**1. Motivate**

A new neighbor moves in down the street. When you invite her to church, she informs you that she is Hindu.

She says. “We believe in one ultimate reality, Brahman, which is beyond all human understanding. But this one reality is expressed in many forms, which is why we have different deities. Our sacred texts teach us about duty, devotion, and the importance of faith—things that I think Christians also value.”

**2. Transition**

Today we consider reasons that we can have confidence the Bible is the inspired Word of God. for several reasons.

* **M**anuscript evidence
* **A**rcheological evidence
* **P**rophetic evidence

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Manuscript and Archeological Evidence

Manuscript Evidence

* The Bible has more manuscript copies than any other ancient text.
* The New Testament alone has over 5,800 Greek manuscripts,
* compared to works like Homer’s Iliad (about 1,800) and Plato’s writings (fewer than 10).

The Dead Sea Scrolls

* discovered in 1947
* confirmed the remarkable accuracy of Old Testament transmission over a thousand years.

Isaiah 40:8 – "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever."

Consistency over time

* The Bible was written over 1,500 years
* by more than 40 authors from different backgrounds (shepherds, kings, prophets, fishermen,
* yet it maintains a unified message.
* The consistency of the text across thousands of manuscripts testifies to careful transmission.

2 Peter 1:21 – "For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit

Visualization of cross references

* 362,000 cross references
* bars on the bottom indicate chapter length
* colors indicate distance between chapters

B. Historical Accuracy

Archeological Confirmation – Affirmation of Biblical accounts

* The discovery of the Hittite civilization (once thought to be mythical).
* The existence of King David (Tel Dan Stele).
* The Pool of Bethesda and Pool of Siloam (both mentioned in John’s Gospel).

Historical Corroboration

* Non-Christian historians like Josephus and Tacitus mention Jesus, John the Baptist, and early Christians, confirming biblical events.
* Ancient records confirm biblical figures such as Pontius Pilate and Herod the Great.

Luke 1:1-4 – Luke claims to have investigated everything carefully to provide an accurate account.

3.2 Prophetic Accuracy Confirms Divine Authorship

A few Messianic prophecies.

1. Born in Bethlehem
	* Prophecy: *Micah 5:2* (written ~700 B.C.) – "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days."
	* Fulfillment: *Matthew 2:1* – "Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king..."
2. Betrayed for 30 Pieces of Silver
	* Prophecy: *Zechariah 11:12-13* (written ~500 B.C.) – "...they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver. Then the Lord said to me, 'Throw it to the potter'—the lordly price at which I was priced by them."
	* Fulfillment: *Matthew 26:14-16* – Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, and *Matthew 27:3-7* confirms that the money was later used to buy a potter’s field.
3. Crucifixion Described Before It Was Invented
	* Prophecy: *Psalm 22:16-18* (written ~1000 B.C.) – "They have pierced my hands and feet... They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots."
	* Fulfillment: *John 19:23-24, 37* – Roman soldiers cast lots for Jesus’ clothing, and He was crucified, fulfilling the prophecy centuries before crucifixion was used as a method of execution.
4. Buried in a Rich Man’s Tomb
	* Prophecy: *Isaiah 53:9* (written ~700 B.C.) – "And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death..."
	* Fulfillment: *Matthew 27:57-60* – Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy man, provided his own tomb for Jesus' burial.

Significance of Fulfilled Prophecies

* The specificity of these prophecies
	+ Many fulfilled centuries later
	+ With precise details
	+ Beyond human ability
	+ Demonstrates divine foreknowledge
	+ Confirms the Bible’s reliability.
* No other religious or historical texts have specific, fulfilled prophecy
	+ Quran, Hindu Vedas, or Buddhist scriptures do not contain detailed, consistently fulfilled prophecies like the Bible does
	+ False prophets such as Nostradamus made vague or incorrect predictions –
	+ Bible’s prophecies are precise and accurate
* Probability of Messianic prophecies happening by chance is astronomical
	+ Chance of one person fulfilling just 8 major Messianic prophecies is 1 in 1017
	+ Similar to covering Texas with silver dollars 2 ft deep and randomly picking the one marked coin.

Conclusion: Fulfilled Prophecy is a Signature of God

* The fulfillment of prophecy is one of the strongest evidences that the Bible is divinely inspired rather than a human invention.
* It confirms God’s sovereignty, the truth of Scripture, and the identity of Jesus as the promised Messiah.
* Jesus Himself affirmed the prophetic nature of Scripture
	+ *Luke 24:44*, "Everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

3.3 Other "Holy Books" Contradict the Bible.

Nature of God

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Bible | Hindu Vedas |
| MonotheisticDeuteronomy 6:4 – "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one." | * Polytheistic
* Many gods with different powers and roles
* Claim they are manifestations of one reality – thus claim monism
 |

Creation of the Universe

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Bible | Hindu Vedas |
| * God created the universe from nothing, by merely speaking
* Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God
 | * Creation is cyclical – endlessly so
* Vedas suggests uncertainty
* Maybe even the gods don’t know origin
 |

Concept of Sin and Salvation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Bible | Hindu Vedas |
| * Sin is rebellion against God
* Salvation only through Faith in Jesus
* Romans 3:23 All have sinned
* John 14:6 I am the way …
 | * Sin is ignorance, bad karma
* Salvation through self-effort, meditation, good deeds
 |

Life After Death

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Bible | Hindu Vedas |
| * One life, then judgment
* Eternal heaven or hell
* Heb. 9:27 appointed for man to die once, then comes judgment
 | * Reincarnation – souls reborn in different forms
* Based on karma
* Goal is to escape the cycle, merge with ultimate reality - Brahman
 |

Worship and Idolatry

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Bible | Hindu Vedas |
| * Worship directed to God alone
* Idolatry forbidden
* Isaiah 42:8 … my glory I give to no other
 | * Encourage worship of many deities
* Use of physical images, idols
 |

Nature of Humanity

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Bible | Hindu Vedas |
| * Made in God’s image – distinct from animals
* People have intrinsic worth
* Gen. 1:27 God created man in His own image … male and female
 | * Caste classifies people by birth and karma
* Leads to social stratification
* Different castes arose from different parts of a primordial being
 |

Conclusion … which is true?

* The Bible presents
	+ An unchanging, personal God,
	+ A clear beginning and end,
	+ A single opportunity for salvation, and
	+ An exclusive way to eternal life through Jesus Christ.
* The Vedas promote
	+ Multiple gods,
	+ Reincarnation,
	+ Karma-based salvation,
	+ Uncertainty about creation and truth.
* Because truth cannot contradict itself,
	+ the Bible and the Vedas cannot both be correct.
	+ The fulfilled prophecies, historical accuracy, and the resurrection of Jesus provide strong evidence that the Bible is the true revelation from God

Application

* List names of people you know who believe a holy book other than the Bible provides truth.
* Think about how you might respond to questions they might ask and study those topics, so you are prepared to share God's truth with them.
* Seek God's guidance in prayer and seek opportunities to start spiritual conversations with them.

Word Search (Again)

These words are taken from your lesson today. We must find them and put them back in the lecture notes. They are in the grid left to right, down, and diagonal. You’re lucky there’s none backwards The Word Search Lady doesn’t know about this list. Don’t tell her or she’ll assign book reports.

HINDU
HOLY
IDOLS
JOSEPHUS
KARMA
MANUSCRIPT
MEDITATION
POTTER
PRECISE
PROBABILITY
PROPHECY
QURAN
REBELLION
SCROLLS
SILVER
SIN
SOLDIERS
TOMB
TRUTH
VEDAS
WORD
WORKS

ACCURATE
AFFIRM
AUTHORS
BETHLEHEM
BETRAYED
BOOK
BRAHMAN
BUDDHIST
CASTE
CONFIRM
CREATION
CYCLICAL
DEADSEA
FAITH
FEET
FORTY
FULFILLED
GARMENTS
GRACE
GRAVE
HANDS