

Can Jesus Be Fact and the Bible Be Fable?

I recently heard this claim and would like to respond to it. I can be saved if I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God but I do not believe the miraculous events recorded in the Bible are real and literal.

The Logic Behind This Claim

Ask yourself if the following statements make sense. “I believe that deity came to earth in the form of a man, was **miraculously** born of a virgin woman, performed countless **miracles** of healing the blind, the lame and even raised the dead, was crucified on the cross taking all the sins of the earth upon Himself, was buried for three days and three nights and **miraculously** rose from the dead, ascended back into Heaven and is sitting on the right hand of God. However, I just cannot believe the illogical and unbelievable stories that God created the universe in six days, that He created Adam and Eve on the sixth day, that Noah built an ark and put animals on it, that God destroyed the world with a flood, that the prophet Jonah was swallowed by a big fish, etc. Those stories are just too farfetched to believe.” Think about the contradiction in your own logic. You will believe certain miracles but not others? How can you honestly believe in God and/or Jesus when you refuse to believe in all of the miraculous events recorded in the Bible?

The Need For More Evidence

Some say they would believe if they could just have enough hard evidence. However, John 12:37-39 says, “But though he [Jesus] had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:” In Luke 16, Jesus told about the rich man and Lazarus—two men who had died. One was taken to paradise and the other to torments. The rich man in torments begged Abraham to send someone back from the dead to convince his brothers of the truth. Luke 16:29-31 says, “Abraham saith unto him [the rich man], They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” When Jesus rose from the dead, He was seen by many people including His disciples. However, one of His disciples, Thomas, was not there the first time the others saw him. In John 20:25-31, we read where Thomas said he would not believe unless he personally put his hands in the nail holes of Jesus’ palms. He had to be an eyewitness and refused to take the other disciples’ word for it even though they were eyewitnesses. When Jesus came to Thomas and he was able to see and touch Jesus, then he believed. Jesus told Thomas, “Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” Why didn’t Jesus say that anyone who believes just based on written Scripture is a fool with an ignorant blind faith because there is no scientific proof that Jesus died and rose from the dead? This raises another question. Why would you claim to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God when there is not a single shred of scientific or archaeological evidence to prove that Jesus even existed—much less was

crucified on the cross and then rose from the dead? All we have is testimony that any of those events occurred. This again shows the contradiction in your logic.

John wrote in his account of the gospel of Christ in John 20:30-31, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." Only one group of people at one point in time on the time line witnessed any of the events in the Bible. From that point forward, every person can only believe based on testimony. What a cruel God we would have if He expected us to find scientific and archaeological evidence of every event in the Bible. Thankfully, He does not expect us to do that. He does expect us to believe the testimonies of the 40 or more men who wrote the Bible and He assures us over and over again in the Bible that these testimonies are from Him. It is good to question the Scriptures (Acts 17:11), but for some people no amount of evidence will ever be enough for them. They are looking for a religion that requires absolutely NO faith at all. There is only one thing we have to be assured of and that is that the Holy Bible (both Old and New Testaments) is the inspired Word of God. If we are assured of this one thing, then we can believe everything in the Bible no matter if we can fully comprehend it or not. I don't have to spend my life searching for the remains of Adam and Eve, searching for archaeological remains of Noah's ark or the remains of the big fish that swallowed Jonah, etc. It would eat up and destroy any man's soul to have to go and find scientific and archaeological proof of every event of the Bible.

The Bible's Claim to Be Inspired of God

In II Timothy 3:15-17, the apostle Paul told the young preacher Timothy, "And that from a child thou hast known **the holy scriptures**, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. **All scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." These verses would, at the very least, be referring to the Old Testament. The five books written by Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) were available to the people of the first century. These 5 books contain events such as: the creation of the universe, the creation of Adam and Eve, Noah and the ark and the flood, the ten plagues, the parting of the Red Sea and many more miraculous events. Not only that but the people also had the writings of all of the prophets which would include the majority of the rest of the books of the Old Testament (do a study of the Greek Septuagint-the Hebrew Old Testament translated into Greek). For one to say that all of these miraculous events are nothing more than fables is to deny what this passage states, that all scripture is inspired of God and not simply some men telling some outlandish fables. Peter wrote in II Peter 1:20-21 that, "...no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." For one to say that all of the prophecies of the Old Testament are nothing more than fables is to deny what this passage states, that the prophecies were from the Holy Spirit. I Thessalonians 2:13 says, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as

the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”

The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 5:4 that whatever things were written before (referring to the Old Testament) were written for our learning, that we might have hope. How could God possibly expect us to be able to figure out what stories are real and what stories are fables because the way the Bible reads, they all appear as if they were real? Where do the fables end and the facts begin? I Corinthians 14:33 says that God is not the author of confusion. This passage sure does not seem true if the Bible is half fable, half fact with no way to determine which is which. That is major confusion!

New Testament References to the Old Testament

There are more reference in the New Testament to Old Testament history than I can count. Here are some examples. Paul referred to Eve and her being tempted by Satan in II Corinthians 11:3. James referred to the patience of Job in James 5:11. Jesus referred to Jonah in the belly of a whale in Matthew 12:40. Jesus referred to the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (the cities destroyed by God using fire and brimstone as recorded in Genesis 19) several times in Matthew 10:15 and 11:23-24, Mark 6:11, Luke 10:12 and 17:29. Stephen, a preacher of the Word of God, recounted the entire Old Testament history beginning with Abraham in Acts 7:1-54. When he was done telling this “fable” he was stoned to death. In all the references to the Old Testament in the New Testament, not ONE TIME are they identified as being fables.

Luke 3:23-38 is the genealogy of Jesus. Some of the names in this list include King David, Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, Noah and Adam—major characters in Old Testament history. Where do the descendants of Jesus go from being real people to fictional characters of fables? How can one possibly say they believe in Jesus but not his descendants? This is major contradiction!

Hebrews 11, often called the “Hall of Faith” chapter of the New Testament refers to many Old Testament characters such as Noah and Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses. Verse 29 refers to the miraculous event of God parting the Red Sea for the Israelites. Verse 13 states that they all died in faith, not having received the promises, but were persuaded by them. Verse 7 states that by faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, obeyed God by building an ark when God told him to. There is absolutely no reference to all these faithful people being simply fictitious characters in a bunch of fables.

Moses of the Old Testament is referred to 80 times by name in the New Testament. Jesus referred to Moses over a dozen times. Why would Jesus refer to a fictional character so many times—just to confuse His audience? Jesus said in John 12:48, “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” We cannot just accept some of Jesus’ words and reject others words of Jesus. In Luke 24:25-27, Jesus had just rose from the dead and told some who saw him that they were slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had said about Christ and then He taught them from the books of Moses (the Old Testament books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus,

Numbers, Deuteronomy) and the prophets (a majority of the rest of the Old Testament books) about Himself. Why would Jesus use the books of Moses and the prophets to teach them about Him if they were only fables? In John 5:45-47, Jesus makes it clear that we are to believe the writings of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) and if we do not, how can we possibly believe in anything Jesus says? In John 6:31-32, some Jews told Jesus that their descendants had eaten manna in the desert (referring to Moses' writing in Exodus 16). Jesus referred to Moses and the manna that the Israelites were provided while they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Neither the people nor Jesus talked about this event as being simply a fable about some fictional characters. In Mark 12:19ff, a group of deceitful people questioned Jesus about the Law of Moses regarding marriage to try to trip Him up. Jesus said in verse 26, "...have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" Neither the people nor Jesus talked about Moses or this event as being simply a fable about some fictional character. Rather they were talking about their own descendants.

In Matthew 24:37-39, Jesus said, "But as the days of Noe [Noah] were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Luke also wrote this account in Luke 17. If Noah, the ark and the flood were nothing more than an unbelievable fable, why would Jesus not have identified it as so? If this story is just a fable and not fact, then God really did not destroy the world with a flood except for Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives. This would make Genesis 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 untrue. Noah would have to have been a fictional character. It is illogical to say that there might have really been a man named Noah but the part about the ark and the flood is a fable. You cannot separate the characters from their lives as recorded in the Bible. That IS illogical! So, if Noah was a fictional character, that makes all the accounts of Noah's life and his descendants' lives untrue as written in the books of Genesis, Numbers, Joshua, I Chronicles, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Hebrews. This would make Peter's comparison between Noah and the ark to baptism into Christ a ridiculous comparison in I Peter 3:20. This would make Peter's point about that if God did not spare the sinful world during the days of Noah and the ark, He will not spare us and our sins another ridiculous comparison in II Peter 2:5. If Noah was not real, then his son Shem was not real. If Shem was not real then his descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were not real. If Jacob, the father of the Jews, was not real, then Jesus cannot be real for he was a direct descendant of these men.

Comparisons Between Fable and Fact

In Romans 5, Paul is explaining why and how Christ came to earth and died for mankind's sins. In verse 14, Paul refers to Adam and Moses and explained Adam's part in God's overall plan of salvation for mankind. How would this chapter make any sense if you try to turn the creation of Adam and Eve into a fable and rely on evolution for the explanation of man's origin? Christ came into the world and was crucified on the cross because of a fable about a fictional character named Adam?

In I Corinthians 15:22, Paul wrote, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Does it make sense for Paul to say, "For as in a fictional character called Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

I Corinthians 15:45 says, "...the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam [referring to Christ] was made a quickening spirit." Was Paul saying, "...the first man Adam was a fictional character in a fable; the last Adam [referring to Christ] is a real character..."?

When Christ was tempted by Satan three times in Matthew 4, Christ's defense in all three cases was to quote from the Old Testament and say, "It is written." Why would Christ use a book of fables to challenge Satan?

Time to Make a Decision

Why do you want to put your faith in modern-day scientists' interpretation of science? They cannot even agree if there is a God or not. Some say there is no God and that all the matter of the universe happened by spontaneous generation which is contrary to the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Some say that non-life must have somehow produced life which is contrary to the Law of Biogenesis. Evolution is still just an unproven and unprovable theory and a cold, lonely and hopeless religion. Beware when you put your faith in scientists' interpretation of science. I Corinthians 1:5 states, "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Chapter 3 and verse 19 of this same books states, "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." Paul told Timothy in I Timothy 6:20-21, "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith."

It is a Christian's job to present the lost of the world the Word of God. It is the sinner's job to decide whether they will believe it or not. You should search the Scriptures daily just as the Bereans did in Acts 17:11 to see if what the Scriptures say is true. You should study the Word of God as commanded in II Timothy 2:15 to show yourself approved to God. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God according to Romans 10:17. However, there comes a point when relying on your own wisdom becomes foolishness. At some point, you will fall into the category of the Gentiles that Paul talked about in Romans 1:20 when he wrote, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools..." We have all the evidence we need around us to have faith. At some point, we are without excuse for not believing. Hebrews 11:1 says that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Verse 3 states that through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Genesis 1 states that God created the heaven and the earth and He did it by His word, ("and God said") and He did it in six days. Moses confirmed this again in

Exodus 20:11, "For in six days the Lord made the heaven and earth..." Jesus confirmed this when John wrote in John 1:1-3 that Jesus has always been, was in the beginning with God and everything was made by Him. Genesis 1:26-27 says, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Then Jesus said in Matthew 19:4-5, "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read [in Genesis 1:26-27], that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female..." Peter confirmed the creation account in II Peter 3:5-6. Paul confirmed the creation account in II Corinthians 4:6. The list could go on and on.

To believe that the Bible stories are nothing more than fables (because they are unbelievable and illogical) is to deny God's power and his involvement in His own creation and that the Bible is the Word of God and to believe your own knowledge is higher than God's knowledge. One consequence from denying the Bible as the true, inspired and literal words of God is to realize that we have no literal revelation from God as to how we or the universe came to be or what our past is since all the Biblical history is nothing more than fables. So when God said that He created the universe in six days, He did not really mean it but then never told us how the universe was created? When God said that He created Adam and Eve as the first two people, He did not really mean it but then never told us how we came to be? When God said that He sent Jesus down to earth to die for us because Adam and Eve had brought sin into the world, He did not really mean it but then never told us the real reason why Christ came to earth and died for us? How does anything make sense if the Bible is simply a book of fables—except for the part about Jesus?

Concluding Remarks

To say that all you must believe in order to be saved is whatever is written about Christ, you are saying you must believe the entire Bible for the gospel of Christ is written from cover to cover beginning with the promise of Christ's first coming in Genesis 3:15 (the first book of the Bible) to Christ's second coming in Revelation 22:20 (the last book of the Bible) where Christ said, "Surely I come quickly."

Beware when you say that the stories of the Bible are illogical and unbelievable. I Corinthians 1:18 states, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

Remember the parable (yes a parable—it is identified as a parable) Jesus told in Luke 8 about the sower sowing his seed and how the seed fell on different soils? Jesus said the seed was the Word of God (which words of God—all of them—not just the ones you choose to believe). Which soil are you? Some of the seed fell by the wayside where the Word of God is taught to someone but they refuse to believe. Some of the seed fell on rocky soil where the Word of God is taught to someone and they believe and obey but only for a little while and then fall away at the first persecution they suffer. Some of the seed fell on thorny soil where the Word of God is taught

to someone and they believe and obey for a while but the cares of the world choke them out. Some of the seed fell on good soil where the Word of God is taught to someone, they believe, they obey and they live their lives completely and totally faithful to God even unto death. Which soil are you? There is no soil of indecisiveness. The only choices are to believe and obey or to not believe the Word of God.

In Acts 28:23, Paul was teaching some people about Jesus and the kingdom of God from the Law of Moses (the Old Testament books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) and the prophets (a majority of the other Old Testament books). Verse 24 states, "And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." That is the decision you must make. You have heard enough of God's Word to make a decision. You will either believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God or you will not. You have been shown enough corroborating evidence that the people, places and events of the Bible are true. It is now up to you to use all the resources available to you and commit to a decision. Indecisiveness is a decision in itself. Belief is required as can be seen in such passages such as Mark 16:15-16, Romans 1:16, I Corinthians 1:21 and James 2:19-20.