

24-0128p Transcript

24-0128p - *Did Moses Have a Laptop?*, John Nousek

Bible Reader: Mike Mathis

This transcript transcribed by TurboScribe.ai

See a detailed summary: [Detailed Summary HTML](#) - [Detailed Summary PDF](#)

(Detailed Summary by Grok, xAI)

Did Moses Have a Laptop?

Transcript (0:03 - 28:07)

Scripture Reading

Bible Reader: Mike Mathis

Hebrews 5:12-14,

(0:03) The scripture reading for tonight is taken from Hebrews the fifth chapter verses 12 through 14. (0:15) Hebrews fifth chapter verses 12 through 14.

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, (0:27) you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God, (0:35) and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk (0:45) is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those (0:56) who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised (1:07) to discern both good and evil. And that completes the reading. (1:13)

Transcript

Preacher: John Nousek

(1:18) Good evening. (1:20) So this evening's sermon I've entitled, Did Moses Have a Laptop? And here on the table (1:31) I have a laptop, a computer, a fantastic device. There's all kinds of things, (1:40) very powerful in computing and storing, calculating.

It's a real wonder of technology. (1:55) But the question, did Moses have a laptop when he wrote the Torah? (2:05) When he wrote the first five books that we find in the Bible? There's a little hint to the question, (2:15) as if you need a hint, but something called the Osborne one is considered the first true (2:22) mobile computer by most historians. That's kind of odd because the word historian, (2:30) and you'll see next, Adam Osborne founded the Osborne Company and produced the Osborne one in (2:39) 1981.

Kind of strange to think of 1981 as historian status, but that's what it is. (2:49) So the short answer is no, and the long answer is no way. So this question might sound like, (3:02) as in the reading

tonight, might sound like a milk level question, (3:07) but actually I hope to bring you more than milk tonight.

And so I'll start with this. You know, (3:19) Moses didn't need a laptop, but he did need to get God's Word into written form (3:28) because, as the scriptures say, and I'll now read a little section out of Exodus 24, (3:35) the first eight verses. Now he said to Moses, (3:42) come up to the Lord, you and Aaron and Nadab and Abihu and 70 of the elders of Israel and (3:48) worship from afar, and Moses alone shall come near the Lord, but they shall not come near nor (3:58) shall the people go up with him.

So Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all (4:05) the judgments, and all the people answered with one voice and said, all the words which the Lord (4:12) has said we will do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. And he rose early in the morning and (4:26) built an altar at the foot of the mountain and 12 pillars according to the 12 tribes of Israel.

(4:31) Then he sent young men of the children of Israel who offered burnt offerings and (4:37) sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins (4:45) and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. He then took the book of the covenant and read (4:58) in the hearing of the people and they said, all that the Lord has said we will do and be obedient.

(5:05) And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, this is the blood of the covenant (5:14) which the Lord has made with you according to all these words. So just as a matter of (5:28) call it housekeeping, call it what you will, let me make clear something. (5:35) The Bible claims in many places that Moses wrote the words of the Lord, the law.

The phrase the law (5:47) being the same as the Torah or the Pentateuch. The Pentateuch is formed by two Greek words, (5:57) pente meaning five and peikos if I pronounced that correctly (6:04) meaning book. So it means five books or five vessels or five containers (6:13) put in one volume.

So in English we also have five words, pentagram, a five-pointed star, (6:23) the pentagon in Washington, D.C. But the word Torah, that's the Hebrew version of that word. (6:35) It also refers to the first five books of the Old Testament. (6:40) I've seen on the movie series, The Chosen, mentioned the Torah, Torah, Torah.

Asking (6:51) Matthew in one scene that comes to mind particularly. Well haven't you read the Torah? (7:00) So therefore these five books written almost entirely in Hebrew are the books of the law (7:10) given to us through Moses. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and number five, Deuteronomy.

(7:18) But why is this all important? See the Bible comes under attack from all kinds of sources (7:32) and one of the big claims is that gee Moses didn't write that even though the Bible says so. (7:43) What's that mean? Well it means that if it can be proven that Moses didn't write the law (7:48) as the Bible claims, the text discredits itself, if that would be the case. (7:56) And if any corruption can be found in the text, especially at the very beginning, (8:03) the reliability of all scripture comes into doubt.

And I'm here to tell you this is the (8:11) inerrant perfect Word of God. He has given it to us. He's given us exactly what we need.

(8:21) But I believe that's the prime reason because the attack on Moses's authorship as it's pertaining to (8:29) the Torah is in an attempt to discredit the entire Bible. So the primary means of that attack is by (8:48) saying gee writing wasn't even an option then. Moses wasn't around then.

Writing didn't even (8:55) start until many, many years later. Let's consider first what the Bible has to say. (9:08) In Exodus 17, this is an account of the Israelites are at war with the Amalekites.

(9:24) And I like this part because I remember this is one of the first (9:31) sections of the Bible that I visually in my mind's eye heard and really started to grasp. (9:42) It says, now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephaim. And Moses said to Joshua, (9:50) this is Exodus 17, and Moses said to Joshua, choose us some men and go out fight with Amalek.

(9:57) Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand. So Joshua did as Moses (10:05) said and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

And so it was (10:12) when Moses held up his hand that Israel prevailed. And when he let down his hand, (10:24) Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands became very heavy.

So he took a stone, put it under him, (10:32) and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other side. (10:38) His hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people (10:48) with the edge of the sword. Then the Lord said to Moses, write this for a memorial book and recount (11:02) it in the hearing of Joshua that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under (11:08) heaven. So here we have another example where the Bible clearly is telling him, write.

(11:17) Moses, write. And later in Deuteronomy, speaking regarding the public reading of the law, (11:32) in Deuteronomy 31, starting at verse 9, so Moses wrote down the law (11:43) and gave it to the Levitical priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord (11:47) and to all the elders of Israel. Then Moses commanded them at the end of every seven years (11:56) in the year for canceling debts during the Feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel comes to appear (12:03) before the Lord, your God, at the place he will choose, you shall read the law before them in (12:12) their hearing.

We're reading what's been written. The next verse, verse 12 says, (12:22) assemble the people, men, women, and children, and the foreigners residing in your town so they can (12:29) listen and learn to fear the Lord your God and follow carefully all the words of this law. (12:37) So it's very clear that the Old Testament is talking about, God is talking about a written (12:46) word by Moses kept in a book to be re-read in the hearing of people so that they can learn.

(12:59) And I find it even more interesting that at the end of the Old Testament, (13:06) the very last chapter, it's almost like the last thing, oh don't forget, this is Malachi 4, (13:18) Malachi 4, verse 4. It says, remember the law of Moses which I commanded him in Horeb (13:30) for all Israel with the statutes and judgments. Like God is bookending his Old Testament (13:43) and saying, don't forget. And in the New Testament, the same sort of thing.

For example, (13:58) in John 1, first chapter of John, starting at verse 43, the following day, (14:17) Jesus wanted to go to Galilee and he found Philip and said to him, follow me. Now Philip was with

(14:24) Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, we have found him (14:31) of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

(14:49) And in Mark 12, the same thing, starting at verse 24, Jesus answered and said to them, (15:02) are you not therefore mistaken? Because you do not know the scriptures nor the power of God. (15:08) For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like (15:14) angels in heaven. But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses (15:29) in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him saying, I am the God of Abraham, (15:34) the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.

He is not the God of the dead, the God of the living. (15:40) You are therefore greatly mistaken. The New Testament is likewise jam-packed, (15:51) full of statements.

Moses wrote it. Those books are attributable, attributed to Moses. (16:07) But the criticisms come without stopping.

And I'm going to spend a little bit right now talking (16:15) about one of the prevailing criticisms to all of this. And as I mentioned before, (16:26) one of the most prevalent criticisms is that Moses lived too early in history to have written the (16:33) Torah, the Pentateuch, the law. And up comes something called the documentary hypothesis.

(16:46) And the premise of this documentary hypothesis theory is that various books, four different (16:56) documents were written over the course of time between 850 BC to 500 BC. And then there was an (17:04) editor that put it all together in a nice package around 200 BC. That's the theory.

(17:18) But Moses lived a long time before that, 15th century BC, thereabouts, I believe, at this (17:28) moment. It says the writing didn't come along until hundreds of years later. (17:39) So I'm going to borrow from an article, and I want to give credit where credit's due, (17:45) and they've asked for it.

I want to borrow from an article that I found on Apologetics Press (17:52) on their website. It's written by Eric Loines, an AP staff writer, and he entitles this (18:00) article, Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch, Tried and True. And it reads as follows, (18:11) Amazingly, one of the first assumptions upon which this theory rests was disproved long ago.

(18:18) From the earliest period of the development of the, in capital letters, documentary hypothesis, (18:25) it was assumed that Moses lived in an age prior to the knowledge of writing. (18:30) One of the founding fathers of this theory, Julius Wellhausen, was convinced that ancient (18:36) Israel was certainly not without God-given basis for ordering of human life, but (18:43) they were not fixed in writing, he says. And 13 years later, Herman Schultz declared, (18:52) of the legendary character of the pre-Mosaic narrators, the time of which they treat (19:00) is a sufficient proof for the theory, which is confusing to me, to be honest.

(19:09) Proof and theory, it was a time prior to all knowledge of writing. (19:17) So these guys are both saying the same thing, essentially. Moses couldn't have done it.

(19:22) Writing wasn't there. He couldn't have written all these things. And one year later, T.K. (19:33) Cheney, Encyclopedia Biblica was published, in which he contended that the Pentateuch was not (19:38) written until almost a thousand years after Moses.

These suppositions most certainly had an impact (19:48) on these men's beliefs, and promoting this theory that Moses could not possibly have written the (19:55) first five books of the Old Testament. One major problem with this documentary hypothesis is that (20:04) we now know Moses did not live prior to all knowledge of writing. In fact, he lived long (20:12) after the art of writing was already known.

There's a lot of archaeological evidence, (20:19) discoveries that have proven one of the earliest assumptions of their theory to be wrong. (20:27) Something called the Ugaritic alphabet was discovered. And in 1928, a Syrian farmer (20:40) uncovered a slab of stone plowing his field at a place called Rosh Shammar.

(20:46) Rosh Shammar is a large mound, and it's about six miles or so north of (20:58) Laodicea, on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. (21:03) It's about an hour's drive south of a place that I've heard the name Antioch. (21:10) So it sits between those two, right on the coast.

And the Syrian farmer uncovered this slab, (21:19) identified as the ancient Phoenician city of Ugarit. This was the beginning of the discovery (21:27) of an entire library of tablets at this site, under the direction of Claude F. A. Schaeffer, (21:35) which began in 1929. And the note reads, scarcely a month had gone by before one (21:45) of the most important discoveries of the century was made.

This was the uncovering of a scribal (21:52) school and library adjoining a temple. Most of the tablets in the library were written in a strange (21:59) new script, but they were soon deciphered by Semitic scholars, one of whom had been decorated (22:07) by the French government for brilliant work on an enemy cipher in the First World War. (22:13) These tablets were dated to approximately 1400 to 1200 BC, indicating that it was possible for (22:21) Moses to write.

The same man, in 1949, found more at this location. He says he found a tablet (22:39) containing 30 letters of this Ugaritic alphabet in their proper order. It was discovered that (22:47) the sequence of the Ugaritic alphabet was the same as the modern Hebrew, revealing that the Hebrew (22:56) alphabet goes back to at least 3500 years ago.

And then in 1933, J. L. Starkey, who had studied (23:07) under the famed archaeologist Petrie, excavated the city of Lachish, which had figured prominently (23:14) in Joshua's conquest of Canaan in Joshua 10. Among other things, he unearthed a pottery (23:22) water pitcher inscribed with the dedication in 11 archaic letters, the earliest Hebrew inscription (23:31) known. So this old capital O language, or paleo-Hebrew script, is a form of writing which is similar to (23:44) used by the Phoenicians, a royal inscription of king, and I'm not going to say this right, (23:57) and this alphabet dates to about 1600 BC.

But yet the best is yet to come. In 1901, 1902, (24:12) the Code of Hammurabi was discovered at the ancient site of Susa, in what is now Iran, (24:22) by a French archaeologist, archaeological expedition under the direction of, (24:28) this one I can really say funny, Jacques de Morgan. It was written on a piece of black diorite, (24:40) diorite's a mineral, very dark mineral, nearly eight feet high, and contained 282 sections.

(24:49) In their book, Archaeology and Bible History, Joseph Free and Howard Voss state, (24:55) the Code of Hammurabi was written several hundred years before the time of Moses. (25:01) This code from the period of 2000 to 1700 BC contains advanced laws similar to those in the (25:11) Mosaic

laws, and in view of this archaeological evidence, the destructive critic can no longer (25:19) insist that the law of Moses is too advanced for his time. The Code of Hammurabi established beyond (25:28) doubt that writing was known hundreds of years before Moses.

Truth is, numerous archaeological (25:37) discoveries of the past 100 years have proven once and for all that the art of writing was known, (25:44) not only during Moses's day, but also long before Moses. However, although skeptics, (25:58) liberal theologians, and college professors, and others can continue to promote this documentary (26:06) hypothesis, they should be informed, or as the article reads, informed or reminded of the fact (26:14) that one of the foundational assumptions upon which this theory rests has been completely (26:21) shattered by archaeological evidence. It almost sounds like the arguments between Darwin and fact, (26:37) the theory versus the real story.

I'll wrap it up here. I'm going to read what Jesus had to say (26:50) about this in John 5, verses 45 and 46. Gospel of John, chapter 5, 45 and 46.

(27:03) Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you, (27:14) Moses, in whom you trust. For if you believe Moses, you would believe me.

(27:21) For he wrote about me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words? (27:34) Jesus' rationale for his own authority and his identity hang on the Torah being written by Moses. (27:47) We should believe the same, not because it's written just in the Bible, as I believe it's (27:54) the inherent Word of God, but because it's supported by extra-biblical writings, (28:02) archaeological discoveries, and I'm grateful to the Lord that we have those.

Amen.