

Dealing With Difficult Texts In The Scripture



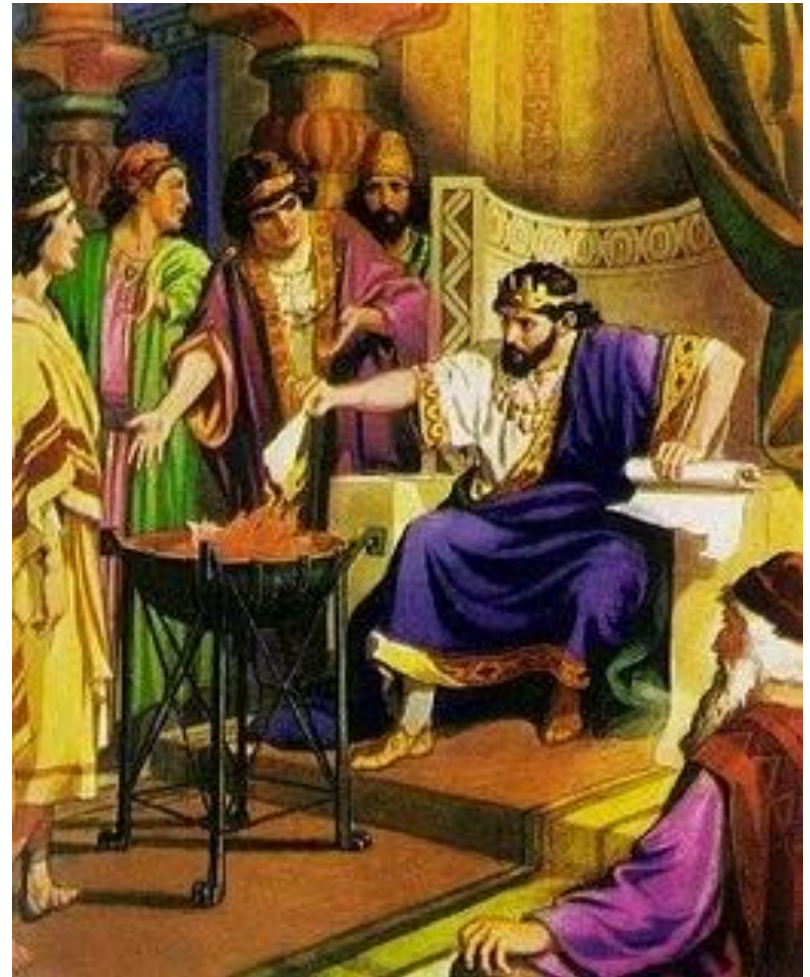
I Pet. 1:23-25

Attacks On The Word of God

- Gen. 3:1-5 → Ye shall not surely die.

Attacks On The Word of God

- King Jehoiakim cuts out God's word with a penknife and throws it into a fire. (Jer. 36:22-23)



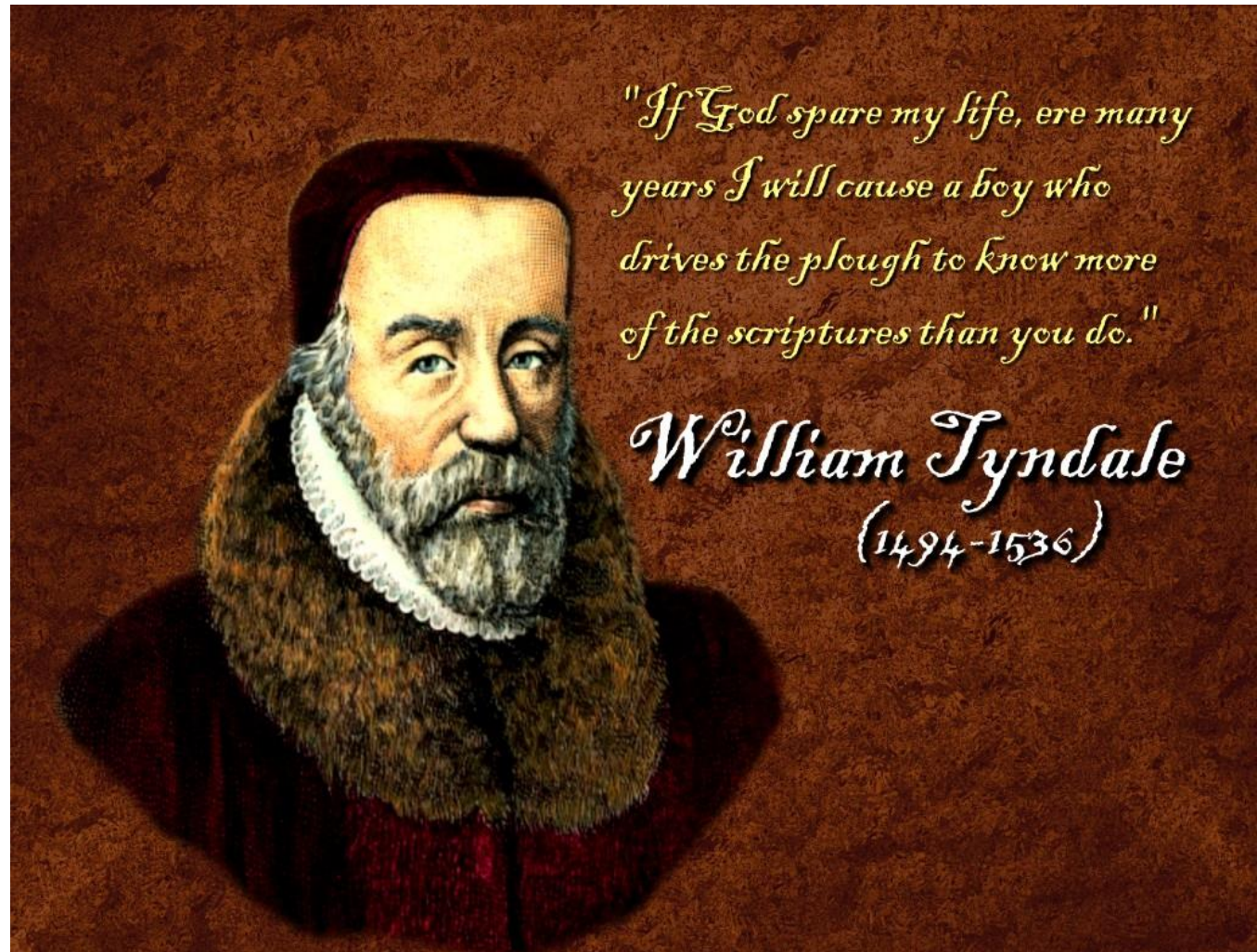
Attacks On The Word of God

- Emperor Diocletian: 300 A. D. ordered every Bible burned because he thought by destroying the Scriptures he could destroy Christianity.



Attacks On The Word of God

- Middle ages:
attempts were made to keep God's word from common man. Those caught were imprisoned, tortured, and killed.



Attacks On The Word of God

- Voltaire (1694-1778) Boastfully declared that there would not be a copy of the Bible on the face of the Earth within 100 years of his death.
- Voltaire died a terrible death. His nurse said: "For all the money in Europe I wouldn't want to see another unbeliever die! All night long he cried for forgiveness."



Attacks On The Word of God

- Thomas Paine, in “The Age of Reason” I have now gone through the Bible, as a man would go through a wood with an axe on his shoulder, and fell trees. Here they lie; and the priests, if they can, may replant them. They may, perhaps, stick them in the ground, but they will never make them grow (1795, p. 151)



Attacks On The Word of God

- Dennis Mckinsey, “The Encyclopedia of Biblical Errancy” claims Bible contains contradictions, inconsistencies, absurdities, etc...

THE
ENCYCLOPEDIA
OF
BIBLICAL
ERRANCY

C. DENNIS MCKINSEY





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1 Peter 1:22-23

- **22** Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, **23** since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; **24** for
 "All flesh is like grass
 and all its glory like the flower of grass.
The grass withers,
 and the flower falls,
25 but the word of the Lord remains forever."

The Why of Such Attacks

- Just don't like what it says.
- Anti-supernatural bias.
- The desire to cast doubt, deny and remove the influence of the Bible.
- The desire to follow one's own way rather than God's. (Jer. 6:16)
- The desire to rid oneself of accountability. (Rom. 1:28)
- Ignorance.

Principles For Answering Alleged Contradictions...

- The Presumption of Innocence Until Proven Guilty.
 - One of fundamental principles of any study or investigation.
 - The principle applies when we read historical books or documents. The Bible deserves the same treatment.
 - Simon Greenleaf:



The Presumption of Innocence Until Proven Guilty

- **Simon Greenleaf:** The Testimony of the Evangelists:
- The rule of municipal law on this subject is familiar, and applies with equal force to all ancient writings, whether documentary or otherwise; and as it comes first in order, in the prosecution of these inquiries, it may, for the sake of mere convenience, be designated as our first rule: “Every document, apparently ancient, coming from the proper repository or custody, and bearing on its face no evident marks of forgery, **the law presumes to be genuine, and devolves on the opposing party the burden of proving it to be otherwise**”

Possibilities Will Suffice...

- J.W. McGarvey commented on this point as follows:
- We are not bound to show the truth of the given hypothesis; but only that it may be true. If it is at all possible, then it is possible that no contradiction exists; if it is probable, then it is probable that no contradiction exists.... It follows, also, that when there is an appearance of contradiction between two writers, common justice requires that before we pronounce one or both of them false we should exhaust our ingenuity in searching for some probable supposition on the ground of which they may both be true. The better the general reputation of the writers, the more imperative is this obligation, lest we condemn as false those who are entitled to respectful consideration (Evidences of Christianity 1886, part 2, p. 32).

Understand What Constitutes A Real Contradiction...

- A difference does not necessarily constitute a contradiction.
- W. Stanley Jevons' *Elementary Lessons in Logic*, says:
“Nothing can both be and not be” (1928, p. 117)
- Another writer amplified this definition by suggesting that there are three areas to which this maxim is applied. He stated:
“That the same thing should at the same time both be and not be for the same person and in the same respect is impossible.”

Illustrated...

- John Brown is poor.
- John Brown is rich.
- Are these statements necessarily contradictory?
 - Is it the same John Brown?
 - Is a the time being spoken of the same in each statement?
 - Is the same kind of language being used in each instance? (Js. 2:5) the poor chosen to be rich.

Is The Same Person Or Thing Under Consideration?

- Is it the same person?
 - **1** About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. **2** He killed James the brother of John with the sword, (Acts 12:1-2)
 - After they finished speaking, James replied, "Brothers, listen to me. **14** Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for his name. **15** And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, (Matt. 13:55; Gal. 1:19)

Is The Same Person Or Thing Under Consideration?

- Is it the same thing?
 - **14** Make yourself an **ark** of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.**15** This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. **16** Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks. (Gen. 6:14-16)
 - **14** So when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan with the priests bearing the **ark** of the covenant before the people, (Josh. 3:14)

Is The Same Time Frame Under Consideration?

- **31** And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. (Gen. 1:31)
- **5** The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. **6**And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. (Gen. 6:5-6)

Are Words Used In The Same Sense?

- Abraham's only son?
 - **17**By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son (Heb. 11:7)
 - **16**And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram. (Gen. 16:16)
- Saved by works?
 - **2**For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. (Rom. 4:2)
 - **21**Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? (Js. 2:21)

Supplementation Does Not Equal Contradiction

- **How many did Jesus feed?**

- **44** And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men. (Mk. 6:44)
- **21** And they that did eat were about five thousand men, besides women and children. (Matt. 14:21)

- **Who buried the body of Jesus?**

- **59**And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, **60**And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. (Matt. 27:59-60)
- **38**And after this Joseph of Arimathaea...He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. **39**And there came also Nicodemus... **40**Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. (Jn. 19:38-40)

Consider Who Is Speaking...

- The Devil → (Gen. 2:17; Gen. 3:4)
- Job's wife → Job 2:9
- Job's friends → Job 42:7
- The unbelieving Jews → Matt. 12:24

Some Questions To Illustrate The Principles...

- How could Isaac be called “Abraham’s only son?” (Gen. 22:2)
 - Consider the qualification found in Heb. 11:17. “...his only begotten son...”
 - Only one of a kind...unique, special. He was the only one through whom the promises were to be fulfilled.
 - Consider the parallel in John 3:16.
 - Jesus is the Son of God in a very unique sense.
 - God has many sons. (Heb. 2:10)

Some Questions To Illustrate The Principles...

- Why did Saul not know who David was after he slew Goliath? He had already played the harp for him. (I Sam. 17:55)
 - Not necessarily chronological. (17:54)
 - Could have changed some in appearance.
 - Not the question that is asked. (17:25)

Some Questions To Illustrate The Principles...

- How could David be called a “man after God’s own heart” when he was such a sinner?
 - I Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22
 - The word of God does not attempt to cover the sins of David.
 - David could be touched with the truth, and sought forgiveness for his sins. (Ps. 32, 51)