yahweh said to me, "Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them." So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of Yahweh. (Zechariah 11:12-13)

The prophecies in that part of the book of Zechariah are very complicated. They all have to do with the time period of the betrayal and crucifixion of Jesus and the subsequent destruction of Israel. The surprising details of this prophecy were fulfilled several hundred years later when Jesus Christ, the Messiah, was betrayed. He was the "good Shepherd" sent by God, but the Jews rejected Him.

14 课：耶稣基督的死亡

弥赛亚：他被背叛，被捕和牺牲。

耶稣经过三年半的传道生涯之后，他被他的一个门徒背叛了，被犹太人的首领一致冤枉而被钉死在十字架上。很奇妙地，有许多事情的细节在耶稣基督时代的几百年之前已经被预测出来。请读马太福音 26 至 27 章。

我们已经看到但以理怎样预测到弥赛亚到来的时间，他也预言弥赛亚将会被杀：“…那受膏者必被剪除，一无所有…”（但以理书 9:26）。虽然对于犹太人来说这是很难接受的，但旧约圣经清楚地预言了弥赛亚的受苦和死亡。

在这件事情上有很多预言被应验，但我们只看三组旧约圣经的预言。第一是关于加略人犹大，那个背叛耶稣的门徒。马太写到：

当下，十二门徒里有一个称为加略人犹大的，去见祭司长，说：“我把他交给你们，你们愿意给我多少钱？”他们就给了他三十块钱；从那时候，他就找机会，要把耶稣交给他们……

说话之间，那十二个门徒里的犹大来了，并有许多人带著刀棒，从祭司长和民间的长老那里与他同来；那卖耶稣的给了他们一个暗号，说：“我与谁亲嘴，谁就是他，你们可以拿住他。”犹大随即到耶稣跟前，说：“请拉比安。”就与他亲嘴。耶稣对他说：“朋友，你来要作的事，就作吧。”於是那些人上前，下手拿住耶稣；……

这时候，卖耶稣的犹大看见耶稣已经定了罪，就後悔，把那三十块钱拿回来，给祭司长和长老，说：“我卖了无辜之人的血，是有罪了。”他们说：“那与我们有甚麽相干？你自己担当吧！”犹大就把那银钱丢在殿里，出去吊死了。祭司长拾起银钱来，说：“这是血价，不可放在库里。”他们商议，就用那银钱，买了窑户的一块田，为要埋葬外乡人；（马太福音 26:14-16, 47-50; 27:3-7）

犹大是一个非常贪婪的人。在约翰福音中我们看到他是耶稣门徒小组里保管财产的人，“乃因他是个贼，又带著钱囊，常取其中所存的”（约翰福音 12:6）。看来犹大原来认为耶稣将会成为世界的君王，而他就可以成为耶稣手下的一位大臣。但是耶稣在那时候并没有要成为君王来统治地球的意愿，他已经准备被钉在十字架上。可能就在那时候犹大意识到了这一点，他十分失望，决定背叛耶稣，他找到宗教和人民的领袖，为了三十个银币出卖了耶稣。这等于一位日间劳作者四个月的工钱。几天之后，他带领一队士兵到了耶稣正在祈祷的那个花园。士兵拘捕了耶稣，领袖们就判了他死刑。

但是当犹大看到所发生的事之后，他又觉得十分後悔。非常内疚的他想归还那些钱，可是那些伪君子祭司长，尽管他们不关心罪的问题，还是不愿意收回钱币，所以犹大把钱币扔进了圣殿。很可惜，犹大最后没有选择归回上帝，求上帝的赦免，而是自己结束了自己的生命。虽然祭司们对犹大的自杀和耶稣的被处死刑不以为然，但是他们也知道依照圣殿的规定那 30 块银币不能归入圣殿的财产，所以他们向一个窑户买了一块坟地，作为安葬没有人认领的过路人的尸体的地方。一些学者认为他们还利用法律上的假定宣告那块地是用犹大的名义买下的，属于犹大。

犹大背叛耶稣的细节在几百年前已被一位叫撒迦利亚的先知奇妙的预测了出来。他预测犹太人的领袖会把上帝本身等同于 30 个银币的价值，就是那位耶稣基督，一位完全的神和完全的人。撒迦利亚又预测那 30 个银币会“在耶和华的圣殿中丢给窑户”：

我对他们说：“你们若以为美，就给我工价。不然，就罢了。”於是他们给了三十块钱作为我的工价。耶和華吩咐我说：“要把众人所估定美好的价值丢给窑户。”我便将这三十块钱，在耶和華的殿中丢给窑户了。（撒迦利亚书 11:12-13）

撒迦利亚书那一部分的预言非常复杂，都是关于耶稣被出卖和被钉死的那个时期以及以色列后来被毁灭。那令人吃惊的预言的细节在几百年之后被应验了，耶稣基督，那位弥赛亚，被出卖。他原来是上帝派来的那位“好牧人”，但犹太人拒绝了他。

Psalm 22 Predicted the Messiah's Death

More than a thousand years before Jesus was crucified, King David had already predicted the specific details of Jesus's execution. Please read Psalm 22.

In this Psalm, David uses the first person, "I," to describe the events. However, it is completely clear that the events written in this Psalm did not happen in David's lifetime. (Interested readers should read 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, etc., to see the detail of David's life.) David was a prophet as well as a king, and he used the first person "I" to write prophecy about the future.

To understand how amazing this prophecy is, we must understand crucifixion. The person to be punished was stripped naked. The soldiers who carried out the execution were allowed to keep the crucified person's clothing and personal effects. The victim's hands and feet were nailed (or sometimes tied) to a wooden beam, and then he was left there to die slowly. Under these circumstances, the crucified person's breathing gradually became very difficult, and he had to use his hands and his feet to force his body up before he could take a breath. It seems that the victim usually died because in the end he became too weak and exhausted to raise himself, and finally died of asphyxiation. They could take several days to die. Jesus was God, and it seems He chose the exact moment of His death (see John 19:30), but, from a physiological standpoint, the fact that Jesus died a few hours after being nailed to the cross may have been because of heart failure.

The Jews did not normally use this form of execution. The earliest historical record we have of crucifixion comes from late sixth century BC Persia. It seems that it did not come into Palestine until 331 BC, with the Greeks under Alexander the Great. It is not possible that a Jew living at the time of David had seen a crucifixion, but God let King David see what would happen in the future to his descendant, the Messiah. Now we will examine the details of the prophecy and their fulfillment.

Prophecy

But I am a worm, and not a man, A reproach of men, and despised by the people. All who see me sneer at me; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, "Commit yourself to Yahweh; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him."... Many bulls have surround-ed me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They open wide their mouth at me, As a ravening and a roaring lion. (Psalms 22:6-8, 12-13)

Fulfillment

Then they spat in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him, and said, "Prophesy to us, You Christ; who is the one who hit You?"...

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him. And they stripped Him, and put a scarlet robe on Him. And after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they kneeled down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they spat on Him, and took the reed and began to beat Him on the head. And after they had mocked Him, they took His robe off and put His garments on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him. ...

At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left. And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him, and saying, "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him. "He trusts in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He takes pleasure in Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'" And the robbers also who had been crucified with Him were casting the same insult at Him. (Matthew 26:67-68; 27:27-31, 38-44)

This prophecy has been fulfilled. At that time, the chief priests and leaders of Israel, the Roman soldiers, the people passing by the site of the crucifixion, even the criminals being crucified at the same time as Jesus all mocked Him. As Christians, if today unbelievers mock us, seeing how others mocked our Lord at that time, we really should not be surprised.

I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me. (Psalm 22:14)

but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs; but one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water. (John 19:33-34)

On the cross, Jesus's bones undoubtedly slowly went out of joint. His heart also experienced a terrible strain. He may have died of heart failure. When He was pierced after His death, blood poured out of His body, perhaps indicating that there had been internal bleeding.

诗篇 22 篇预言弥赛亚的死亡

大卫王在耶稣被钉十字架的一千多年前就已经预言了耶稣被处死刑的具体细节。请读诗篇 22 章。

在这诗篇中，大卫用了第一人称“我”来叙述这些事。然而，十分清楚地，这篇诗所写的那些事都没有发生在大卫的有生之年。（有兴趣的读者请读撒母耳记上下，列王纪上等，看看大卫的一生的细节。）大卫既是一位先知，也是一位国王，他有时用第一人称“我”来写有关将来的预言。

要理解这个预言有多么奇妙，我们必须理解钉十字架的情形。受惩罚的人要被剥光衣服。执行死刑的士兵有权得到被钉的人的衣服和个人物品。受惩罚的人手脚被钉在（有时候被绑在）木架上，然后他就会被留在那里，慢慢地死去。在这种情况下，被钉的人的呼吸会逐渐变得困难，必须用手和脚用力把身体向上提起才能吸一口气。受惩罚的人最终的死因通常好象是他们变得衰弱无力、体力透支而窒息死亡。他们可能要过好几天才会死去。耶稣基督作为上帝，好象选择了他死亡的确切时间（看约翰福音 19:30），但从生理角度来看，耶稣在被钉后几小时就死去了，这很可能是因为他心脏衰竭。

犹太人并不是经常施行过这种死刑。历史上关于钉十字架实行死刑是来自公元前六世纪晚期的波斯人。这种死刑法好象是在公元前 331 年才从亚历山大大帝统治下的希腊人传入巴勒斯坦地区。一个大卫时代的犹太人见到人被钉十字架是一件根本不可能的事，但上帝让大卫王看到将来要发生在他后裔弥赛亚身上的事。现在让我们来看预言的细节和它们的应验。

预言

但我是虫，不是人，被众人羞辱，被百姓藐视！凡看见我的都嗤笑我；他们撇嘴摇头，说，他把自己交托耶和华，耶和华可以救他吧，耶和华既喜悦他，可以搭救他吧！……。有许多公牛围绕我，巴珊大力的公牛四面困住我。它们向我张口，好像抓撕吼叫的狮子。（诗篇 22:6-8, 12-13）

应验

他们就吐唾沫在他脸上，用拳头打他，也有用手掌打他的，说：“基督啊！你是先知，告诉我们打你的是谁？”……。巡抚的兵就把耶稣带进衙门，叫全营的兵都聚集在他那里。他们给他脱了衣服，穿上一件朱红色袍子，用荆棘编作冠冕，戴在他头上；拿一根苇子放在他右手里，跪在他面前，戏弄他，说：“恭喜，犹太人的王啊！”又吐唾沫在他脸上，拿苇子打他的头。戏弄完了，就给他脱了袍子，仍穿上他自己的衣服；带他出去，要钉十字架……。当时，有两个强盗和他同钉十字架，一个在右边，一个在左边。从那里经过的人讥诮他，摇着头，说：“你这拆毁圣殿，三日又建造起来的，可以救自己吧！你如果是神的儿子，就从十字架上下来吧！”祭司长和文士并长老，也是这样戏弄他，说：“他救了别人，不能救自己。他是以色列的王，现在可以从十字架上下来，我们就信他；他倚靠神，神若喜悦他，现在可以救他，因为他曾说：‘我是神的儿子！’”那和他同钉的强盗，也是这样地讥诮他。（马太福音 26:67-68；27:27-31, 38-44）

这个预言应验了。那时以色列的祭司长和领袖，罗马的士兵，经过钉十字架现场的犹太人，甚至连与耶稣同时被钉十字架的犯人也讥笑他。我们作为基督徒，如果今天有非信徒讥笑我们，想一想当时他人怎讥笑我们的主，我们真的不应该感到吃惊。

我如水被倒出来；我的骨头都脱了节；我心在我里面如蜡熔化。（诗篇 22:14）

只是来到耶稣那里，见他已经死了，就不打断他的腿，惟有一个兵拿枪扎他的肋旁，随即有血和水流出来。（约翰福音 19:33-34）

被钉在十字架上，耶稣的骨骼无疑地会慢慢脱离关节，他的心脏也承受着极大的压力。他可能是死于心脏衰竭。在他死后被矛刺时，身体的血液流出，这也许显示出内出血。

My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And Thou dost lay me in the dust of death. (Psalm 22:15)

And immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink. ...And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. (Matthew 27:48, 50)

After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop, and brought it up to His mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit. (John 19:28-30)

That Jesus suffered extreme thirst was not strange. Jesus may have wanted a drink of water in order to wet His parched mouth, so that He would be able to loudly proclaim "It is finished!" He wanted to tell the world that His work of bearing the sin of humanity was completed.

For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet. (Psalm 22:16)

The other disciples therefore were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing." Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed." (John 20:25-29)

This is among the most amazing prophecies. David could not have seen a crucifixion. In spite of this, he accurately prophesied that at the time of Jesus's crucifixion, they would drive large nails through His hands and feet. A revelation from God enabled David to know what would happen in the future to Jesus Christ.

I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots. (Psalm 22:17-18)

And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots; (Matthew 27:35)

The soldiers therefore, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece. They said therefore to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be"; that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "They divided my outer garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." (John 19:23-24)

Pictures of Jesus on the cross usually have a piece of cloth wrapped around His waist. This representation is for the sake of modesty, but in fact Jesus was completely naked on the cross, suffering shame. He was in a public place outside the city, and it was a holiday, so thousands of people saw Him. His body was stretched out on the cross, with His bones visible, protruding under His skin. His executioners divided up His clothing, and gambled for the remaining piece.

Now we understand that a thousand years before Jesus Christ was crucified, the Bible had already predicted even the smallest details of it. But what significance do these things have for us today in China? The answer is at the beginning and ending of Psalm 22:

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning. (Psalm 22:1)

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46)

"My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?" Jesus cried out while He was hanging on the cross. At that moment, God rejected and forsook Jesus, refusing to have any relationship or interaction with Him. The reason God the Father abandoned His Son Jesus was in order to punish sin. But Jesus had no sin; He had never sinned once in His life.

Why did the holy God the Father reject and punish His holy Son Jesus? Jesus was punished for our sins, for your sins and my sins, for the sins of every Chinese person, for the sins of all the people in the world. This explains why Psalm 22 ends this way:

我的精力枯乾，如同瓦片；我的舌头贴在我牙床上。你将我安置在死地的尘土中。
(诗篇 22:15)

内中有一个人赶紧跑去，拿海绒蘸满了醋，绑在苇子上送给他喝。。。耶稣又大声喊叫，气就断了。(马太福音 27:48, 50)

这事以后，耶稣知道各样的事已经成了，为要使经上的话应验，就说：“我渴了。”有一个器皿盛满了醋，放在那里；他们就拿海绒蘸满了醋，绑在牛膝草上，送到他口。耶稣尝(原文是受)了那醋，就说：“成了！”便低下头，将灵魂交付神了。(约翰福音 19:28-30)

耶稣感到极度的口渴并不奇怪。耶稣可能要求喝一口水来湿润一下他干渴的口，以便他可以大声宣告“成了”。他想告诉世界他为人类担当罪的工作已经完成了。

犬类围著我，恶党环绕我；他们扎了我的手，我的脚。(诗篇 22:16)

那些门徒就对他说：“我们已经看见主了。”多马却说：“我非看见他手上的钉痕，用指头探入那钉痕，又用手探入他的肋旁，我总不信。”过了八日，门徒又在屋里，多马也和他们同在，门都关了。耶稣来，站在当中说：“愿你们平安！”就对多马说：“伸过你的指头来，摸(原文是看)我的手；伸出你的手来，探入我的肋旁。不要疑惑，总要信！”多马说：“我的主！我的神！”耶稣对他说：“你因看见了我才信；那没有看见就信的有福了。”(约翰福音 20:25-29)

这是最奇妙的预言中的一个。大卫不可能见过钉十字架的事。然而，他却清楚地预言他们把耶稣钉十字架的时候所用的大钉就会扎耶稣的手和脚。是上帝启示使大卫知道将要发生在耶稣身上的事。

我的骨头，我都能数过；他们瞪著眼看我。他们分我的外衣，为我的里衣拈阄。(诗篇 22:17-18)

他们既将他钉在十字架上，就拈阄分他的衣服，(马太福音 27:35)

兵丁既然将耶稣钉在十字架上，就拿他的衣服分为四分，每兵一分；又拿他的里衣，这件里衣原来没有缝儿，是上下一片织成的。他们就彼此说：“我们不要撕开，只要拈阄，看谁得著。”这要应验经上的话说：“他们分了我的外衣，为我的里衣拈阄。”兵丁果然作了这事。(约翰福音 19:23-24 上)

耶稣基督在十字架上的画像通常会有一块布缠在他的腰间，这样画只不过是因为道德的问题，但事实上耶稣是完全赤裸地在十字架上受人羞辱。那里是城外的一个公共场所，那天算是假日时期，成千上万的人都看得见他，全身被拉开悬挂在十字架上，隔着皮肤也看得到他的骨头。在那里，为他行刑的人还把他的衣服瓜分了，把剩下的一件拿来赌博。

现在我们终于清楚地了解，在耶稣基督钉十字架的一千年前，圣经怎样连微小的细节也早已预测到了。但是这些事情对于今天在中国的我们又有什么意义呢？答案就在诗篇 22 章的开头和结尾：

我的神，我的神，为甚麽离弃我？为甚麽远离不救我？不听我唉哼的言语？(诗篇 22:1)

约在申初，耶稣大声喊著说：“以利！以利！拉马撒巴各大尼！”就是说：“我的神！我的神！为甚麽离弃我？”(马太福音 27:46)

“我的神，我的神，为什么离弃我？”耶稣被挂在十字架上时大声说。就是那一刻，上帝拒绝、离弃了耶稣，他拒绝与耶稣有任何的关系和沟通。父上帝舍弃他的儿子耶稣的原因是他要对罪作出惩罚。可是耶稣并没有罪，他一生从未犯过错。

为什么圣洁的父上帝会拒绝和惩罚圣子耶稣呢？耶稣是为了我们的罪，为了你的罪和我的罪，为了每一个中国人的罪，为了全世界人的罪而被惩罚。这也解释了为什么诗篇 22 章如此结尾：

All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to Yahweh, And all the families of the nations will worship before Thee. For the kingdom is Yahweh's, And He rules over the nations. All the prosperous of the earth will eat and worship, All those who go down to the dust will bow before Him, Even he who cannot keep his soul alive. Posterity will serve Him; It will be told of Yahweh to the coming generation. They will come and will declare His righteousness To a people who will be born, that He has performed it. (Psalm 22:27-31)

These verses are a prophecy written around 1000 BC. At that time, apart from the Jews, probably all the world was worshipping idols. Among non-Jews, only the tiny portion who happened to live near Israel had even heard of the name of Yahweh, the true God. At that time, certainly less than one percent of the world's population knew the true God. The circumstances of David's time had not changed much by the time Jesus Christ came several hundred years later. But now, people from "*all the families of the nations*" from "*all the ends of the earth*" have turned to Yahweh and worship Him. This prophecy began to be fulfilled shortly after Jesus's resurrection, and continues to be fulfilled today, as the gospel being spread to the remaining places and peoples where the church still has not been established.

The final fulfillment of these verses will occur when Jesus comes to the earth again to rule for 1,000 years. As it says in prophecies in several places in the Old Testament of the Bible, at that time everyone on earth will worship Him. Clearly however, the predictions in Psalm 22 about the death of Jesus and the spread of the worship of Yahweh have already been fulfilled. What do we learn from the fulfillment of these prophecies? We learn that God inspired David to write them, revealing future events to him. We also learn that Jesus really was God come to the earth, God become a man, who died for the sins of the world.

The Book of Isaiah Predicted the Messiah's Rejection, Death and Resurrection

Psalm 22 is not the only place in the Old Testament of the Bible which prophesies the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The prophet Isaiah also predicted it in detail. Please read Isaiah 53:1-12 and 52:13-15. Note that the chronological sequence here is the events of chapter 53 happened first, then those of 52:13-15 happened afterwards.

In this passage, Isaiah predicts Jesus would be rejected by the majority of the Jews, unjustly condemned, and die. Isaiah also says Jesus would be sacrificed to bear the punishment for the sins of humanity, and that afterwards He would come back to life, be exalted, and that people from many different ethnicities would come to believe in Him. Remember that Isaiah lived 700 years before Jesus, and that the oldest extant copy of the book of Isaiah dates from more than a hundred years before Jesus's death. That is to say, Isaiah's words really are prophecy. Now let us examine the details and fulfillments of the Isaiah's prophecies.

Prophecy

Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of Yahweh been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. (Isaiah 53:1-3)

Fulfillment

But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him; (John 12:37)

Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas; and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth, and kill Him. ... But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes...to put Jesus to death. ... Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let Him be crucified!" And he said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they kept shouting all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!" (Matthew 26:3-4; 27:20, 22-23)

There was nothing special in Jesus's appearance which showed that He was the Messiah, nor was He unforgettably handsome. He was a carpenter from an ordinary peasant family. Although Jesus performed many miracles, most people still did not believe in Him. Finally, the majority of the Jewish leaders and common people, along with the Roman governor, all agreed to put Him to death. While He was hanging on the cross, the passers-by mocked Him, not acknowledging that He had been sent by God. They paid no attention to Isaiah's prophecy, despite the fact that every Jew was very familiar with it.

地的四极都要想念耶和华，并且归顺他；列国的万族都要在你面前敬拜。因为国权是耶和华的；他是管理万国的。地上一切丰肥的人必吃喝而敬拜；凡下到尘土中不能存活自己性命的人，都要在他面前下拜。他必有俊裔事奉他；主所行的事必传与后代。他们必来把他的公义传给将要生的民，言明这事是他所行的。（诗篇 22:27-31）

这些字句作为一个预言都是写于公元前 1000 年左右。在那个时候很可能除了犹太人以外，全世界都在拜偶像。在非犹太人中，只有一小部分碰巧居住在以色列附近的人才听说过耶和华真神的名。那时全世界认识真神上帝的人口一定少于百分之一。这种在大卫时代的情况，再过几百年到耶稣基督到来时一直都没有很大的改变。现在人们从“列国的万族”，从“地的四极”，都归向耶和华，来敬拜他。这句预言在耶稣复活后不久便开始应验了，一直延续到今天，福音继续向剩下的几个还没有设立教会的地方和民族传播。

这些字句的最终应验，会在耶稣再来地球统治 1000 年时发生，正如在旧约圣经中的几处预言一样，到那时地球上所有人都会敬拜他。但是很明显，在诗篇第 22 章关于耶稣之死的预言，和耶和华将会被广为敬拜的预言已经应验了。我们可以从这应验了的预言中看到一些什么呢？是上帝启示大卫把它写了出来，把将来的事情显示给他知道。我们也知道耶稣真的是上帝来到地球上，成为一个人，为了世人的罪而死。

以赛亚书预言弥赛亚被拒绝、死亡、复活

诗篇第 22 章不是旧约圣经唯一一处预言耶稣基督的死和复活的经文。先知以赛亚也有详细的叙述。请读以赛亚书 53:1-12 和 52:13-15。要注意这里的时间顺序是 53 章发生在先，52:13-15 发生在后。

在这段话中，以赛亚预言耶稣将会被大部份的犹太人拒绝、将被不公平地定罪，以及他的死亡。以赛亚还说耶稣会为承担人类罪恶的刑罚而牺牲，然后耶稣将会复活、将会被高举，而且不同民族的人们都会来相信他。回忆一下，以赛亚是生活在耶稣的 700 年之前，并且最古老的还存在的以赛亚书的一个抄本是来自耶稣死前的 100 多年前。这就是说，以赛亚的话真的是预言。现在，让我们研究一下以赛亚的预言的细节和应验。

预言

我们所传的(或译：所传与我们的)有谁信呢？耶和華的膀臂向誰顯露呢？他在耶和華面前生長如嫩芽，像根出於乾地。他無佳形美容；我們看見他的時候，也無美貌使我們羨慕他。他被藐視，被人厭棄；多受痛苦，常經忧患。他被藐視，好像被人掩面不看的一樣；我們也不尊重他。（以賽亞書 53:1-3）

应验

他虽然在他們面前行了許多神迹，他們还是不信他，（約翰福音 12:37）

那時，祭司長和民間的長老聚集在大祭司稱為該亞法的院裡。大家商議要用詭計拿住耶穌殺他；……祭司長和長老挑唆眾人……除滅耶穌。……彼拉多說：“這樣，那稱為基督的耶穌，我怎麼辦他呢？”他們都說：“把他釘十字架！”巡撫〔彼拉多〕說：為什麼？他作了什麼惡事呢？”他們便極力地喊着說：“把他釘十字架！”（馬太福音 26:3-4；27:20，22-23）

耶穌的外表並沒有什麼特征顯示他是彌賽亞，他也並非特別英俊令人難忘。他來自一個普通的農民家庭，是一位木匠。雖然耶穌施行了許多神迹，大多數的人仍然不願意相信他。最後，大多數的猶太領袖和普通的人民，以及羅馬官員都同意處死他。當他被掛在十字架上時，過路的人也取笑他，不承認他是上帝派來的。他們完全無視以賽亞書中的預言，儘管每一位猶太人都對它非常熟悉。

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)

*And the high priest stood up and said to Him, "Do You make no answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his robes, saying, "He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; what do you think?" They answered and said, "He is deserving of death!" ...
Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And Jesus said to him, "It is as you say." And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He made no answer. Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" And He did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so that the governor was quite amazed. (Matthew 26:62-66; 27:11-14)*

Jesus made no reply to His interrogators, just as Isaiah had predicted. In the final moment of His trial before the Jewish leaders, He directly proclaimed that He was the Son of God, quoting from a prophecy in the book of Daniel. The priests all understood what He meant, but they did not believe that Jesus really was the Son of God, so they accused Him of blasphemy against God.

The Roman government did not permit the native leaders in colonized areas to implement the death penalty. Only the local Roman governor had that authority. Therefore the priests took Jesus to the Roman governor, Pilate. Before Pilate, the priests made a different accusation, saying that Jesus was leading a rebellion. Once again, Jesus did not defend Himself. He only affirmed that He was the King of the Jews.

By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living, For the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? (Isaiah 53:8)

*Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, in order that they might put Him to death; and they did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. ... (Matthew 26:59-60a)
And Pilate summoned the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and said to them, "You brought this man to me as one who incites the people to rebellion, and behold, having examined Him before you, I have found no guilt in this man regarding the charges which you make against Him. "No, nor has Herod, for he sent Him back to us; and behold, nothing deserving death has been done by Him. "I will therefore punish Him and release Him." ...
But they cried out all together, saying, "Away with this man...!" ...
And Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again, but they kept on calling out, saying, "Crucify, crucify Him!" And he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has this man done? I have found in Him no guilt demanding death; I will therefore punish Him and release Him." But they were insistent, with loud voices asking that He be crucified. And their voices began to prevail. And Pilate pronounced sentence that their demand should be granted. (Luke 23:13-16, 18a, 20-24)*

The leaders of the Jews and the Roman governor Pilate were all very clear that Jesus was innocent. Pilate knew that the Jewish leaders were purposely bringing a false accusation against Jesus, but because he feared the crowd might riot, he let them put Jesus to death. Thus Jesus was put to death by crucifixion, the details of which we have discussed above with Psalm 22.

His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth. (Isaiah 53:9)

And when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given over to him. And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away. (Matthew 27:57-60)

In Jesus's time, rich Jews cut cave-like tombs in rock for themselves and their posterity. An executed criminal was not permitted this kind of burial. His body was left on the cross to rot, or buried in a public gravesite, such as the one purchased with Judas's money. The book of Isaiah was written hundreds of years before Jesus. Once more, the minutely detailed prophecy about an event which was impossible to foresee were precisely fulfilled.

他被欺压，在受苦的时候却不开口（或译：他受欺压，却自卑不开口）：他像羊羔被牵到宰杀之地，又像羊在剪毛的人手下无声，他也是这样不开口。（以赛亚书 53:7）

大祭司就站起来，对耶稣说：“你甚麽都不回答吗？这些人作见证，告你的是甚麽呢？”耶稣却不言语，大祭司对他说：“我指著永生神叫你起誓，告诉我们，你是神的儿子基督不是？”耶稣对他说：“你说的是；然而我告诉你们，后来你们要看见人子，坐在那权能者的右边，驾著天上的云降临。”大祭司就撕开衣服，说：“他说了僭妄的话，我们何必再用见证人呢？这僭妄的话，现在你们都听见了，你们的意见如何？”他们回答说：“他是该死的。”……。

耶稣站在巡抚面前，巡抚问他说：“你是犹太人的王吗？”耶稣说：“你说的是。”他被祭司长和长老控告的时候，甚麽都不回答。彼拉多就对他说：“他们作见证告你这麽多的事，你没有听见吗？”耶稣仍不回答，连一句话也不说，以致巡抚甚觉希奇。（马太福音 26:62-66；27:11-14）

耶稣并没有给质问他的人任何回答，正如以赛亚所预言的一样。在他被犹太的大祭司审判的最后时刻，他直接宣告他自己就是上帝的儿子，并引用了但以理书中的预言。祭司们都明白他在说些什么，但他们不相信耶稣真的是上帝的儿子，所以他们以亵渎上帝的罪名控告他。

罗马政府不允许殖民地的当地领袖对犯人施行死刑，只有在那里的罗马官员才有这样的权力。因此，祭司们把耶稣带到罗马的官员彼拉多那里。在彼拉多面前，祭司们用了另一个控告，他们说耶稣想带头叛乱。再次地，耶稣没有为自己辩护。他只是肯定他是真正的犹太人的王。

因受欺压和审判，他被夺去，至於他同世的人，谁想他受鞭打，从活人之地被剪除，是因我百姓的罪过呢？（以赛亚书 53:8）

祭司长和全公会寻找假见证控告耶稣，要治死他。虽有好些人来作假见证，总得不著实据；……。（马太福音 26:59-60 上）

彼拉多传齐了祭司长和官府并百姓，就对他们说：“你们解这人到我这里，说他是诱惑百姓的。看哪，我也曾将你们告他的事，在你们面前审问他，并没有查出他甚麽罪来，就是希律也是如此，所以把他送回来，可见他没有作甚麽该死的事。故此，我要责打他，把他释放了。”……。

众人却一齐喊著说：“除掉这个人！……。”

彼拉多愿意释放耶稣，就又劝解他们；无奈他们喊著说：“钉他十字架！钉他十字架！”彼拉多第三次对他们说：“为甚麽呢？这人作了甚麽恶事呢？我并没有查出他甚麽该死的罪来，所以，我要责打他，把他释放了。”他们大声催逼彼拉多，求他把耶稣钉在十字架上，他们的声音就得了胜。彼拉多这才照他们所求的定案，（路加福音 23:13-16，18 上，20-24）

犹太的领袖和罗马的官员彼拉多都很清楚耶稣是无罪的。而犹太的领袖特意地捏造罪名控告耶稣，彼拉多也知道这些，但是他害怕人民会造反，所以他便让他们处死耶稣。这样耶稣就被钉死在十字架上，其中的细节我们在上面讨论诗篇 22 章时也已经讨论过。

他虽然未行强暴，口中也没有诡诈，人还使他与恶人同埋；谁知死的时候与财主同葬。（以赛亚书 53:9）

到了晚上，有一个财主名叫约瑟，是亚利马太来的，他也是耶稣的门徒，这人去见彼拉多，求耶稣的身体；彼拉多就吩咐给他。约瑟取了身体，用乾淨细麻布裹好，安放在自己的新坟墓里，就是他凿在磐石里的；他又把大石头滚到墓门口，就去了。（马太福音 27:57-60）

在耶稣的那个年代，有钱的犹太人会在岩石里凿刻出一个好像洞穴一样的坟墓作为自己和后代的墓地。一个死刑犯人当然不可能有这样的墓地，他的尸体可能会在十字架上腐烂，或者被埋葬在公共墓地中，就像用犹太的钱买来的那块墓地一样。以赛亚书于耶稣的几百年前所写的，那十分难料的预言中的详尽的细节，又一次得以确切地应验了。

Why did God allow these things to happen to the Messiah? The prophecies in the Old Testament of the Bible and the fulfillments in the New Testament clearly explain the reason: Jesus suffered and died to take the punishment for the sins of all humanity.

Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But Yahweh has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. ...

By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living, For the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due?

...

But Yahweh was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of Yahweh will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:4-6, 8, 10-12)

In the Old Testament of the Bible, a guilt offering was an animal sacrificed to God when someone had sinned. This symbolized placing the sin of the person on the body of the animal, and the punishment falling on the animal. However, an animal could not, of course, take the place of a human being. Everyone clearly understood that this was only a symbol, a metaphor. Only a human being with a soul could take the place of a human being. The Messiah, Jesus, did this on the cross. He was “*crushed for our iniquities*”; He was put to death “*for the transgression of my people.*” We have all “*turned to his own way,*” that is, we have refused to do what God wants us to do. “*Yahweh has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.*”

In fact, we each often go our own, selfish way. We often choose to do what we know is wrong. Perhaps some of us have told lies to keep out of trouble. Or have cheated on a test. Or have been full of vengeful hatred because of some small offense against us. Or have gossiped behind someone’s back. Or have lusted in our hearts, or even engaged in immoral, impure sexual activity. Or have murdered our own child through abortion. God has righteous wrath toward all of these sins. He refuses to have a relationship with us now, and in the future, after we die, He will punish us forever in hell. Jesus died for these and other kinds of sins which we have committed, suffering punishment in our place.

Besides doing what we should not have done, we also have often chosen not to do what we should. Perhaps some of us have been lazy, wasting our opportunity to study in school. Or we have not helped others because it would have interfered with our work or pleasure. Or we have not bothered to go home and visit our parents. Or we have uncaringly walked past a beggar on our way to enjoy a luxurious dinner at a restaurant. We have not loved our neighbor and our companion as ourselves, and we have not loved the God who created us at all. God has righteous wrath toward all of these sins. He refuses to have a relationship with us now, and in the future, after we die, will punish us forever in hell. Jesus died for these and other kinds of sins which we have committed, suffering punishment in our place.

Jesus loves us so much that He was willing to bear the punishment for our sins: “*...By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors*” (Isaiah 53:11-12). If we want to bear the punishment for our sin ourselves, it would mean eternal suffering in hell. But because Jesus is fully God and fully human, His spirit is unlimited. During the brief time He was hanging on the cross, His unlimited soul bore the punishment which countless limited, human souls should have suffered in hell. But if we do not believe and repent, this will be of no use to us. We cannot rely on our good works to save us. God’s standard is 100%, and we are very far from that. We have sinned, and either we ourselves must bear the punishment for sin, or else believe in Jesus and let Him bear the punishment for sin in our place.

上帝为什么会让这些事情发生在弥赛亚身上？圣经旧约中的预言及其在圣经新约中的应验清楚地说明了原因：耶稣受苦和死亡是为全人类承担罪的惩罚。

他诚然担当我们的忧患，背负我们的痛苦；我们却以为他受责罚，被神击打苦待了。哪知他为我们的过犯受害，为我们的罪孽压伤。因他受的刑罚，我们得平安；因他受的鞭伤，我们得医治。我们都如羊走迷，各人偏行己路；耶和華使我们众人的罪孽都归在他身上……。

因受欺压和审判，他被夺去，至於他同世的人，谁想他受鞭打，从活人之地被剪除，是因我百姓的罪过呢？……。

耶和華却定意(或译：喜悦)将他压伤，使他受痛苦；耶和華以他为赎罪祭(或译：他献本身为赎罪祭)。他必看见後裔，并且延长年日。耶和華所喜悦的事必在他手中亨通。他必看见自己劳苦的功效，便心满意足。有许多人因认识我的义仆得称为义；并且他要担当他们的罪孽。所以，我要使他与位大的同分，与强盛的均分掬物。因为他将命倾倒，以致於死；他也被列在罪犯之中。他却担当多人的罪，又为罪犯代求。(以赛亚书 53:4-6, 8, 10-12)

在圣经旧约中，赎罪祭是当有人犯罪后杀一只动物献给上帝。这象征把人所犯的罪加在动物身上，惩罚也落到它的身上。但是，一只动物当然不能代替一个人；大家都清楚地知道那只是一个象征，一个比喻。只有一个有灵魂的人才能代替另一个人。弥赛亚，耶稣在十字架上做到了这点。他是“为我们的罪孽压伤”；他被杀是“因我百姓的罪过”。我们都“偏行己路”，也就是说，

我们拒绝去做上帝要我们做的事。“耶和華使我们众人的罪孽都归在他身上。”事实上，我们各人通常都走自己的、自私的路。我们经常选择去做一些我们自己也知道是错误的事。我们当中或有一些人曾经说谎避免麻烦；有一些人曾经考试作弊；有一些人曾经醉酒；有一些人有时因其他人在很小的事上得罪了他们，就怀恨在心；有一些人曾经拜偶像；有一些人在别人的背后也曾说长道短；有一些人曾经在心中也会有过淫念，甚至有过神不道德、不洁净的性行为；有一些人可能曾经人工流产扼杀他们自己的骨肉。上帝对于这一切的罪都有他公义的愤怒。他现在拒绝与我们罪人有任何关系，而且将来待我们死后还要在地狱永远惩罚我们的罪。耶稣的死为着我们这些类似的和别的罪，代替我们受惩罚。

除了我们做过不该做的以外，我们也经常选择不做我们应该做的事。我们当中或有一些人曾经懒惰，可能甚至浪费在学校学习的机会；有一些人也曾经因为自己的工作或娱乐会受影响而不去帮助别人；有一些人也曾不回家探望父母；有一些人也曾漠然走过乞丐身旁而到餐馆享受一顿昂贵的晚餐。我们没有爱我们的邻居与同伴好像我们爱自己一样，并且我们一点都没有爱过我们的创造者上帝。上帝对于这一切的罪都有他公义的愤怒。他现在拒绝与我们罪人有任何关系，而且将来我们死后还要在地狱永远惩罚我们的罪。耶稣的死为着我们这些类似的和别的罪，代替我们受惩罚。

耶稣如此的爱我们以至他愿意为我们承担罪的惩罚：“有许多人因认识我的义仆得称为义，并且他要担当他们的罪孽……。他却担当多人的罪，又为罪犯代求”(以赛亚书 53:11-12)。如果我们要自己承担罪的惩罚，那将会是永远的地狱之苦。但因为耶稣是完全的神、完全的人，他的灵魂是无限的。在被挂上十字架的短短一刻，他无限的灵魂承担了无数有限的人类灵魂在地狱中应受的惩罚。但如果我们不相信，不悔改，这就对我们毫无益处。我们也不能依靠我们的好行为来拯救我们。因上帝的标准是百分之百的好，而我们离它实在太远。我们犯了罪，要不就是我们自己承担罪的刑罚，要不就相信耶稣让他来代替我们承担罪的惩罚。

Lesson 15: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

The Messiah's Resurrection

Three days after Jesus died, God the Father brought Him back to life. Please read Matthew 28 and Luke 24.

The heart of the Christian faith is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Every page of the New Testament of the Bible ceaselessly emphasizes this point. The earliest Christians were Jesus's twelve disciples (except Judas) and those close to them. They saw Jesus with their own eyes, and spread the news of Jesus's resurrection to others. They did not hear about Jesus's resurrection from other people, but were eye-witnesses. Originally they did not expect that Jesus would rise, and thus they were hard to convince. When the women told how they had seen angels at the tomb, and the angels had told them Jesus was risen, the reaction of the disciples was: "*And these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them*" (Luke 24:11). A little later that day, ten of the eleven disciples saw Jesus, but Thomas was absent. When they told Thomas, he refused to believe. Later, Thomas himself saw Jesus and believed:

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing." Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed." (John 20:24-29)

After Jesus's resurrection, He continued to appear on earth for forty days. Then He went to heaven, which is called Jesus's ascension. In total, the Bible records at least eleven different occasions when Jesus was seen after His resurrection, by groups of one to 500 people. (Some scholars think that Acts 1:3 indicates Jesus appeared at least once on each of the forty days between His resurrection and His ascension.)

All of the eleven disciples were at various times beaten or imprisoned for proclaiming this news. According to church history (not the Bible), most of them were put to death for their preaching. They did not attain any social status, power or money from their preaching. On the contrary, they were rejected and persecuted. They preached and wrote because they believed what they had seen with their own eyes. Their actions forcefully confirmed their witness: they were even willing to suffer and give up their lives for what they had seen and for the faith they proclaimed. In fact, if they had just been willing not to speak about Christianity, they could have avoided suffering and death.

The great truths which the apostles declared, were, that Christ had risen from the dead, and that only through repentance from sin, and faith in Him, could men hope for salvation. This doctrine they asserted with one voice, everywhere, not only under the greatest discouragements, but in the face of the most appalling terrors that can be presented to the mind of man. Their master had recently perished as a malefactor, by the sentence of a public tribunal. His religion sought to overthrow the religions of the whole world. The laws of every country were against the teachings of his disciples. The interests and passions of all the rulers and great men in the world were against them. The fashion of the world was against them. Propagating this new faith, even in the most inoffensive and peaceful manner, they could expect nothing but contempt, opposition, revilings, bitter persecutions, stripes, imprisonments, torments, and cruel deaths. Yet this faith they zealously did propagate; and all these miseries they endured undismayed, nay, rejoicing. As one after another was put to a miserable death, the survivors only prosecuted their work with increased vigor and resolution. The annals of military warfare afford scarcely an example of the like heroic constancy, patience, and unblanching courage. They had every possible motive to review carefully the grounds of their faith, and the evidences of the great facts and truths which they asserted; and these motives were pressed upon their attention with the most melancholy and terrific frequency. It was therefore impossible that they could have persisted in affirming the truths they have narrated, had not Jesus actually risen from the dead, and had they not known this fact as certainly as they knew any other fact. If it were morally possible for them to have been deceived in this matter, every human motive operated to lead them to discover and avow their error. To have persisted in so gross a falsehood, after it was known to them, was not only to encounter, for life, all the evils which man could inflict, from without, but to endure also the pangs of inward and conscious guilt; with no hope of future peace, no testimony of good conscience, no expectation of honor or esteem among men, no hope of happiness in this life or in the world to come.

Such conduct in the apostles would moreover have been utterly irreconcilable with the fact that they possessed the ordinary constitution of our common nature. Yet their lives do show them to have been men like all others of our race; swayed by the same motives, animated by the same hopes, affected by the same joys, subdued by the same sorrows, agitated by the same fears and subject to the same passions, temptations and infirmities, as ourselves. And their writings show them to have been men of vigorous understandings. If then their testimony was not true, there was no possible motive for its fabrication. (Evidence that Demands a Verdict p.192)

15 课：耶稣基督的复活

弥赛亚的复活

耶稣死后的第三天，父上帝使他重获生命。请读马太福音 28 章和路加福音 24 章。

基督教信仰的中心是耶稣基督的复活。新约圣经里的每一页都不停地强调这点。最早的基督徒是耶稣的十二位门徒(除了犹大)和跟他们关系密切的人们。他们亲眼见过耶稣，也把耶稣复活的消息传播给其他的人。他们都不是从别人的口中得知耶稣的复活，而是亲眼目睹。原来他们并没有料到耶稣会复活，因而不易被说服。当那些妇女们述说在坟墓里看见了天使们，而天使们告诉她们耶稣复活了，使徒们的反应是：“她们这些话，使徒以为是胡言，就不相信”(路加福音 24:11)。那日的迟些时候，11 个使徒中的 10 个见到了耶稣，而多马不在。当他们告诉多马时，他拒不相信。后来，多马亲眼见到了耶稣就相信了：

那十二个门徒中，有称为低土马的多马，耶稣来的时候，他没有和他们同在。那些门徒就对他说：“我们已经看见主了。”多马却说：“我非看见他手上的钉痕，用指头探入那钉痕，又用手探入他的肋旁，我总不信。”过了八日，门徒又在屋里，多马也和他们同在，门都关了。耶稣来，站在当中说：“愿你们平安！”就对多马说：“伸过你的指头来，摸(原文是看)我的手；伸出你的手来，探入我的肋旁。不要疑惑，总要信！”多马说：“我的主！我的神！”耶稣对他说：“你因看见了我才信；那没有看见就信的有福了。”(约翰福音 20:24-29)

耶稣复活之后，于 40 天内继续在这地球上显现。然后他去了天堂，这被称为耶稣的升天。总的来说，圣经至少记录了耶稣复活之后在 11 个不同的场合，被从 1 个到 500 个人所目睹。(有些学者认为使徒行传 1:3 指出耶稣在其复活到升天期间的 40 天内，至少每天显现一次。)

十一个门徒全部都在不同的时间为着传播这消息被打和被监禁。根据教会的历史(不是圣经)的记载，他们之中大部分的人都是因为传道而被杀死。他们传道并没有得到社会地位、权力或金钱，反而是得到拒绝和压迫。他们传道和写作是因为他们相信他们亲眼看见的事情。他们的行为强有力地确认他们的见证：他们居然愿意为了他们看见的、传播的信仰受苦并献上生命。其实只要他们能绝口不提基督教，他们便可以避免痛苦和死亡。

使徒们所传扬最伟大的真理，就是耶稣已经由死里复活，唯有人在认罪、悔改，相信他后，人类才能获得救恩的希望。他们会在四处异口同声地传扬此一教义实在有些令人不可思议，因为他们当时身受逼迫，而面临人心所能面临的最大的恐惧。他们的主不久之前，被民众法庭以罪犯嫌疑处死，即使他们想以最善良、最和平的方法来传扬福音，他们仍不免要遭人的蔑视、受欺压、遭毁谤；人们起来逼迫他们、鞭打他们、将他们下在监里，施矛酷刑甚至将他们迫害至死。但他们依然热心传扬此一信仰，面对苦难，他们却不惊慌，反倒喜乐。当他们一个又一个地倒下去时，却有更多持此信仰之人站出来以最大的毅力与决心继续完成未竟之业。他们经常有外来的刺激向他们挑战，使他们必须重估自己信仰的根基，并需证实自己所信的真理与事实。如果耶稣不曾由死里复活，他们不可能再确定自己所信的是真的；如果他们不能肯定这些事实，他们不会持久拥有这样的信心。如果人有办法在这件事上如此欺骗他们，世间必然也有其他的动力能使他们回转发现自己的错误。若他们所信仰的是错误的，却顽固坚持下去，那么他们终生所遭遇的不但是人在外表所能承担下最大的不幸，他们的内心也要承受极大的苦闷与罪恶感。他们对未来的和平将无法再存希望，没有良心平安的见证，没有荣耀的盼望，也得不到人的尊重。在今生没有喜乐，来世亦无福乐。

使徒们的本性与常人无异，而他们的行为与每个人都具有的自然天性是完全不同的。因为使徒们的生命与常人无异，与我们一样，他们被同样的动机所左右，会因同样的希望而生出活力来，会为同样的喜乐所感，也会为同样的愁苦所困；会因惧怕而心紊乱，也会被类似的感情所骚扰；他们更与我们一样为试探、疾病所困。但他们的作品却表现出他们是具有深刻的洞察力的一群人，如果他们的见证不实，实无道理，因为没有理由能使他们作假。(《铁证待判》，267 页)

Sometimes people will make sacrifices for a lie, because they believe that it is true. But who would be willing to give up his life for a lie of his own making?

The Importance of the Resurrection

We remember that Abraham was justified by faith. In fact, although he lived 2,000 years before the birth of Jesus, Abraham's faith in God was faith in the god-man, Jesus. The book of Romans in the New Testament explains the relationship between Jesus's resurrection and our salvation:

Therefore also it was reckoned to him [Abraham] as righteousness. Now not for his sake only was it written, that it was reckoned to him, but for our sake also, to whom it will be reckoned, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, He who was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification. (Romans 4:22-25)

On the cross, Jesus died in our place. Our sin became His sin. And when He died, the punishment our sin deserved was fully paid. In the same way, Jesus's resurrection demonstrates that our sin has been completely removed. If our sin still existed, Jesus could not have risen from the dead, because He would still have had sin. The wages of sin is death; if Jesus was still bearing our sin, He would still be dead! But Jesus, during several hours on the cross, endured the eternal punishment of all humanity. Our debt has been completely paid. Sin had to be completely removed before Jesus could rise from the dead. His resurrection was because of our justification. His resurrection guarantees that our sin has been forgiven, and guarantees that we will rise from the dead.

Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we witnessed against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

Otherwise...If the dead are not raised at all...Why are we also in danger every hour? I protest, brethren, by the boasting in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If from human motives I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, what does it profit me? If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. (1 Corinthians 15:12-19, 29-32)

If Jesus has not risen from the dead, there are only two possibilities. One is that God is true, and the Old Testament is true, but Jesus was a fake. When we die, we will be judged by God according to our merits. We are "still in [our] sins," and will certainly go to hell. Moreover, what Paul and other Christians suffered was for nothing, of no value. In fact, they were preaching a lie, which in itself is a sin, and could only increase the punishment they would suffer in hell.

The other possibility – which Paul does not raise directly, perhaps because it is so absurd – was that even the Old Testament was false. After all, it clearly prophesies that humans will be resurrected, some going to hell, and some to heaven. If the entire Bible is false, if there is no God, if human beings like animals are snuffed out when they die – in that case, life really is cruel and meaningless. "[L]et us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

But these two possibilities are irrational and false. Paul only writes them to enable us to understand the central importance of the resurrection. In fact, Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, and His resurrection guarantees that believers will also rise.

The Resurrection of Believers

As soon as a believer dies, his or her spirit and soul go to God, thus Jesus answered the criminal being crucified with Him: "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43), and Paul confidently proclaimed: "Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord – for we walk by faith, not by sight – we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:6-8). However, this is not our only hope. God has promised that all believers will receive a new resurrection body which will never get sick, grow old, or die.

Jesus's resurrection body could be clearly recognized, to the point that even the marks of the crucifixion nails could still be seen distinctly. But at the same time, His body had changed. After His resurrection, Jesus could appear and disappear at any moment. His body transcended the laws of the material universe. This shows that He would never die again, since His body was no longer an ordinary mortal body, but glorified resurrection body. God promises that when Jesus comes back to the earth, every true Christian will receive a body like Jesus's resurrection body.

有时人们会为一个谎言而牺牲，因为他们相信那是真实的。可是有谁愿意为自己编造的谎言而献出生命呢？

复活的重要性

我们还记得亚伯拉罕因信称义。事实上，虽然他活在耶稣出世两千年之前，亚伯拉罕信神就是信那位既是神又是人的耶稣。新约中的罗马书解释了耶稣的复活和我们得救的关系：

所以，这就算为他[亚伯拉罕]的义。“算为他义”的这句话，不是单为他写的，也是为我们将来得算为义之人写的，就是我们这信神使我们的主耶稣，从死里复活的人。耶稣是为我们的过犯交付了，是为我们称义复活了。（罗马书 4:22-25）

耶稣在十字架上代替我们受死。我们的罪变成了他的罪。因而当他死了，我们的罪所应受的惩罚就得到了完全的报应。同样地，耶稣的复活证明了我们的罪已被除掉了。若我们的罪仍然存在，耶稣就不能复活因为他仍带有罪。罪的工价乃是死；若耶稣还带着我们的罪，他仍旧是死人！但耶稣在十字架上数小时之中，忍受了全人类永远要受的惩罚。我们这笔债就完全算清了。罪已经被除掉了，所以耶稣才能从死里复活。他的复活是因为我们的公义。他的复活保证了我们的罪已被赦免，也保证了我们的复活。

既传基督是从死里复活了，怎麼在你们中间有人说，没有死人复活的事呢？若没有死人复活的事，基督也就没有复活了。若基督没有复活，我们所传的便是枉然，你们所信的也是枉然；并且明显我们是为神妄作见证的，因我们见证神是叫基督复活了。若死人真不复活，神也就没有叫基督复活了，因为死人若不复活，基督也就没有复活了。基督若没有复活，你们的信便是徒然，你们仍在罪里，就是在基督里睡了的人也灭亡了。我们若靠基督只在今生有指望，就算比众人更可怜。

不然。。。若死人总不复活，。。。我们又因何时刻冒险呢？弟兄们，我在我主基督耶稣里，指著你们所夸的口，极力地说，我是天天冒死。我若当日像寻常人，在以弗所同野兽战斗，那於我有甚麽益处呢？若死人不复活，我们就吃吃喝喝吧！因为明天要死了。（哥林多前书 15:12-19, 29-32）。

如果耶稣没有从死里复活，那只有两种可能性：一种是上帝是真的，旧约也是真的，但耶稣是假的。当我们死了，将要按我们功过面对上帝的审判。我们“仍在罪里，”且一定要下地狱。而且，保罗及所有其他基督徒所忍受的苦难都是白白地受苦，没有任何价值。事实上他们所传的是谎言，这本身就是一种罪，只会加重他们自己在地狱中所受的惩罚。

另一种可能性——保罗并没有直接指出，也许是因为那是非常不合理的——是甚至连旧约也是假的。毕竟它清楚地预言了人类的复活，有一些要下地狱，一些上天堂。若全本圣经都是假的，若上帝并不存在，若人像动物一般死后如灯灭——那么，生命真的很残酷，并且毫无意义。“吃吃喝喝吧！因为明天要死了。”

可是这两种可能性既不合理也不真实。保罗写了这些话，是为了让我们可以明白复活的中心重要性。实际上，耶稣基督已经从死里复活了，而他的复活证明信徒将来也要复活。

信徒的复活

信徒一死亡，他的灵和魂就去了上帝那里，因而耶稣答应了那个和他一同被钉十字架的犯人：“我实在告诉你，今日你要同我在乐园里了。”（路加福音 23:43），而且保罗确信地宣告：“所以，我们时常坦然无惧，并且晓得我们住在身内，便与主相离，因我们行事为人是凭著信心，不是凭著眼见。我们坦然无惧，是更愿意离开身体，与主同住”（哥林多后书 5:6-8）。然而那并不是我们唯一的盼望，上帝承诺了所有信徒将来会得到一个永不生病、衰老或死亡的复活的新躯体。

耶稣复活之后的身体仍然可以被清晰地辨认，甚至连他被钉十字架的钉痕仍然清晰可见。但同时他的身体也改变了。复活之后，耶稣可以随时出现或消失。他的身体已经超越了物质世界的规律。这就显示他永远也不再会死亡了，因为他的身体再也不是一个普通的会死的身躯，而是一个完美的复活的身躯。上帝承诺当耶稣再来地球之时，每一位真正的基督徒都会拥有一个与耶稣复活的身躯类似的身躯。

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. ...

But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?" ...

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ...

Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:20, 35, 42-44, 50-55)

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

God promises we will have a new body. It will be material, but never decay. At the endtime, Jesus will appear in the air, accompanied by the souls of all the Christians who have already died and gone to heaven. Then the Christians who have already died will receive new, eternal resurrection bodies. After this, the Christians who are still on earth will be taken up into the air and receive new resurrection bodies. These newly received material bodies will live forever on the material new earth which God will create.

The Old Testament of the Bible Predicted the Messiah's Resurrection

Before the early believers were willing to believe in the resurrection, they needed a lot of evidence. But they should have known Jesus would be crucified and rise again, because these both were in the prophecies of the Old Testament Bible:

And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. (Luke 24:25-27)

Not surprisingly, there are many places in the Old Testament of the Bible which predict the resurrection of the Messiah. Here we will only look at one passage. In the previous lesson we have already seen that Isaiah said the Messiah would be "cut off out of the land of the living," and be buried in a rich man's tomb after He died. After that he wrote:

But Yahweh was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of Yahweh will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:10-12)

Since the Messiah was already dead, how could He "see His offspring"? And how could He "prolong His days"? And how could He see the "...result of the anguish of His soul...and be satisfied"? And how could He "divide the booty with the strong"? Clearly the Messiah's life would continue after His death. The reason that the truth of Christianity has been proclaimed throughout the world is this, because Jesus Christ has risen from the dead.

The Exaltation of the Messiah and the Spread of 'Messianity' (Christianity)

We remember that 'Christ' means 'Messiah.' They are both translated from the Hebrew word 'mashiach,' which means 'anointed one.' Now we can understand that 'Christianity' means 'religion of the Messiah.' Christianity is the faith of the Messiah predicted in the Old Testament of the Bible. The amazing spread of Christianity throughout the world is a fulfillment of a prophecy, made by Isaiah several hundred years before Jesus, which says that Jesus would be exalted. God promised:

但基督已经从死里复活，成为睡了之人初熟的果子。。。。

或有人问：“死人怎样复活，带著甚麽身体来呢？”。。。。

死人复活也是这样，所种的是必朽坏的，复活的是不朽坏的；所种的是羞辱的，复活的是荣耀的；所种的是软弱的，复活的是强壮的；所种的是血气的身体，复活的是灵性的身体。若有血气的身体，也必有灵性的身体。。。。

弟兄们，我告诉你们说，血肉之体不能承受神的国，必朽坏的不能承受不朽坏的。我如今把一件奥秘的事告诉你们，我们不是都要睡觉，乃是都要改变，就在一霎时，眨眼之间，号筒末次吹响的时候；因号筒要响，死人要复活成为不朽坏的，我们也要改变。这必朽坏的，总要变成(变成：原文是穿；下同)不朽坏的，这必死的，总要变成不死的；这必朽坏的既变成不朽坏的，这必死的既变成不死的，那时经上所记：“死被得胜吞灭”的话，就应验了。死啊！你得胜的权势在哪里？死啊！你的毒钩在哪里？(哥林多前书 15:20, 35, 42-44, 50-55)

论到睡了的人，我们不愿意弟兄们不知道，恐怕你们忧伤，像那些没有指望的人一样。我们若信耶稣死而复活了，那已经在耶稣里睡了的人，神也必将他们与耶稣一同带来。我们现在照主的话告诉你们一件事，我们这活著还存留到主降临的人，断不能在那已经睡了的人之先；因为主必亲自从天降临，有呼叫的声音，和天使长的声音，又有神的号吹响；那在基督里死了的人必先复活。以后我们这活著还存留的人，必和他们一同被提到云里，在空中与主相遇，这样我们就要和主永远同在。所以，你们当用这些话彼此劝慰。(帖撒罗尼迦前书 4:13-18)

上帝承诺我们将会有一个新的躯体，是物质的却不会朽坏。到末世时，耶稣会在空中出现，所有已经死了去了天堂的基督徒的灵魂伴随左右。然后已死的基督徒会得到新的、永恒的复活身躯。其次，仍在世的基督徒会被提到空中并得到新的复活身躯。这些新得的物质身躯会永远活在上帝将要创造的物质性的新地球上。

旧约圣经预言了弥赛亚的复活

早期信徒在其愿意相信复活之前需要很多的证据，但他们应该料到耶稣的钉死和复活，因为两者皆在旧约圣经的预言中：

耶稣对他们说：“无知的人哪，先知所说的一切话，你们的心信得太迟钝了，基督这样受害，又进入他的荣耀，岂不是应当的吗？”於是从摩西和众先知起，凡经上所指著自己的话，都给他们讲解明白了。(路加福音 24:25-27)

难怪旧约圣经里有不少地方预言了弥赛亚会复活。这里我们只看一段。我们在上一课已经看到以赛亚说弥赛亚会“从活人之地被剪除”，死后埋葬在一位富人的坟墓中。而接下去他写到：

耶和華却定意将他压伤，使他受痛苦；耶和華以他为赎罪祭。他必看见后裔，并且延长年日，耶和華所喜悦的事必在他手中亨通。他必看见自己劳苦的功效，便心满意足。有许多人因认识我的义仆得称为义，并且他要担当他们的罪孽。所以，我要使他与位大的同份，与强盛的均分掬物；因为他将命倾倒在死，他也被列在罪犯之中。他却担当多人的罪，又为罪犯代求。(以赛亚书 53:10-12)

既然他已经死了，弥赛亚又怎可以“看见后裔”？他又怎可以“延长年日”？他又怎可以“看见自己劳苦的功效，便心满意足”？他怎可以“与强盛的均分掬物”？很明显弥赛亚的生命会延续到他死亡以后。基督教的真理已经传到全世界的原因就是在此，因为耶稣基督复活了。

弥赛亚被高举和‘弥赛亚教’(基督教)的传播

我们记得‘基督’那个词也就是‘弥赛亚’的意思。它们都是从希伯来语翻译过来的‘mashiach’，意思就是‘受膏抹者’。现在我们便可以知道其实‘基督教’就是‘弥赛亚教’的意思。基督教是相信旧约圣经中所预言的弥赛亚的信仰。基督教很奇妙地得到世界性的传播正是应验了在耶稣之前几百年以赛亚的预言，说耶稣将会被升高。上帝承诺：

Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong....
(Isaiah 53:12)

Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up, and greatly exalted. (Isaiah 52:13)

Today, Jesus is exalted. He is worshipped as the Messiah, God the Son, and the Savior of humanity. Truly, God has allotted Jesus *"a portion with the great."* Moreover, this is not only among the Jews, but also among the peoples of the entire world. Just as Isaiah prophesied:

Thus He will sprinkle many nations, Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; For what had not been told them they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand. (Isaiah 52:15)

And now says Yahweh, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, in order that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of Yahweh, And My God is My strength), He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth." Thus says Yahweh, the Redeemer of Israel, and its Holy One, To the despised One, To the One abhorred by the nation, To the Servant of rulers, "Kings shall see and arise, Princes shall also bow down; Because of Yahweh who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You." (Isaiah 49:5-7)

And as Jesus said:

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, (Matthew 28:19)

and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. (Luke 24:46-27)

The Messiah not only wanted to lead the *"preserved ones"* of Israel back to Yahweh, to salvation (this refers to the minority of the people of Israel, who believed in Jesus Christ), but He also wanted to be a light to the nations, allowing them to be saved. That way the grace of Yahweh would be preached to the entire world, *"to the end of the earth."* This prophecy seemed impossible at the time of Isaiah, but now, in every province in China and every place in the world, it really has been fulfilled. The command that Jesus gave at that time to His tiny band of disciples seemed completely impossible to carry out, but now it has almost been completed. All over the world, people ranging from kings and nobles to peasants and slaves have heard the news that their ancestors *"had not heard,"* and have *"seen"* the light of Jesus Christ. Although most of the people who hear the gospel reject it, nonetheless, millions of people have *"underst[oo]d"* that they were living in the darkness of sin and have repented and *"bow[ed] down"* to Jesus Christ, acknowledging Him as the only true God. Only a few minority people groups still do not have Christians. Thus Jesus's command has not yet been completely carried out. Christian missionaries are planning to go to those places which have not yet heard the gospel. When this work is completed, Jesus Christ will come again, just as He prophesied: *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come"* (Matthew 24:14). It is very possible that the endtime is near. Regardless, seeing how Jesus has fulfilled these prophecies of the Old Testament Bible, we can know that He really is the Savior of the world, who died for our sins, was raised from the dead, and has enabled human beings to receive forgiveness of sins. Now is our chance to believe in Him, repent, and ask for forgiveness.

The Coming of Christianity to China

From the above we can clearly see 'Christianity' is not a 'Western' religion. When God established Christianity, He began from the Middle East in Asia, from the Asian Jewish people. But this does not mean that Christianity is only a religion for Jews. It has always been God's truth given to all humanity.

But someone may ask, 'Why did God neglect the Chinese for so long? Why did this truth not come to China until recently?' First, we must remember, in all likelihood, the earliest Chinese people knew about the one true God, who was a pure Spirit, the 'King of Heaven' whom they worshipped and sacrificed to. It seems that even as late as the time of Confucius there was still some memory of this truth. Some scholars say that Confucius cried out against the impurity of the religion of his time. He wrote that in the time of the Zhou dynasty, people only worshipped the 'King of Heaven,' offering animal sacrifices twice a year. In addition to that early period knowledge, before the 19th century Christian missionaries established the present church in China, China has had three opportunities to hear the gospel (all dates below are AD).

635-879 The so-called Nestorians (a type of Christianity with some heretical doctrines) preached in China and established a church. They were weakened, however, by their many corrupt doctrines. They were oppressed and persecuted, and disappeared in the late Tang dynasty period.

1279-1368 Nestorianism temporarily returned to China. Roman Catholicism also had some activity in China. Kublai Khan invited the Roman Catholic Church to send one hundred missionaries to China.

所以，我要使他与位大的同份，与强盛的均分掬物……。(以赛亚书 53:12)

我的仆人行事必有智慧 (或译：行事通达)，必被高举上升，且成为至高。(以赛亚书 52:13)

今天，耶稣已经被高举，他也作为弥赛亚、圣子和人类的拯救者而被敬拜。事实上，上帝也给予耶稣“与位大的同份”。再者，这不仅是在犹太人当中的事，而且是在全世界的人民当中的事。正如以赛亚所预言的一样：

这样，他必洗净(或译：鼓动)许多国民；君王要向他闭口。因所未曾传与他们的，他们必看见；未曾听见的，他们要明白。(以赛亚书 52:15)

耶和華从我出胎，造就我作他的仆人，要使雅各归向他，使以色列到他那里聚集。原来耶和華看我为尊贵；我的神也成为我的力量。现在他说，你作我的仆人，使雅各众支派复兴；使以色列中得保全的回归尚为小事，我还要使你作外邦人的光，叫你施行我的救恩，直到地极。救赎主以色列的圣者耶和華对那被人所藐视，本国所憎恶，官长所虐待的如此说，君王要看见就站起，首领也要下拜；都因信实的耶和華，就是拣选你以色列的圣者。(以赛亚书 49:5-7)

并正如耶稣说过：

所以你们要去，使万民作我的门徒，奉父、子、圣灵的名，给他们施洗 (或译：给他们施洗，归於父、子、圣灵的名) (马太福音 28:19)

又对他们说：“照经上所写的，基督必受害，第三日从死里复活；并且人要奉他的名悔改、赦罪的道，从耶路撒冷起，直传到万邦，(路加福音 24:46-47)

那位弥赛亚不但要带领以色列人当中的那些得到“保全”的人回归耶和華、得救 (这是指那些少数的相信耶稣基督的以色列人)；而且他还要作列国人民的光，让他们得救。这样，耶和華的救恩要传到普天下，“直到地极。”这个预言在以赛亚的时候似乎很不可能，但现在它真的在中国的各省、世界的各地被应验了。耶稣那时对他那一小群门徒提出的命令似乎根本不可能完成，但现在也几乎完全完成了。全世界，上至国王和贵族，下至农民和奴隶都已经听得见他们和他们的祖先“未曾听见的”消息，已经“看见”了耶稣基督的光。虽然大部份听过福音的人都拒绝它，但仍然又千千万万的人已经“明白”了他们以前的生活是在黑暗里犯罪，就悔改了、“下拜”耶稣基督，承认他是独一无二真正的上帝。只剩下一些少数民族还没有基督徒，耶稣的命令还没有完全被完成。基督教的传教士甚至已经计划要到那些没有听过福音的地方去。当工作完成后，耶稣基督便会再来，正如他所预言的：“这天国的福音，要传遍天下，对万民作见证，然后末期才来到”(马太福音 24:14)。末日很可能已经很近。无论如何，看见耶稣如何应验这些旧约圣经的预言，我们便可以知道他真的是救世主，为我们的罪死，得到复活，以便人类得到罪的赦免。现在就是我们应当相信他、悔改、求他的赦免的机会了。

基督教来到中国

从上面我们还可以清楚地看到‘基督教’不算是一个‘西方的’宗教。上帝设立基督教时，就是从亚洲的中东地区、属于亚洲的犹太民族开始。但这也不代表基督教只是犹太人的宗教。她一直都是上帝给全人类的真理。

但是有人或者会问，‘为什么上帝那么长时间忽略了中国人？为什么这些真理要到最近才传入中国？’首先，必须记住，按最大的可能性，最早的中国人知道那位唯一的真神，那位单纯灵性的，那位他们敬拜而且献祭的‘上帝’。好象甚至到了孔子时代还存在这真理的一点记忆。有学者说孔子为那时的宗教的不纯正而哀哭，他写到周朝时人们只敬拜‘上帝’，一年两次牺牲动物为祭物。除了这些早期的认识之外，在 19 世纪的基督教传教士在中国建立现在的教会之前，中国曾经有三次听到福音的机会(所有以下年份为公元)。

635-879 那所谓的景教(指一种有一些异端教导的基督教)在中国传教、建立教会。可是他们的许多腐败的教条削弱了他们。他们被压迫和杀害，在晚唐时期便消失了。

1279-1368 景教短时间回归中国。罗马天主教也进入了中国，有一些活动。忽必烈邀请罗马天主教会派 100 位传教士来中国，

Regrettably, the medieval Roman Catholic Church was extremely corrupt. They did not have much of a reaction, just sending a few missionaries many years later.

1583-1724 Roman Catholicism again entered China, at first with state patronage. At that time, the Russian Orthodox Church also had some activity in China. In the mid-Qing dynasty, the emperor forbade these religions.

1807-now Missionaries of Protestant Christianity [in Chinese: Christ Religion or Christianity] (erroneously termed 'New Religion') established the modern church in China. The Roman Catholic Church also refounded a small part.

From this we can see that by 1807 China had had at least three opportunities to know and accept Jesus Christ. From the resurrection of Jesus Christ to the year 1807 (that is, 30--1807 AD) there are 1,777 years. During this period, China had a gospel witness during 474 years. Thus from Jesus's resurrection to 1807, China had a witness about Jesus Christ one year in four. But the Chinese people willingly chose to reject God. In fact, the question is not, why did God wait so long to send the truth to the Chinese people, but why did China refuse God, not even allowing believers to live a peaceful life. God has sought the Chinese people, but we have rejected Him again and again.

We must admit that Nestorianism, Russian Orthodoxy, and medieval Roman Catholicism all had corrupt doctrine and many errors. It was not until the 'Protestant Reformation' began in the 16th century that many places in Europe regained a pure, Biblical faith. This is Christianity, [sometimes] erroneously termed [in Chinese] 'New Religion.' In fact, the Christian 'Reformation' was based on the Bible, restoring the pure truth preached by Jesus Christ and His disciples. The leaders of the Roman Catholic Church persecuted the so-called 'Reformers.' Those whom they caught were killed, and the rest were expelled by them, forcing the 'Reformers' to establish a new church. The result was that so-called Roman Catholicism [in Chinese: Heavenly Lord Religion], as well as Greek and Russian Orthodoxy, all failed to share in the restoration of Biblical truth.

Thus part of the reason that the Chinese church was destroyed three times is that the impure faith which came to China before the 19th century could not withstand the fires of persecution. After the establishment of the [Protestant] Christian church in China in the 19th century, believers also endured many years of severe persecution, especially under the rule of the Dowager Empress during the Boxer Movement period in 1899-1900, and during the Cultural Revolution period. But this time, a pure, Biblically based Christian faith, with the help of God's Holy Spirit, enabled Chinese believers to withstand persecution. Today, the church of Jesus Christ in China is much stronger than at any previous time, with many millions of believers.

Reader, what will you do? You have patiently studied so long. You know the one true God exists, that He inspired the writers of the Bible, that the Bible is true. You also know that you are a sinner, and that God will punish you. God is lovingly inviting you to come and receive forgiveness and eternal life. How will you, a modern Chinese person, answer God?

但可惜中世纪的罗马天主教会非常腐败，他们并没有很大的回应，只是在多年以后才派出了一些传教士。

1583-1724 罗马天主教再次进入中国，起初有国家资助。那时，俄国东正教在中国也有活动。清朝中期，帝王们禁止了这些宗教。

1807-迄今 基督教（误称‘新教’）的传教士在中国建立了现代的教会。罗马天主教会重建了一小部分。

因此我们可以看到中国在 1807 年前至少有三次机会认识和接受耶稣基督。从耶稣复活后到 1807 年（指公元 30--1807 年）一共有一千七百七十七年。在这时期当中，中国有福音的见证占了四百七十四年。因此，从耶稣复活到 1807 年，在中国大约每四年中有一年会有关于耶稣基督的见证。但是中国人却自愿地选择拒绝上帝。其实问题不是为什么上帝等了那么久才把真理传到中国人民当中，而是为什么中国拒绝上帝，甚至连让信徒平静地生活都不许。上帝曾经寻找过中国人民，但是我们一次又一次地拒绝了他。

我们也仍然必须承认那时的景教、俄国东正教和中世纪的罗马天主教的教条有很多腐败、错误的地方。直到 16 世纪起的‘宗教改革’（又称‘宗教更正’）运动开始，在欧洲的很多地方才恢复了单纯的、符合

圣经的信仰。这是那被误认、称为‘新教’的基督教。事实上，基督教‘宗教改革’是以圣经的记载为基础，恢复原来耶稣基督及他的门徒所传的单纯真理。罗马天主教会的领袖就迫害那些所谓‘改革者’，被他们捉住的人被处死了，其他人则被他们赶走了，使‘改革者’不得不建立新的教会。结果所谓的天主教以及希腊、俄国的东正教都没有分享恢复圣经的真理。

所以中国教会三次消失的部分原因，是 19 世纪前来到中国不纯正的信仰并不能抵挡迫害的火焰。19 世纪中国建立了基督教的教会后，信徒也忍受了许多年严重的迫害，特别是在慈禧统治下的 1899-1900 年在

义和团运动时期和文化大革命时期。但这时，一个纯洁的、以圣经为根据的基督教信仰，在上帝圣灵的帮助下，使中国的信徒能够忍受了压迫。今天，耶稣基督在中国的教会比以前的任何时期都壮大，有着好几百万的信徒。

读者，你又会怎么做呢？耐心的学习了那么久，你知道唯一真神的存在，他启示作者们写成了圣经，圣经是真理。你又知道你是一个罪人，并且上帝将会惩罚你。上帝正在慈爱地邀请你得到赦免和永生。你这位现代中国人怎么回答上帝？

Lesson 16: The Second Coming of Jesus Christ: The Christian's Hope

After Jesus rose from the dead, He was seen on earth for forty days. Then He ascended into heaven. After Jesus's ascension, two angels promised the disciples that one day He would return:

And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:9-11)

Jesus will return to earth in a physical body and rule the entire world. When will this happen? How can we know when it is soon to happen? The Bible specifically says that no one can know exactly when He will return, but we can have a rough idea.

During the last week before Jesus was crucified, the disciples asked Him: "what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:3). Jesus's reply is recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. We must combine these three chapters before we can completely understand what Jesus meant. Jesus reply gives an outline of history from His resurrection to His second coming.

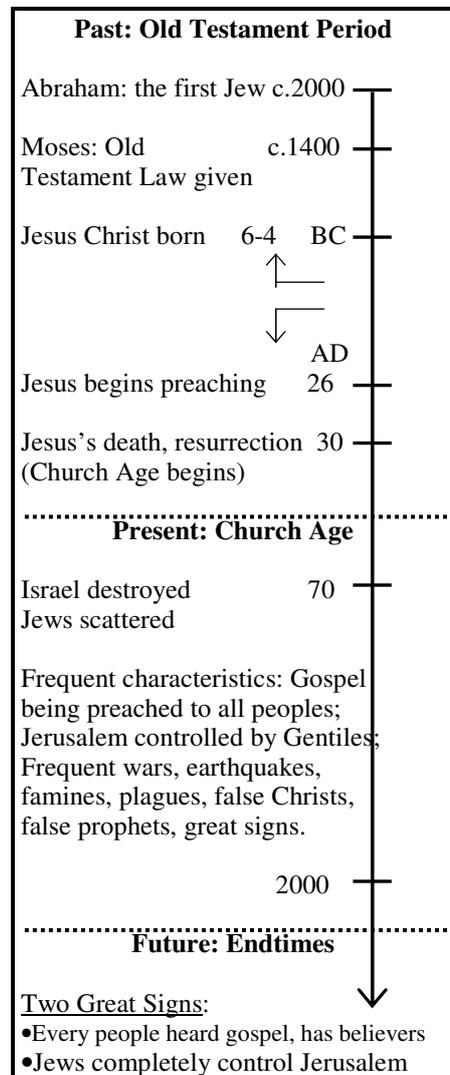
Ongoing Characteristics of the Church Age

The present is often called the 'Church Age' by Christians. The Church Age began fifty days after Jesus's resurrection at 'Pentecost,' when the Holy Spirit came on the disciples. It continues to today, and all the way until Jesus comes again. In Matthew 24 and Luke 21, the first type of events which Jesus described were ongoing, frequently seen characteristics of the Church Age. Jesus described this time period to His disciples:

And He said, "See to it that you be not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time is at hand'; do not go after them. And when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately." Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake. It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute. But you will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death, and you will be hated by all on account of My name." (Luke 21:8-17)

"And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many. And because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come." (Matthew 24:11-14)

Persecution of Christians, as well as terrible wars, natural disasters, so-called 'great signs' appearing in the heavens, false prophets, cults, false Christs – all of these things are commonly seen during the Church Age. The past 2,000 years of history is filled with things like these, continuing down to today. Some Christians have mistakenly thought that natural disasters have increased recently. Actually, we simply hear about them more, because the means of communication and broadcast of news are much more advanced than in the past. Historical research shows no indication that there has been an increase in the number or severity of earthquakes. Similarly, cults and false Christs are no more numerous than in the past. In the late Qing dynasty, millions of people followed Hong Xiuquan, who called himself the younger brother of Jesus Christ. Twenty million people, about 5% of China's population at that time, died in the Taiping Rebellion, while Hong Xiuquan played with his many concubines and killed his own generals. But that was not the end.



16 课：耶稣基督的再来：基督徒的盼望

耶稣从死里复活后，他在世上有四十天的时间被人看见。然后他才升上天堂。当耶稣升天以后，两个天使应许门徒们有一天他会回来：

说了这话，他们正看的时候，他就被取上升；有一朵云彩把他接去，便看不见他了。当他往上去，他们定睛望天的时候，忽然有两个人身穿白衣，站在旁边，说：“加利利人哪，你们为甚麽站著望天呢？这离开你们被接升天的耶稣，你们见他怎样往天上去，他还要怎样来。”（使徒行传 1:9-11）

耶稣会以物质的身躯回到世上并统治全地球。这件事何时会发生呢？我们如何知道这件事的临近呢？圣经具体地说没有人能准确知道他回来的时间，但能够有个大体的概念。

在耶稣被钉十字架之前最后一个星期，门徒们问他：“你降临和世界的末了，有甚麽预兆呢？”（马太福音 24:3）。耶稣的回答记在马太福音 24 章，马可福音 13 章及路加福乐 21 章。我们必须把这三章结合在一起，才能完全明白耶稣的意思。耶稣的回答对他复活直到他的第二次到来的世界历史列出了大纲。

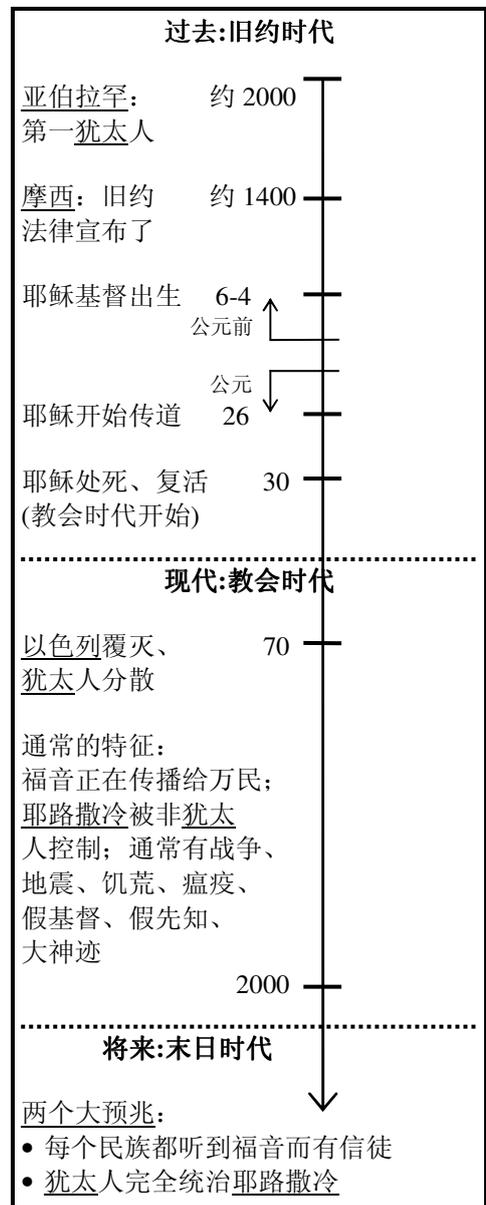
教会时代特征的延续

现代通常被基督徒称为‘教会时代’。教会时代在耶稣复活后的五十天由“五旬节”开始，圣灵降临在门徒身上。一直延续至今，直到耶稣再来。耶稣在马太福音 24 章、路加福乐 21 章所描述的第一类事件是延续的，是教会时代中一些常见的特征。耶稣向给门徒们描述了这个时代：

耶稣说：“你们要谨慎，不要受迷惑；因为将来有好些人冒我的名来，说：‘我是基督。’又说：‘时候近了。’你们不要跟从他们！你们听见打仗和扰乱的事，不要惊慌，因为这些事必须先有，只是末期不能立时就到。”当时，耶稣对他们说：“民要攻打民，国要攻打国；地要大大震动，多处必有饥荒、瘟疫，又有可怕的异象和大神迹，从天上显现。但这一切的事以先，人要下手拿住你们，逼迫你们，把你们交给会堂，并且收在监里，又为我的名拉你们到君王诸侯面前，但这些事终必为你们的见证。所以，你们当立定心意，不要预先思想怎样分诉，因为我必赐你们口才、智慧，是你们一切敌人所敌不住，驳不倒的。连你们的父母、弟兄、亲族、朋友，也要把你们交官，你们也有被他们害死的；你们要为我的名被众人恨恶。”（路加福音 21:8-17）

且有好些假先知起来，迷惑多人。只因不法的事增多，许多人的爱心才渐渐冷淡了；惟有忍耐到底的，必然得救。这天国的福音要传遍天下，对万民作见证，然后末期才来到。（马太福音 24:11-14）

基督徒受逼迫，还有可怕的战争、自然灾害、所谓的‘神迹’出现在空中、假先知、邪教、假基督——所有这一切事情都是教会时代常见的东西。过去的两千年历史中充满了这样的事件，一直延续至今。有些基督徒错误地认为这些灾难近年来增加了。其实，我们只是听说得更多了，因为通讯及新闻消息传播的手段比过去先进多了。历史研究显示并没有迹象表明地震的次数和严重性增加了。同样，邪教及假基督并不比过去多。在晚清时期成千上万的人追随洪秀全，他自称为耶稣基督的弟弟。有两千万人，相当于当代中国人口约百分之五，死于太平天国起义中，而当时洪秀全却在与很多的妾嬉戏，还杀害了自己的将领。但当时并不是末世。



Ordinary natural disasters, social or political disasters, and the appearance of cults are not signs of the endtimes, not even if several disasters happen at the same time. “*See to it that you be not misled*” (Luke 21:8). The sign of the endtimes is the Church completing her mission of preaching the gospel to the entire world. The gospel will be preached to every people on the entire earth before the end comes.

The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Scattering of the Jews

The second set of events which Jesus predicted happened not long after the beginning of the Church Age. In 66-70 AD, a Jewish uprising against the control of the Roman empire was put down by the Roman army. Jerusalem was desolated and the Jewish temple was destroyed. This was a part of God’s judgment against the Jews because they had rejected their Messiah, Jesus Christ. In 30 AD, forty years before these events occurred, Jesus warned his disciples:

And while some were talking about the temple, that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts, He said, "As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down. ... But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people, and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:5-6, 20-24)

Similarly, the prophet Daniel also predicted that after “*the Messiah [was] cut off,*” that is after Jesus was crucified, a Gentile ruler would come and destroy the entire city of Jerusalem and the temple:

Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. (Daniel 9:26)

That is just what happened. In 66 AD, the Jews revolted, and the Romans quickly suppressed most of the rebel armies, and by 67 AD they had surrounded Jerusalem. Then, unbelievably, the Roman army withdrew. The contemporary historian Josephus said this foolish move was “without any reason in the world.” Under the providence of God, this withdrawal gave Christians in the city an opportunity to flee. The Roman army returned to Jerusalem in 69 AD, and in 70 they destroyed the city and the temple. Over one million Jews died in the war, and tens of thousands of survivors were sold as slaves. This was the beginning of the Jews’ worldwide dispersion, something which did not happen during the Assyrian or Babylonian occupations. Since then, the city of Jerusalem has been under the control of Gentiles.

In 1948, when the Jews established the state of Israel, they controlled about half of the city of Jerusalem, not including the site of the former temple. After the ‘Six Day War’ in 1967, the Jews took all of Jerusalem. However, very importantly, the Islamic holy site known as the ‘Dome of the Rock’ mosque (also known as the Mosque of Omar), still occupies the site of the ancient temple. Although the Jews hold the entire city, Muslims still worship at the site of the former temple, and do not permit any Jew to enter. This most important place in Jerusalem is still “*trampled under foot by the Gentiles*” because the “*the times of the Gentiles*” are not yet “*fulfilled*” (Luke 21:24). A sign of the endtimes is the Jews’ recovery of complete control over Jerusalem.

The Second Coming of Jesus for the Church

The third set of events prophesied by Jesus concern the endtimes. At the end of the Church Age, Jesus will suddenly return to the earth. Just before He returns, there will be a period of terrible disaster. This period will include or begin with the “*‘abomination of desolation’*” being set up. This “*‘abomination of desolation’*” seems to be set up in the Jewish temple, which would seem to indicate that by that time the Jewish temple at Jerusalem will have been rebuilt:

Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation’ which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! "But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short. Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance. If therefore they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go forth, or,

普通的自然灾害、社会或政治灾难、以及邪教的出现并不是末世的征兆，甚至即使几种灾难同时发生还不算。“你们要谨慎，不要受迷惑”（路加福音 21:8）。末世的征兆是教会向全世界遍传福音的任务完成。末世将在福音被传遍全球各民族之后才来到。

耶路撒冷城的毁灭及犹太人的分散

耶稣所预言的第二系列事件发生在教会时代开始之后不久。在公元 66-70 年，一次犹太人反罗马帝国统治的起义被罗马军队镇压了。耶路撒冷城被毁，犹太人的圣殿被毁坏了。这是上帝对犹太民族一部分的审判，因为他们拒绝了他们的弥赛亚耶稣基督。在公元 30 年，这些事发生的四十年前，耶稣警告他的门徒：

有人谈论圣殿是用美石和供物装饰的，耶稣就说：“论到你们所看见的这一切，将来日子到了，在这里没有一块石头留在石头上，不被拆毁了。”……你们看见耶路撒冷被兵围困，就可知道它成荒场的日子近了。那时，在犹太的应当逃到山上，在城里的，应当出来，在乡下的，不要进城；因为这是报应的日子，使经上所写的都得应验。当那些日子，怀孕的和奶孩子的有祸了，因为将有大大灾难降在这地方，也有震怒临到这百姓，他们要倒在刀下，又被掳到各国去；耶路撒冷要被外邦人践踏，直到外邦人的日期满了。（路加福音 21:5-6, 20-24）

同样地，但以理先知也预言说“那受膏者…被剪除”之后，即耶稣被钉之后，一位外邦统治者会到来并摧毁耶路撒冷全城及圣殿：

过了六十二个七，那受膏者必被剪除，一无所有，必有一王的民来毁灭这城和圣所，至终必如洪水冲没。必有争战，一直到底，荒凉的事已经定了。（但以理书 9:26）

事实就是这样发生的，犹太人在公元 66 年起义，罗马军队很快镇压了大部分的叛军，并在公元 67 年包围了耶路撒冷城。然后，没想到的是，罗马军却撤退了。据当代史学家 Josephus 说这一愚蠢举动是“没有任何原因的”。在上帝的安排下，这一撤退给城里的基督徒的逃跑提供了机会。罗马军在公元 69 年返回耶路撒冷城，并于 70 年摧毁了城市及圣殿。多达一百万犹太人死于战争中，而几万个幸存者被卖为奴隶。这就是犹太人分散到全世界的开始，这是在亚述和巴比伦占领时候从未发生过的。耶路撒冷城从此处在外邦人的控制之下。

1948 年，犹太人建立了以色列国，他们控制了约一半的耶路撒冷城，但不包括先前圣殿所在的地方。1967 年的‘六日战争’之后，犹太人控制了全耶路撒冷。然而，非常重要的一点是，伊斯兰教（即回教）所谓的‘石顶’清真寺（‘Dome of the Rock’，有名奥玛清真寺）圣地仍然占据着古代圣殿所在的地区。虽然犹太人占有整个城市，但伊斯兰教徒仍在先前圣殿所在地朝拜，并不许任何犹太人的侵入。这一耶路撒冷最重要的地方仍“被外邦人践踏”，因为“外邦人的日期”还没“满了”（看路加福音 21:24）。犹太人重新获得对耶路撒冷完全的控制是末世时期的事件之一。

耶稣为了教会的再来

耶稣所预言第三系列事件是有关末世的。在教会时代的末期，耶稣会突然地回到世上。就在他回来之前，会有一段可怕的灾难时期。这一时期将会包括或者开始于“‘那行毁坏可憎的’”被设立起来。那个“‘那行毁坏可憎的’”好象将会被设立在犹太教圣殿里，这应该是指到了那时候，在耶路撒冷城已经重建了犹太教的圣殿：

你们看见先知但以理所说的，‘那行毁坏可憎的’站在圣地（读这经的人须要会意），那时在犹太的，应当逃到山上；在房上的，不要下来拿家里的东西；在田里的，也不要回去取衣裳。当那些日子，怀孕的和奶孩子的有祸了，你们应当祈求，叫你们逃走的时候，不遇见冬天或是安息日；因为那时必有大灾难，从世界的起头直到如今，没有这样的灾难，后来也必没有。若不减少那日子，凡有血气的，总没有一个得救的，只是为选民，那日子必减少了；那时，若有人对你们说：‘基督在这里。’或说：‘基督在那里。’你们不要信！因为假基督、假先知将要起来，显大神迹、大奇事；倘若能行，连选民也就迷惑了。看哪，我预先告诉你们了，若有人对你们说：‘看

Behold, He is in the inner rooms, 'do not believe them. For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. (Matthew 24:15-31)

This passage seems to be saying that in the midst of a period of severe disaster, or perhaps at the beginning of it, an idol will be erected in the temple. Terrifying, worldwide disasters will follow this event, the worst ones in all of history. The appearance of the sun, moon and stars will change. Then, suddenly, Jesus will take Christians to heaven. The Christians who have already died will return with Him, and at that time will receive new resurrection bodies. The Christians still on earth at that time will be caught up into the air and will also receive new bodies.

We absolutely must not be deceived. When Jesus comes again, everyone on the earth will immediately see Him in the air. This is what Jesus Himself said. Anyone who tells you that Jesus has already returned to this or that place is a liar.

The Two Great Signs of the Endtimes

No one can know precisely when Jesus will come again. Jesus specifically told us: *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone”* (Matthew 24:36). On the other hand, we can have a rough idea about when the time of His second coming is near: *even so you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door”* (Matthew 24:33). The two great signs of the endtimes are the proclamation of the gospel throughout the entire world, and the recovery by the Jews of control over Jerusalem.

Concerning the sign of the worldwide proclamation Christianity, in Matthew 24:14 Jesus Christ said: *“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.”* Similarly, Genesis 22:18 predicts about Abraham’s descendent (referring to Jesus Christ): *“And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.”* Additionally, Isaiah 49:6 directly states about the Messiah (Jesus): *“I [Yahweh] will also make You [Messiah] a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”*

We do not know exactly what Jesus meant by *“preached in the whole world.”* It could hardly mean to every person – after all, babies are being born every minute! Clearly, however, there are fewer and fewer people groups or nations with absolutely no believers and no gospel witness. The situation is vastly better than it was a mere 200 years ago in 1800, when all of East Asia and most of India and Africa were unreached. This shows that we are closer now to the fulfillment of this prophecy than at any time since Jesus spoke it, perhaps very close. There is much work left to be done, but it is finally possible to envision the end of the task. Meanwhile, we should especially be concerned for China’s minority peoples with no Christians and places with no churches.

The second sign is the return of the Jews to their ancestral land, Israel, and the restoration of temple worship. Amazingly, although the Jews were scattered all over the globe for almost 2,000 years, were oppressed everywhere they went, did not have their own nation, and even forgot their own language, they have still continued to exist as an independent ethnicity. This is because God was causing His prophecy – the Jews will return to Israel in the endtimes – to be fulfilled. Note the following prophecies:

Then it will happen on that day that the Lord Will again recover the second time with His hand The remnant of His people, who will remain, From Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, And from the islands of the sea. And He will lift up a standard for the nations, And will assemble the banished ones of Israel, And will gather the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth. (Isaiah 11:11-12)

And say to them, “Thus says the Lord Yahweh, ‘Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land.’ ” (Ezekiel 37:21; to confirm the reference is to the endtimes, see 37:24 and 38:8)

...and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (Luke 21:24)

Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation’ which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place [meaning the Jewish temple]... (Matthew 24:15)

...but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering... (Daniel 9:27)

We can summarize the above as three main prophecies:

哪，基督在旷野里。’你们不要出去！或说：‘看哪，基督在内屋中。’你们不要信！闪电从东边发出，直照到西边，人子降临也要这样。尸首在哪里，鹰也必聚在那里。那些日子的灾难一过去，日头就变黑了，月后也不放光，众星要从天上坠落，天势都要震动。那时，人子的兆头要显在天上，地上的万族都要哀哭；他们要看见人子，有能力，有大荣耀，驾著天上的云降临。他要差遣使者，用号筒的大声，将他的选民从四方(方：原文是风)，从天这边到天那边，都招聚了来。(马太福音 24:15-31)

这一章节似乎是说在一场严重灾难事件的中期，或可能是开始，有个偶像会被树立在圣殿中。可怕的世界性灾难会随后发生，这是历史上最厉害的。太阳、月亮和星星的外观会发生变化。然后，突然地，耶稣会把基督徒带回天堂。已死的基督会跟随他，并在那时得到新的，复活的身体。那时仍在世的基督徒会被提到空中，并且也得到新的身体。

我们绝对不要被人欺骗。当耶稣再来时，世上每个人将会立刻看见他在空中。这是耶稣自己说的话。任何一个告诉你耶稣已经回到这里或那里的人都是骗子。

末世的两个重大迹象

没有人能准确知道耶稣何时再来。耶稣具体地告诉我们：“但那日子、那时辰，没有人知道，连天上的使者也不知道；子也不知道，惟独父知道”(马太福音 24:36)。另一方面，我们能有个大体的概念关于他第二次到来的时候接近了：“这样，你们看见这一切的事，也该知道人子近了，正在门口了！”(马太福音 24:33)。末世的两个重大的迹象是福音在全世界的广传和犹太人对耶路撒冷恢复统治。

关于基督教世界性传播的预兆，在马太福音 24:14，耶稣基督说：“这天国的福音，要传遍天下，对万民作见证，然后末期才到。”同样，创世记 22:18 关于亚伯拉罕的后代(指耶稣基督)就预言了：“地上万民都必因你的后裔得福。”以赛亚书 49:6-7 还直接地指出弥赛亚(耶稣)：“我[耶和华]还要使你[弥赛亚]作外邦人的光，叫你施行我的救恩，直到地极。”

我们不知道耶稣说的“要传遍天下”那句话确切的意思指出的是什么。不可能是指世上的每一个人已经听过福音——每一时刻都有婴孩新来到这个世界！可是很清楚的是绝对没有任何信徒的民族或国家越来越少。现在的情况比仅仅两百年前的 1800 年的情况，已经好的多了，那时整个中国以及大部分的印度、非洲都没有听到福音。这就表示，从耶稣发出这个预言直到现在，我们比任何其它时期更接近它的应验，可能已经很近了。有很多工作还要作，可是现在终于我们能够想象我们的任务的完成。期间，我们应该特别关心中国没有信徒的少数民族以及没有教会的地方。

第二个预兆是犹太人回归祖国以色列和圣殿崇拜的恢复。很奇妙地，犹太人虽然分散到世界各地近两千年之久，而且到处受压迫，没有自己的领土，甚至忘记了他们本国的语言，但犹太人作为一个独立的民族仍然继续存在着。这是因为上帝会令他的预言——犹太人将会在末世回归以色列——得以应验。注意以下的预言：

当那日，主必二次伸手救回自己百姓中所余剩的，就是在亚述、埃及、巴忒罗、古实、以拦、示拿、哈马，并众海岛所剩下的。他必向列国竖立大旗，招回以色列被赶散的人，又从地的四方聚集分散的犹太人。(以赛亚书 11:11-12)

要对他们说，主耶和华如此说：‘我要将以色列人从他们所到的各国收取；又从四围聚集他们，引导他们归回本地。’(以西结书 37:21；确认指出末世时代，看 37:24 及 38:8)

…耶路撒冷要被外邦人践踏，直到外邦人的日期满了。(路加福音 21:24)

你们看见先知但以理所说的，‘那行毁坏可憎的’站在圣地[指犹太人的圣殿]…(马太福音 24:15)

…一七之半，他必使祭祀与供献止息。…(但以理书 9:27)

我们可以把上面的话总结为三大预言：

1. The Jews will return to Israel and establish an independent nation there (this prophecy has been mostly fulfilled already, but many scholars think one day all the Jews in the world will return to Israel to live).
2. The Jews will once again completely control Jerusalem (this prophecy was partly fulfilled after the 1967 war, but as long as Muslims occupy the Temple Mount area, the prophecy is not yet completely fulfilled).
3. The Jews' temple worship ("*sacrifice and grain offering*") will be restored (this part awaits fulfillment; 'Orthodox' Jews constantly long to restore the temple and the worship rituals).

This set of prophecies is the second sign that the endtimes are near.

Consider how improbable these two important prophecies – the worldwide spread of the gospel and the restoration of the Jewish state – are, and how the two of them are completely independent of each other! One concerns the entire world, hundreds of different peoples. When Jesus announced that prophecy, these peoples either opposed the gospel (most of the Jews), or ignored it (the Romans and Greeks in the area), or had never heard anything about it (the entire rest of the world). Especially considering the primitive technology of 30 AD, who would dare to predict that all mankind would hear the gospel? But today, we already see the partial fulfillment of this prophecy, and its completion is nearing.

The other is a highly specific prophecy, concerned with a tiny people group and a tiny, specific point on the earth's surface – the city of Jerusalem. Who could have predicted that the Jews would recover control of this city? But today we see the Jews controlling most of Jerusalem, and it is easy to imagine how, one day, they will rebuild the temple, despite the opposition and hatred of the Arabs.

As if predicting these two things were not enough, how could one, solely relying on human ability, have predicted that the two things would happen at the same time? Dear reader, be completely sure that God is in total control of history. You can also be sure that God is in control of the details of your life, manipulating the environment around you to draw your heart to come to Him, love Him, follow Him. There are no accidents in history, and none in your life either.

Signs of the Endtimes in Society

Besides these signs relating to international political circumstances, we can also see signs of the endtimes in society. In the book of 2 Peter, Peter warns:

Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." (2 Peter 3:3-4)

This passage was written nearly 2,000 years ago. It predicted what we today call 'Uniformitarianism': the Natural Laws have never been changed by anything, and never will be changed by anything. The main point is that God has never intervened in the Natural Laws. Nature is regarded as eternal and independent, in essence, Nature is 'god.' The erroneous conjecture derived from this theory is that only material entities exist. In Lesson 1 we have already seen that the Natural Laws absolutely cannot explain the existence of life on earth. In fact, 'Uniformitarianism' or 'Philosophical Materialism' is completely senseless. 'Uniformitarianism' is simply an assumption blinded erected on the basis of 'Philosophical Materialism' and 'Philosophical Naturalism.' In fact, this theory already existed at the time of the ancient Greeks, 500 years before Jesus, but it did not achieve wide acceptance until the 20th century. This is also a sign of the endtimes.

The second social sign is severe, widespread moral decay. The book of 2 Timothy says:

But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these. For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. (2 Timothy 3:1-7)

People have always committed the sins listed above; we might ask, what will be the difference in the endtimes? The answer might already be manifest in our own time. People have always been "*lovers of self*," only loving themselves, but selfishness was always regarded as a bad thing. Not until now has selfishness been raised to a virtue, with self-love called a necessary and healthy part of development. People have always been "*lovers of money*," but greed was regarded as evil. But now people regard being filled with ambition as a sign of outstanding talent. Children have always been "*disobedient to parents*," or not listening to them, not honoring them, but felt guilty about it. But today this is regarded as "modern freedom" or "healthy independence." People have always committed sexual immorality, but it has never been widely morally acceptable until this period. Doesn't this show that the endtimes are very possibly near?

Finally, God warns that in the endtimes there will be many people who call themselves Christians who would reject the faith, because they had never actually believed.

1. 犹太人会回归以色列并在那里建立一个有独立主权的国家(这个预言的大部分已经应验了,但许多学者都相信将有一天,世界上所有的犹太人都要回到以色列居住)。
2. 犹太人将会再次完全统治耶路撒冷(这个预言在1967年战争后应验了一部分,但只要伊斯兰教徒仍然占据圣殿区,这预言就不算完全应验)。
3. 犹太人圣殿的敬拜(“祭祀和供献”)将会恢复(这一点正等待应验,犹太人的‘正统’组织时刻期待着恢复圣殿和礼拜仪式)。

这一系列预言成为末世临近的第二个预兆。

试想这两个主要的预言——福音在全世界的传扬和犹太人的复国——是多么的不太可能,而这两个预言又是多么的完全独立!一个与整个世界,几百个不同民族有关。耶稣宣布这个预言的时候,这些民族对福音或是敌视(大部分犹太人),或是不理(当地的罗马及希腊人),或是根本不知道(其余整个世界)。特别是想到公元30年时的原始技术,谁敢预言全人类都能听到福音?但今天,我们已经看到预言的大部分应验了,并且已经接近其尾声。

另一个十分具体的、关于一个少数民族的预言,以及在地球表面既小又具体的地点——耶路撒冷城。那城有一千八百七十八年的时间,即公元70年到1948年,不受到犹太人的任何控制。谁能预知犹太人会重获该城控制权?但今天我们看见犹太人控制了大部分的耶路撒冷城,而且很容易想像有一天,他们将会不顾阿拉伯人的憎恨和反对,重建圣殿。

即使预言这两件事情并不够伟大,那仅靠人类的能力怎能预言这两件事情会同时发生?亲爱的读者,可以非常肯定的是上帝全然地控制历史,也可肯定上帝控制你的生活细节,操控你周围的环境使你的心来接近他、来爱他、跟随他。历史上没有意外,你的生命里也没有。

社会中的末世预兆

除了这些国际性政治形势预兆以外,我们在社会中也可以看到末世将近的预兆。在彼得后书里他警告说:

第一要紧的,该知道在末世必有好讥诮的人,随从自己的私欲,出来讥诮说:“主要降临的应许在哪里呢?因为从列祖睡了以来,万物与起初创造的时候仍是一样。”(彼得后书 3:3-4)

这段话写于几乎两千年以前,它已经预测到我们今天说的‘古今一致论’(又称‘均变说’或‘天律不变论’):自然规则从来没有被任何事物改变过,也将不被任何事物而改变。中心论点是从来没有神干预自然规律。自然被认为是永恒和独立的,本质上,自然就是‘神’。从这理论得出的错误推论是,物质是唯一存在的。在第1课里,我们已经看到自然规律根本无法解释地球生命的存在。事实上,‘古今一致论’或‘唯物论’是毫无道理的。‘古今一致论’只是在‘唯物论’和‘自然主义论’基础上盲目地作出的一个假定。这个理论其实在耶稣时代500年之前的古希腊时代已经存在,只是它在二十世纪才被广为接受。这也是末世的一个标志。

第二个社会的预兆是严重的、广泛的道德衰败。提摩太后书警告说:

你该知道,末世必有危险的日子来到。因为那时,人要专顾自己,贪爱钱财,自夸,狂傲,谤渎,违背父母,忘恩负义,心不圣洁,无亲情,不解怨,好说谗言,不能自约,性情凶暴,不爱良善,卖主卖友,任意妄为,自高自大,爱宴乐不爱神,有敬虔的外貌,却背了敬虔的实意;这等人你要躲开。那偷进人家牢笼无知妇女的,正是这等人;这些妇女担负罪恶,被各样的私欲引诱,常常学习,终久不能明白真道。(提摩太后书 3:1-7)

人类一直都在犯以上所陈列的罪,我们可能会问,末世又有什么不同呢?答案可能已经显示在我们的时代里。人们一直都“专顾自己”,只爱自己,但自私一直被认为是一件坏事。只有今天自私才被提升为一种美德,自恋则被讲成是一种需要和正常的发展。人们一直都是“贪爱钱财”,但贪婪被认为是邪恶的。可是现在人们会以野心勃勃而引以为豪。孩子们一直都会为“违背父母”,或不听从、不孝顺,而感到内疚,但今天这却被称为“现代式的自由”或“健康的独立”。人们也一直犯淫乱的罪,但也是直到这个时代在道德上这才被广泛接受。这不是说明很可能末日已经临近吗?

最后,上帝作出警告说到末世会有很多自称是基督徒的人都会违背信仰,因为他们根本从来没有相信过。

[Now we request] *that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, (2 Thessalonians 2:2-3)*

But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, (1 Timothy 4:1)

In the book of Matthew, Jesus Christ said: *“because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold.”* This may refer to the endtimes, because many nominal Christians will abandon Christianity and will join the ranks of the *“anti-Christ.”* If someone calls himself a Christian, has been baptized, and attends church, this does not necessarily mean he has truly believed. Many churches only preach religion and do not follow Jesus. Thus naturally in the church there are many so-called *“Christians”* who are nominal and have never truly believed. Even Chiang Kai Shek accepted Christianity in order to be able to marry Soong Mei Ling. In the endtimes, all the false ‘Christians’ will publicly reject the truth of the Bible, and very possibly at that same time still call themselves ‘Christians’!

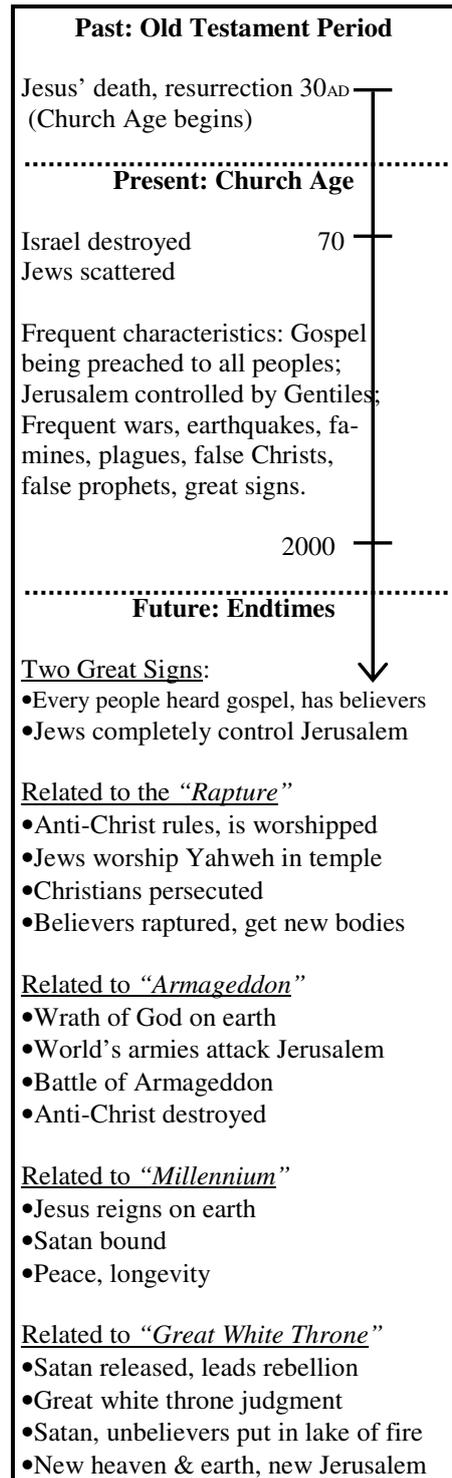
How will these events happen in China? We have already see the moral decay mentioned in 2 Peter and 2 Timothy. Qigong and other so-called ‘powers,’ including Falun Gong, very possibly are Satan preparing people’s hearts, making it easy to draw them to accept and worship the *“anti-Christ”* in the future. Perhaps he will claim he is filled with the *“force”* of the universe, and perhaps this *“force”* will be used to explain the so-called evolution of life, since it is more and more obvious that ‘evolution’ could not occur by the workings of the Natural Laws (see Lessons 1 and 2). Today many people say all religions, including Christianity, are preaching the same thing. Perhaps the *“anti-Christ”* will say he is the ‘Combined Fulfillment’ of Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, and all other religions, to facilitate having everyone on earth worship him. Thus this world will have a religion without an actual god: it will only be a ‘force,’ which will not demand that people do good instead of evil, control their lusts, or love everyone. Because humans have wanted to regard themselves as the highest entities in the universe, in the future, Satan will provide them with the perfect idol – a human being, the *“anti-Christ.”*

Specific Events of the Endtimes

No one can know exactly when Jesus will come again. But we can have a rough idea. In the same way, the exact order of each event in the endtimes is not clearly recorded in the Bible. Doubtless, for believers, when the endtime actually comes, everything will be clear. Although we cannot give a precise sequence, it is clear that certain events form several groups, and we can make a rough sequence.

Related to the “Rapture.” In the endtimes, a person called the *“anti-Christ”* will appear and exercise great power.

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. ... that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, 9-10)



我劝你们，无论有灵，有言语，有冒我名的书信，说主的日子现在到了，不要轻易动心，也不要惊慌。人不拘用什么法子，你们总不要被他诱惑；因为那日以前，必有离道反教的事；并有大罪人，就是沉沦之子，显露出来。（帖撒罗尼迦后书 2:2-3）

圣灵明说，在后来的时候必有人离弃真道，听从那引诱人的邪灵和鬼魔的道理；（提摩太前书 4:1）

耶稣基督在马太福音里曾说：“只因不法的事增多，许多人的爱心，才渐渐冷淡了。”这可能也是指末世，因此许多名义上的基督徒将会拒绝基督教而加入“反基督”的行列。人如果自称是基督徒、受过洗礼、参加教会礼拜，但这并不等于他是真正相信。许多教会都只是宣传宗教，不是跟随耶稣。所以在教会中当然会有很多名义上的却不是真正相信的所谓‘基督徒’。甚至蒋介石也是为了能与宋美玲结婚才自称接受基督教。到了末日时期，所有假的‘基督徒’都会公开地违背圣经的真理，而很可能同时还是自称为‘基督徒’！

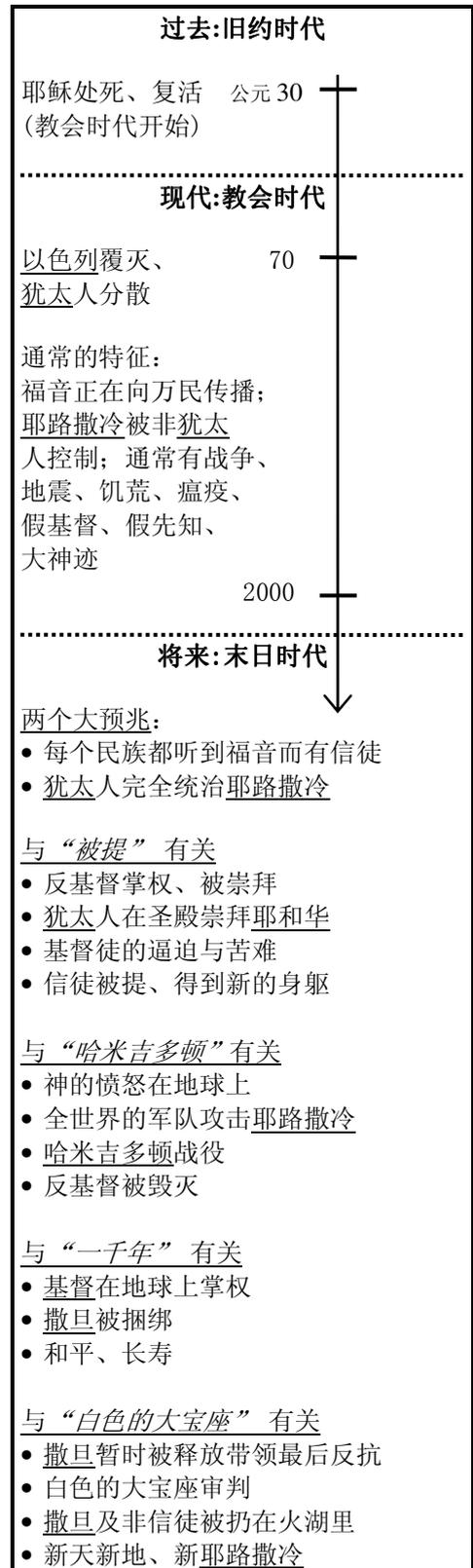
这些事又是怎样发生在中国呢？我们已经看到了彼得后书和提摩太后书中提到的道德的衰败。气功和其它所谓的‘力量’，包括法轮功，很有可能是魔鬼撒旦在准备人们的心，使他们将来很容易被吸引去接受、崇拜“反基督”。可能他会自称是充满宇宙的“力量”，而这“力量”很有可能会被用于解释生物的所谓‘进化’，因为越来越明显，‘进化’的发生不可能是由于自然规律的作用而发生（参考第 1、2 课）。今天许多人都说所有的宗教，包括基督教，都是宣传同一种东西。那位“反基督”可能会说他是佛教、伊斯兰教、基督教等教的‘集大成者’，以便让世界所有的人都敬拜他。以致这世界将会有个没有真神的宗教：只有一股‘力量’，并不要求人弃恶从善、控制私欲、博爱众生。因为人们本来就想把人类视为宇宙中至高无上的存在体，撒旦将会为他们提供一个完美的偶像——一个人、那位“反基督”。

末世的具体事件

无人能明确知道何时耶稣再来。但我们可有个大体的概念。同样，末世的各样事件的准确顺序在圣经中也没明确记载。毫无疑问，对信徒来说，到末世真正来到时这一切就都清楚了。虽然我们不能明确其顺序，但很清楚的是这些事件属于几个系列，而且我们可有个粗略排序。

与教会“被提”有关。在末世时，有个叫做“反基督”（敌基督）的人会出现且掌握大权。

弟兄们，论到我们主耶稣基督降临，和我们到他那里聚集。我劝你们，无论有灵、有言语、有冒我名的书信，说主的日子现在到了，不要轻易动心，也不要惊慌。人不拘用什么法子，你们总不要被他诱惑。因为那日子以前，必有离道反教的事，并有那大罪人，就是沉沦之子，显露出来。他是抵挡主，高抬自己，超过一切成为神的和一切受人敬拜的，甚至坐在神的殿里自称是神。……这不法的人来，时照撒旦的运动，行各样的异能、神迹和一切虚假的奇事，并且在那沉沦的人身上行各样出于不义的诡诈，因他们不领受爱真理的心，使他们得救。（帖撒罗尼迦后书 2:1-4, 9-10）



It seems that the “*anti-Christ*” is the same person referred to as the “*man of lawlessness*” in the passage above, and also the same as the beast whose “*number is six hundred and sixty-six*” in the book of Revelation (see Revelation 13:18). He will gain power over a multi-nation coalition. This multi-national coalition (probably ten nations) will be at least partly composed of the old Roman Empire. Many Christians think today’s European Union will change into this coalition.

Because the “*anti-Christ*” is empowered by Satan, he will be able to perform many apparent miracles, deceiving many people. Finally, he will call himself god, and everyone in the world will worship his idol. He will persecute Christians. Everyone will have to receive the mark of the “*anti-Christ*” on his or her forehead or right hand, otherwise they will not be permitted to buy or sell anything. Perhaps this mark will be an implant under the skin, like the magnetic strip on a bank card. The technology to do this already exists.

At about this time, all the false, nominal Christians will fall away and worship the “*anti-Christ*.” This is called “*the apostasy*” (2 Thessalonians 2:3). Today, about one third of the world’s population nominally call themselves Christians. Of course the number of true Christians is much smaller than that. During the “*the apostasy*,” the false Christians will worship the “*anti-Christ*” along with all the other unbelievers in the world.

At roughly the same time, the Jews will rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, and begin once again to worship Yahweh according to the Old Testament of the Bible. This seemingly answers to Daniel’s seventieth “*seven*.” As we have discussed in Lesson 11 of these materials, the first sixty-nine “*sevens*” end with the coming of the Messiah (that is, when Jesus began His ministry). After this, the Messiah was to be “*cut off*” and the city of Jerusalem and its temple were to be destroyed. These events were completed in 70 AD. After these things – Daniel does not say how long after – the final, seventieth “*seven*” will come:

And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”
(Daniel 9:27)

The precise meaning of this verse is not clear, because the time has not yet come. However, it seems to be saying that the “*anti-Christ*” will make a seven year treaty, permitting the Jews to worship Yahweh in their temple. During the period of the treaty, the “*abomination of desolation*” will suddenly be set up in the temple. Very possibly this will be an idol statue of the “*anti-Christ*.” Later, all the world will suffer extreme disaster. Countless people will die in these disasters.

At some point during these events, Jesus will ‘rapture’ believers. He will return to the earth in the clouds. The Christians who have already died will receive new, resurrection bodies. All true believers still on the earth will be gathered up together with them into the clouds. These believers will instantly receive new, resurrection bodies. This meeting is called the ‘marriage supper of the Lamb.’ At this time the Bridegroom (Jesus) will finally receive His completed Bride (the Church, that is, all true Christians). Will the Rapture of the Church happen before, during or after those disasters? Sincere Christians have different opinions. The writer of these materials thinks that, at the very least, it is clear that before Jesus Christ comes and the Church is raptured, the Christians of the world will undergo a period of especially severe persecution.

Related to the Battle of “*Armageddon*.” After Christians leave the world, the wrath of God will be poured out on the earth. This is sometimes called the **Great Tribulation**. This may include war, natural disasters, and/or supernatural punishments. At the end of this time period, the armies of every nation will gather in the Middle East and attack the Jews in Israel and Jerusalem. The God will shatter their assault at a place in Israel called Armageddon. Jesus will return to earth in a physical body, destroy the armies of humanity, and bind Satan for a thousand years. It seems that all or most of the surviving Jews will either already be Christians or will become Christians after the battle.

Related to the “*Millennium*.” After crushing all human resistance, Jesus and the resurrected believers will rule the world for a thousand years. This is often called the ‘*Millennium*.’ All the world will be peaceful and prosperous, and human lifespans will be increased (perhaps to an average of 100 years). Jerusalem will be the capital of the world.

Related to the “*Great White Throne*.” After a thousand years, Satan will be temporarily released, deceive the nations (peoples), and lead the final rebellion against God. Satan will be defeated and thrown into hell. That will be the end of human history. Then Jesus will judge all people, seated on a great white throne. Unbelievers will be thrown into hell to suffer eternal punishment. The present earth and outer space will be destroyed and replaced with a new heaven and new earth. There believers will live with God forever. This will be the restoration of God’s original plan, to be together with humans in Eden.

“反基督”（敌基督）几乎可以说与以上一段所指的“不法的人”是同一个人，也和启示录中的“数目是六百六十六”的兽是相同的（看启示录 13:18）。他将会取得一个多国联盟的控制权。这多国联盟（大概十个国家），至少部分是由过去的罗马帝国组成的。许多基督徒认为现今的欧盟可能会卷入这一联盟。

因为“反基督”从撒旦得到力量，他会作很多看起来似乎是奇迹的事去欺骗许多人。最终，他会自称为上帝（神），全世界的人会朝拜他的偶像。他会逼迫基督徒。每个人将不得不在前额或右手上接受“反基督”的印记，不然他们就不被允许买或卖任何东西。也许接受这印记就像在皮下植入类似银行卡上的磁条的芯片。这样的技术已经存在。

大约在这个时候，所有假的、名义上的基督徒会忍受不了而去拜“反基督”。这被称为“离道反教”（帖撒罗尼迦后书 2:3）。今天，世界人口约有三分之一的人在名义上称自己为基督徒。当然真正的基督徒数目少得多。在“离道反教”时期，假基督徒会同世界上其它所有不信的人一起拜“反基督”。

大概在相同的时期内，犹太人会重建耶路撒冷的圣殿，并重新开始按旧约圣经的模式崇拜耶和华。这似乎回应了但以理的第七十个“七”。就象我们在本材料的第 11 课所讨论的，最先的六十九个“七”是在弥赛亚来到（即耶稣开始传道时）结束。此后，弥赛亚“必被剪除”，而且耶路撒冷城及它的圣殿要被毁灭了。这些事在公元 70 年完成了。再迟些时候，但以理并没有说再过多久之后，最终的七十个“七”就会来到：

一七之内，他必与许多人鉴定盟约；一七之半，他必使祭祀与供献止息。那行毁坏可憎的如飞而来，并且有愤怒倾在那行毁坏的身上（或作：倾在那荒凉之地），直到所定的结局。（但以理书 9:27）

这一节详细的意思可能并不太清楚，因为时候未到。然而，它似乎是说“反基督”会签订一个七年的协议，允许犹太人在他们的圣殿中崇拜耶和华。在协议期间，“那行毁坏可憎的”会突然被设立在圣殿里。这很可能是“反基督”的偶像。后来整个世界会遭遇极度的灾难。无数的人会死在这些灾难中。

这些事件期间的某一时刻，耶稣会‘提起’信徒。他会从云中降回到世上。已死的基督徒会得到新的、复活的身体。所有仍在世的真的信徒会被提到云中与他们相聚。这些信徒会立即地得到新的、复活的身体。这一会合被称为‘羔羊的婚宴’，此时新郎（耶稣）最终得到他已经被完成的新娘（教会即真正的基督徒）。教会被提是发生在那些灾难之前、之中或之后？一些诚实的基督徒有不同的看法。本文作者认为，很明确的至少是耶稣基督再来、教会被提之前，地球上的基督徒要遭遇一段格外厉害的逼迫时期。

与“哈米吉多顿”战役有关。基督徒们离开世界之后，上帝的愤怒倾倒在地球上，有时这也叫做重大灾难。其中可能包括战争、自然灾害、及/或超自然的惩罚。在这段时期的尾声，各国的军队会在中东聚集并进攻以色列与耶路撒冷中的犹太人。然而上帝会在以色列的一个叫哈米吉多顿的地方粉碎他们的进攻。耶稣会以物质的身体回到世上，摧毁人类的军队，将撒旦囚禁一千年。似乎所有或大部分在那时尚存的犹太人或者已经是基督徒或者在战后成为基督徒。

与“一千年”有关。在击溃了人类所有的反抗之后，耶稣会同复活的信徒们一起统治地球一千年，这经常被称为‘千禧年’。全球会有和平与繁荣，人的寿命也延长了（也许平均有一百年）。耶路撒冷会成为世界的首都。

与“白色的大宝座”有关。一千年后，撒旦会暂时被释放，去诱惑各国（民族），并带领最后的叛乱、反抗上帝。撒旦会被打败并被扔进地狱。那就是人类历史的终结。然后耶稣会在白色的大宝座上对众人施行审判。不信的人将被扔到地狱受永远的惩罚。现在的地球及天空会被毁灭且由一个新天新地取代，信徒们在那里与上帝永远生活在一起。这将恢复上帝最初的计划，就是在伊甸园之中与人同在。

