

If not then what?

In this post I am thinking about the Old Testament. In particular, how do I know it is true? This will not be an answer more in note-ish form .

What does it teach?

That God created the world. He had some sort of early encounter with a man, or group which was unsuccessful and resorted in some type of rift.

Fast-forward a bit and God tries again, through a man called Abraham. God promises him land and that his descendants will be a great nation. In return Abraham has to trust God that he will do this and later circumcise himself and male household, worship God.

Then the family slowly grows and then they go to Egypt for 400 ish years.

After that they leave and go through the desert. This time is particularly important as they get the law and their mandate: What is offered them in terms of land, material blessings etc, and what is required of them, as well as what will happen if they fail. But also promises of redemption if they repent.

Then there is the rather vague time of the judges. After which there is the appointment of a King. Saul first who fails. Then after that David and his line. With Solomon the Temple is built and there are more covenants. The tribes divide and within a few hundred years (700BC ish), due to serious short comings, the North is exiled, never to return and then a few hundred years more the South is exiled. However, it is allowed to return under Cyrus (probably a Zoroastrian). A lot of literature being written about now.

There are lots of prophecies about a coming kingdom, a ruler, and restoration and that God will come back to the temple and there will be a golden age.

If this is not true then what?

A group of Hebrews who lived in Canaan. Multiplied. Won a few little wars and created a little kingdom. Exiled. Then trying to work out why this happened, and also – what power enabled them to return. Invented or greatly elaborated the law later. Wrote history of the form: we did good, we were blessed; we did bad, we were punished. Then looked forward thinking if we do extra good, then maybe we will be extra blessed.

Problems with traditional.

Historically we know that some details are not true e.g.

- The Angel killing 180,000 Assyrians – they just paid a ransom.
- Jericho – was destroyed well before Joshua.

Some pieces look borrowed, or re-worked from ancient literature.
Creation account. Noah. Isaac and Rebecca?

Problems with alternative

Where did they get the idea of one God from?

What about the law?

There is archaeological evidence verifying many details. David. Solomon.
Exile. Amorites.

False dichotomy to try to pigeon-hole ancient literature into perfect
historical account or fiction.

Preservation of Israel, after exile, destruction of Jerusalem, and holocaust
is bordering on the miraculous.

If the story is largely false, then Jesus is not who he claims.

Christianity is then a fraud.