

## What is Truth?

When did Noah build the Ark? **BEFORE** the rain

*John 18:33-38*

English Standard Version

33 So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” 34 Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” 35 Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?” 36 Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.” 37 Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.” 38 Pilate said to him, “What is truth?” After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, “I find no guilt in him.”

## “What is Truth?”

### Who is Pontius Pilate?

Encyclopedia Britannica:

Governor of Judea, the southernmost of the three traditional divisions of ancient Palestine; the other two were [Galilee](#) in the north and [Samaria](#) in the center.

According to **Warren Carter**, a Professor of New Testament, at Phillips Theological Seminary in OK

*“Governors were the face of Rome’s empire and power in the provinces. Pilate represented Rome’s political and economic interests, defended its hierarchical societal structure, and ensured submission and order in the provinces. As governor, Pilate exercised military, political, social, judicial, and economic power for the benefit of Rome’s ruling elites.”*

Pilate was a man of great political importance and significant power and yet he had no idea what truth was or where to get it. In condemning an innocent man in Christ we can say that Pilate didn’t let the absence of truth get in the way of his own objectives.

**Pilate had no absolute basis or grounding in anything he was assured of...**

**Most people today don’t. Do we?**

If we are like Pilate and lack a firm grasp of absolute, objective truth we are a person without wisdom as described in James

James 1:5-6

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.”

Best to define our terms: Two Types of Truth: Subjective & Objective

**Subjective** truth has to do with taste, preferences, feelings and opinions. Subjective claim of truth is either true or false based on the whims of the person.

Examples of **Subjective** truth

- Chocolate is better than vanilla.
- Macaroni & cheese is delicious.
- Driving on the freeway at 75 MPH feels unsafe
- Playing video games all day is fun and a good use of my time
- Spiders are scary

Any of these statements can be either correct or incorrect based on opinion or the subject and circumstances. Your subjectivity changes and so does your subjective truth. (example: driving)

**Objective** / universal truth is outside of ourselves, having nothing to do with the self... Nothing to do with me. An Objective claim is either true or false based on the support or objection of other known facts.

Examples of **objective** truth

- Water freezes at 32 degrees
- 12 inches = 1 foot
- The earth is round. It is not flat.
- Pontius Pilate was a real person who served as the Roman governor of Judea (26-36 AD) during the reign of the Emperor Tiberius (14-37 AD).

In 1961 an inscription with Pilate's name was discovered on carved limestone in Caesarea Maritima (By The Sea) that attest to him.

Concerning the stone, John McRay who was an archaeologist and professor of New Testament at Wheaton College, who also directed certain archaeological excavations in Israel wrote in 1991, in *Archaeology and the New Testament*;

“In 1961, researchers found a two-foot by three-foot slab of rock that had been used “in the construction of a landing between flights of steps in a tier of seats reserved for guests of honor” The Latin inscription on the stone, however, proved that originally, it was not meant to be used as a building block in the theater. On the stone, the researchers found what was left of an inscription bearing the name of Pontius Pilate. The entire inscription is not legible, but concerning the name of Pilate, ...it is quite unmistakable, and is of much importance as the first epigraphical documentation concerning Pontius Pilate, who governed Judea A.D. 26-36 according to commonly accepted dates”. The stone is now known appropriately as “The Pilate Inscription,” and documents that Pilate was the Roman official governing Judea, and even uses his more complete name of Pontius Pilate, as found in Luke 3:1.”

**Which type of statement is the following?**

**The original text of the holy bible is the inerrant perfect word of God.**

This is an **objective claim**. The statement is either true or false. It does not rely on or place any claims on me as the subject. It cannot be reduced to a matter of subjectivity. My belief in this statement or unbelief in this statement is completely irrelevant.

Since this is an **objective claim**, if it is supported from credible and reliable sources, it is by definition **objective truth** and worthy of claims and instructions found within its pages. So consider this.

The bible itself claims to be the word of God.

*1st Thessalonians 2:13* “For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.”

*1 Corinthians 2:16* “For ‘who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?’ But we have the mind of Christ.”

*2 Peter 1:20-21*

“knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own **interpretation**. 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.”

*2 Timothy 3:16* “**All** Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,” (package deal)

The Truth, The Mind, Objective, What we need.

The sceptic may say, you have properly quoted these scriptures. However, that by itself is self-serving and circular reasoning and proves nothing. If that was all there was, the sceptic would be correct. But **IF** it is supported elsewhere from reliable sources, other tests. . . .the statement “**The original text of the holy bible is the inerrant perfect word of God.**” than it is true and very much worthy of our attention and obedience.

## **Two Historians:        Flavius Josephus and                                  Cornelius Tacitus**

**Eric Meyers:** Professor of Religion and Archaeology at Duke University Durham, NC

Josephus wrote "The Jewish War," he wrote a history of the Jewish people, and he was commander of the Galilean forces of the army that opposed Rome for two years. He gave up those forces ... after 68, he becomes the major spokesperson against the war with the Romans. After the war he winds up in Rome [sponsored by] the Roman Emperor, and gets paid to write the rest of the history he didn't finish in Palestine.

**Read** (Jewish War 2.169-77; Antiquities of the Jews 18.55-89).

**James McDonald** described in his work, **God Wrote a Book** (2004): that there are no less than five specific tests that were applied in order to be considered for inclusion in the bible: These are:

1. Authority,
2. Authorship,
3. Authenticity (cross-checking),
4. Alive (life changing),
5. Acceptance (previously received as God's word)

## MAPS

<b>M</b> anuscripts	Dead Sea Scrolls (1947)
<b>A</b> rcheology	The Pilate Inscription (1961)
<b>P</b> rophecy	Fulfilled (ongoing)
<b>S</b> cientific Foreknowledge	Dietary & ceremonial washings
	Paths of the Sea (Psalms 8:8)
	The Earth hangs on nothing (Job 26:7)

Today our culture accepts some of the most bizarre statements as truth.

- Men can have babies (give birth)
- Women are the same as men.
- Gender is fluid.
- Some men are actually women, and some women are actually men
  
- Don't believe a lie.
- "That's just your opinion"
- This is not a subjective matter.

Genesis 1:27 RSV      So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

**God's word stands firm.**