

CONTRADICTIONS IN THE BIBLE EXPLAINED

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To the skeptic and the believer alike, the Bible can often appear to be packed with contradictory statements. From book to book or even chapter to chapter, there are different accounts or conflicting statements.

These skeptics maintain that the Bible is simply a historical book written by men, who naturally err in their recollections, and thus it can't be used as the basis for a system of beliefs.

Other skeptics criticize the validity of the stories themselves based on these seemingly conflicting passages. They say that not only is the Bible written solely by imperfect humans, but it's not even historically accurate and therefore shouldn't be given any more weight than a children's fairytale passed down through the ages.

It is my attempt in this book, to answer as many questions about these "so-called contradictions" as possible.

Christians believe that the Bible is the unfailing word of God. They acknowledge that yes, the books were written by humans, but they were divinely inspired by God's spirit. Therefore, nothing exists in the Bible that isn't there intentionally.

Other scholars say the contradictions have everything to do with the way the text has been translated over time; they think that the original Scriptures were the infallible ones, but words have been misapplied in translation, causing problems with consistency and also in our current understanding.

Also, differing accounts of the same story is the perspective from which they're told. Different authors might be telling different parts of the very same story, only highlighting different details.

Some point out that lack of detail in one portion of the text, or additional detail in another, doesn't negate the consistency of the Scripture, but instead adds layers of meaning and understanding to the same story.

Many people claim that the way the Gospel stories were passed down verbally to the individual Gospel writers was God-inspired, meant to show us different aspects of Jesus' life.

There are many ways to interpret the Bible and still retain the belief that it's a holy book without error.

There are also rabbinic methods of interpretations based on what they call four levels, abbreviated as PaRDeS.

PaRDeS is an acronym of the following words:

-Peshat (פְּשָׁט): meaning plain or simple.

It is used for the most obvious and simple meaning.

-Remez (רֵמֵז): meaning hints. It is used for the allegoric (hidden or symbolic) meaning beyond the literal sense.

-Derash (דְּרָשׁ): meaning inquire or seek.

It is used for the comparative (midrashic) meaning.

-Sod (סוֹד): meaning secret or mystery. It is used for the esoteric and mystical meaning, as often used in the Kabbalah.

This was the method used to write and interpret Scripture by the authors themselves as well as the audience of their time and culture.

Considering how often the ancient biblical texts had to be copied in order to safely transmit them, it is surprising that only some minor errors were introduced in the texts.

EXAMPLES OF PARDES FROM MATTHEW

Examples of the Remez, D'rash and Sud, can be found in Matthew as follows. (Of course the p'shat is throughout the text.) Without knowledge and application of the rules of PARDES, these verses would either not make sense or indicate an error on the part of the author:

Remez

Matthew 2:15 - "Out of Egypt I called my son."

This is a quote from Hosea 11:1 that Matthew is applying to Yeshua. If we stuck to a literal exegesis only and researched the quote, we would have to accuse Matthew of improperly using Scripture, as Hosea is clearly speaking of the nation of Israel, and not the Messiah. Matthew however, is hinting (a remez) at the relationship between Israel and the Messiah, in this and other verses he uses.

D'rash

Matthew 18:18 - "... Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven..." This is a verse that has been interpreted in numerous (incorrect) ways due to a lack of understanding that this is a d'rash concerning decisions one makes in their personal walk with God (called your "halakha" in Hebrew/Judaism).

Sud

Matthew 26:28 - "Then He took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them saying, Drink from it all of you, This is my blood ..." Taken literally this verse would not only be a violation of the Torah commandment against consuming blood, but along with other verses about eating Yeshua's flesh (John 6:51-56), could be grounds for accusations of cannibalism.

There is a far deeper, more mystical meaning here however, (the sud), even those who heard Him did not understand.

There are also different styles of writing such as poetic, apocalyptic, wisdom literature, historical and prophetic...

Now that we have discussed a few ways to understand scripture, let's look at some of these "contradictions" in the Bible and see if they are really contradictions, or if there is another answer...

1 Samuel 17:50 and 2 Samuel 21:19

1 Samuel 17:50 says "David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him."

2 Samuel 21:19 says "Elhanan, son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed the Goliath the Gittite, who had a spear with a shaft like a weaver's rod."

So, who killed Goliath, David or Elhanan?

1 Chronicles 20:5 says "Elhanan son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, who had a spear with a shaft like a weaver's rod."

This is the correct answer: Elhanan killed Goliath's brother. It appears 2 Samuel 21:19 had a copyist error. According to Gleason Archer's Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties on page 179, the copyist misread the word for "brother" ('-H) as the sign of the direct object ('-T) right before G-L-Y-T (Goliath). Thus, he made "Goliath" the object of "killed" (WAYYAK), instead of the "brother" of Goliath (as the Chronicle's passage does). In other words, "the brother of" and the name "Lahmi" were likely combined by a copyist to form the what is translated in English as "Beth-lehemite" in 2 Samuel 21:19.

A fair, in depth examination of the alleged difficulty shows that there actually is no contradiction at all, but only a copyist's mistake, therefore, 1 Chronicles 20:5 is the correct information. Also, in 1 Samuel 17:54, how could Goliath's head be carried to Jerusalem when it was held by the Jebusites?

When David killed Goliath and cut his head off, the city of Jerusalem was still in the hands of the Jebusites. David did not conquer the city until much later.

Actually, it does not say that Goliath's head was taken immediately to Jerusalem, so- David probably took his trophy there eventually, when he made Jerusalem the place of his throne.

Newer translations have begun adding "the brother of Goliath" to the passage in 2 Samuel 21:19.

Exodus 9:6 and Exodus 9:20

Exodus 9:6 says "So the Lord did this thing on the next day, and all the livestock of Egypt died; but of the livestock of the children of Israel, not one died."

Exodus 9:20 says "He who feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses."

So- was all the livestock dead or not? There are three possible explanations. First, it is possible that in the few days Between Exodus 9:1-7 and Exodus 9:18-21, the Egyptians acquired cattle from other sources.

Second, in Exodus 9:3, the prediction covers the livestock in the field. Therefore, it is possible that the prediction was restricted to livestock in the field and any livestock in the barns or caves would have been spared.

Third, and probably the most simple answer is that the word "all" does not mean all the livestock. In the case of Exodus 9:6, It might be best translated that "all manner of livestock of the Egyptians died." In other words, the plague included all kinds of animals. Perhaps,, the truth consists of a combination of these views, or there may be another solution which has not been addressed here. In any case, there is no contradiction.

God demonstrated He was more powerful than the gods of Egypt; showing his wrath to the Egyptians and his mercy to the Hebrews.

2 Kings 8:26 and 2 Chronicles 22:2

2 Kings 8:26 says "Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri, king of Israel."

2 Chronicles 22:2 says "Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri."

So was Ahaziah twenty two or forty two when he became king? Ahaziah's true age when he became king of Judah is easy to discern by further research. In 2 Kings 8:17, Ahaziah's father, Joram reigned at age 32. Joram was 40 when he died, showing that Ahaziah could not have been 42. So what does this mean?

One possibility is that the age of 42 in 2 Chronicles 22:2 is a reference to the beginning of the kingly reign of which Ahaziah was a part of. The second possibility is that 2 Chronicles reflects a scribal error. Hebrews did not spell out numbers, as is the case in modern texts, so it could be a copy error. The numbers given in the Hebrew text are not the numbers 42 and 22, but are written out as 2 and 40 and 2 and 20- which would seem to make a copyist error less likely.

Ahaziah's grandfather was King Jehoshaphat while his father was the Jehoram. Jehoshaphat arranged a marriage for his son Jehoram based (to some degree) on political considerations. His son married Athaliah, daughter of the Ahab, king of the northern Kingdom of Israel (also known as Samaria).

Jehoshaphat himself, married Ahab's sister, the daughter of the King Omri. Both of these marriages had catastrophic effects on the House of David. The union between the royal families of David and Omri signified that the wickedness of the latter family had entered the former – and the doom which was ultimately decreed upon it would eventually bear down upon the Davidic line as well.

God sent a prophet to anoint Jehoram's General Jehu to wipe out Ahab's family and assume the kingship himself. Jehu had Ahaziah (who was visiting Jehoram at the time) was killed as well, and Ahaziah's mother, Athaliah (daughter of Ahab) then murdered all of the heirs to the throne – except one son Joash whom his sister, Jehosheba saved and hid – and took over the reign of Judah herself.

Based on this, regarding the age of Ahaziah at the time he became king. He was actually only 22. The 42 then, refers to the number of years which had transpired between Jehoshaphat's marriage to the daughter of Omri and the start of his grandson Ahaziah's reign.

2 Kings 24:8 and 2 Chronicles 36:9

2 Kings 24:8 says "Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem."

2 Chronicles 36:9 says "Jehoiachin was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord."

So was Jehoiachin 18 or 8 when he began to reign? Jehoiachin became co-ruler over Judah with his father, Hehoiakim, at 8 years old and later became ruler in Jerusalem at 18 years old. So, both are true. His father made him the heir, in the face of a Babylonian invasion.

Proverbs 26:4 and Proverbs 26:5

Proverbs 26:4 says "Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you yourself will be just like him.'

And Proverbs 26:5 says "Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes."

So, which is it? This is what is called parallelism- and idea that builds upon itself. In verse, if we allow the fool to draw us to an argument, to act as fool, we then, become like fools. The next verse tells us that there are times when a fool must be addressed.

In this sense, answering him according to his folly means to expose the foolishness of his words and rebuke him. It means to show him truth and the light of reason for the sake of wisdom (in the place of nonsense).

In others words, it is best to let things slide, however, topics that matter must be addressed. It is important that we do not act like the fool, or we will be just like him.

So, verse 4- do not get mad, argue, yell scream, etc...
And verse 5- do address topics that matter, rebuking them.

1 Kings 4:26 and 2 Chronicles 9:25

1 Kings 4:26 says "Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen."

2 Chronicles 9:25 says "Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem."

Did Solomon have 4,000 stalls or 40,000? Some believe that The stalls mentioned in 2 Chronicles were large ones that housed 10 horses each (that is, a row of 10 stalls). Therefore, 4,000 of these large stalls would be equivalent to 40,000 small ones. Another suggestion is that the number of stalls recorded in 1 Kings was at the beginning of Solomon's reign whereas the Number recorded in 2 Chronicles was at the end of his reign. Solomon ruled for 40 years, so obviously, many changes occurred during that time.

1 Chronicles 21:1 and 2 Samuel 24:1

1 Chronicles 21:1 says "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel."

2 Samuel 24:1 says "And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah."

Was Yahweh or Satan against Israel? Anyone can be a satan. Even Yahweh. A satan is an adversary. It is not a fallen angel or cosmic being. God had been judging Israel's sin, and they had not repented. God brought a famine upon the nation for the sin of Saul's house (2 Samuel 21:1) which had just ended a year earlier. Now,, after this census, God leveled a 3 day pestilence for the sin of David. Perhaps, the 3 year famine came so that the leaders of the people would learn to recognize the judgment of God, suspect that their sins were the cause- and therefore, repent and turn to God.

A census in and of itself was not sin, but Exodus 30:12-16 Gives very specific requirements for how a census was to be conducted, and this census by David did not follow the God-given instructions. Then, we are told in 1 Chronicles 21:1, that satan provoked David to number Israel. Thus, 2 Samuel 24:1 and 1 Chronicles 21:1 agree that God/the angel of YHWH (satan) was angry and stood against Israel and incited David.

Matthew 28:1

Matthew 28:1 has caused much confusion since it starts off with "after the Sabbath." This does not support the view that days begin and end at sunset. That is a Babylonian way of keeping times which was adopted by Hebrews prior to leaving captivity. Also the phrase "first day of the week" does not support a "Sunday resurrection." This Greek phrase is "mia ton sabboton" and literally means "one of the Sabbaths." So, this was early Sabbath morning. How do we know?

Matthew 28:1 "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre." It tells us it was beginning to dawn on "one of the Sabbaths." Mark 16:2 also tells us that The women came at the rising of the sun.

Matthew 28 should correctly read: "And on the later of the Sabbaths, at the dawning on one of the Sabbaths, Mary and the other Mary came to the tomb..."

Jesus (Yeshua) died before a High Sabbath. This Sabbath was not the weekly Sabbath (Saturday). It was Unleavened Bread (which could fall on any day- and in this case, Wednesday). Matthew puts the resurrection on Sabbath morning. Period.

We know Matthew 28:1 is speaking of two Sabbaths, because "Sabbath" is plural in this verse and represents two Sabbaths.

Without going into too much detail, if the Greek phrase "first day of the week" did mean the first day of the Roman week, it would still be on a Saturday because when Rome went to a 7 day week, Saturday was the first day of their week.

1 Samuel 15:10-11 and 1 Samuel 15:29

1 Samuel 15:10-11 says "Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, I regret that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night."

1 Samuel 15:29 says And also the Strength of Israel (God) will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent."

God does not change his mind. Can he regret without repenting? To us, it may look like God changes His mind by regretting. God is not a man in that, He lies. God declares the end from the beginning, so He knows all things- and everything He says is God-breathed (including Torah) and all scripture.

Remember, God stopped Abraham from killing his son, God Said He had learned that Abraham was faithful. However, God already knew Abraham was faithful. To us, it may look like God learned something or changed His mind-but what God witnessed at that moment is what God had seen in Abraham already. In Genesis 18, God says He will go down to Sodom and Gomorrah to see if their outcry is true... and then He will know.. The word "know" appears to be metaphorical... as well as in scriptures which describes that God learns and regrets.

God's foreknowledge is important evidence that He is the one true God. When interpreting these stories not to think that our own sense of regret is identical to what God is experiencing. God did not regret making mankind or regret making Saul king in the sense that He thought He made a mistake and did not foresee how things would turn out.

Since God has foreknowledge, He would have known these outcomes in advance; yet God allowed them to happen anyway in order to achieve His sovereign purposes.

God hates sin and certainly would have preferred that the people involved did not sin. He wishes that they had made better decisions. But that does not mean that He did not know what would happen and did not factor these outcomes into His plans. For example, God knew Joseph's brothers would sin by selling Joseph into slavery, and God certainly was displeased with the brothers and would prefer that they would not act sinfully toward Joseph. Yet God allowed them to act in this way, and in the end Joseph specifically states that God allowed the brothers to do their evil because God intended to achieve a good outcome through their sinful choices.

So God truly was "sorry" (in a sense) about the way these events turned out. He did find it lamentable and perturbing how Saul chose to act as king and how humanity at the time of the flood chose to behave (just as He disapproved of the sinful actions of Joseph's brothers). But God foreknew these events and allowed these events to be part of human history in order for God to achieve His good purposes in the end. From a human point of view, we do not know the future and our "regret" is different from God's. We discover new information as we go.

God's regret is not exactly like ours. It is not based on learning new information and wishing He had done things differently. It is based on wishing we would do things differently and not sin.—He knows when people will sin and chooses to allow our sinful actions as He works out His plans.

2 Samuel 24:9 and 1 Chronicles 21:5

2 Samuel 24:9 says "And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel 800,000 valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were 500,000 men."

1 Chronicles 21:5 says "And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of Israel were a 1,100,000 men that drew sword: and Judah was 470,000 men that drew sword."

So how many men drew the sword? 1 Chronicles 21:6 says That Joab was not finished numbering , and had not yet taken a census of the tribe of Benjamin, nor that of Levi's either, due to The fact that David came under conviction about completing the census at all. Thus, the different numbers indicate the inclusion or exclusion of particular unspecified groups in the nation.

We find another reference to this in 1 Chrnicles 27:23-24 where it states that David did nt include those 20 years old and younger, and that since Joab did not finish the census, the number was not recorded in King David's Chronicle.

The producer for conducting the census had been to start with the trans-Jordanian tribes (2 Samuel 24:5) and then shift to the Northern tribe of Dan and work southward towards Jerusalem... the numbering of Benjamin, therefore, would come last.

Hebrews 7:18 and 2 Timothy 3:16

Hebrews 7:18 says "The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God."

2 Timothy 3:16 says "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness..."

So, is all scripture God-breathed and useful or is some of it useless? Hebrews 7 is not talking about God's law becoming useless and old, but more specifically, a change in the Priesthood (from men who die to an eternal Priest, Yeshua). This refers to Metatithemi: a change in state or condition. Whenever the Priesthood is altered, there is also an alteration of the law. A more accurate word would be "transfer." Whenever there is a transfer of the priesthood, There is a transfer in the law; (transfer of sacrifices, etc.. to Yeshua, our new High Priest).

Christianity teaches that Paul said in Galatians, "All who rely on observing the law are under a curse." This is not what Paul said. Anyone who knows the law, knows that it says if one lives by the Torah, they are blessed, and if they do not live by it, they are cursed. Those who are under the curse of the law are those who break the law!

The Torah is not weak or worthless. Psalms 19:7 says the Torah is perfect. It was the priesthood that was flawed. It was also corrupted by the Maccabees who took over the Priesthood after removing the God chosen Zadok Priests.

1 Corinthians 10:13 and 2 Corinthians 1:8

1 Corinthians 10:13 says "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."

2 Corinthians 1:8 says "We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself."

So, are we tempted beyond what we can endure or not? Yes, we will. In context, the topic of 1 Corinthians 10:13 is temptation and being prepared to resist it. Paul wanted us to be self disciplined. He did not want us to follow the bad example of Israel in the wilderness who gave into temptation and disobeyed God. God will allow us to endure more than we can handle, but He will never allow us to be tempted to sin beyond what we can resist.

Paul knew God would allow him to experience more hardship than he could bear. He lived it. Why does God allow us to experience trials, difficulties and grief? So we will rely on Him and not our own strength and power. When we are unable to deliver ourselves, God is able.

God does not promise to keep us from hardship or trials, but He holds his hand out for us to lean on Him. He helps limit the pressure by supplying power the power to endure and escape.

Isaiah 41:10 and Matthew 18:20

Isaiah 41:10 says "Don't be afraid, because I'm with you; don't be anxious, because I am your God. I strengthen you; I'm truly helping you. I'm surely upholding you with my victorious right hand."

Matthew 18:20 says "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Is God with us when we're alone or when we are gathered with two or three? He is with us when we are alone. Matthew 18:20 is actually about church discipline and the context is two or three church leaders gathered in the authority of God to remove someone from the church- and has nothing to do with two or three being gathered together at Bible study, or to worship, or anything like that. This is one of the verses which is most often taken and used out of context.

Matthew 7:21 and Romans 10:13

Matthew 7:21 says "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."

Romans 10:13 says "For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

In Matthew 7:21, Yeshua is speaking about the ones who consider themselves saved, yet are actually workers of lawlessness. They willingly disobey God. Romans 10:13, Paul is pleading with a different audience- the ones who are lost but willing to accept and obey God.

Matthew 1:16 and Luke 3:23

Matthew 1:16 says "and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah."

Luke 3:23 says "Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, the son of Heli..."

So, Was Joseph's father Heli or Jacob? Matthew is giving the genealogy of Joseph and Luke is giving the genealogy of Mary, Making Jacob the father of Joseph and Heli the father of Mary. Matthew 1:18-25 tells the story from Joseph's perspective while Luke 1:26-56 tells the story from Mary's point of view.

Luke is following strict Hebrew tradition in mentioning only males. Therefore, in this case, Mary is designated by her husband's name. The second line of evidence is the Jerusalem Talmud. This recognizes the genealogy to be that of Mary, referring to her as the daughter of Heli (Hagigah 2:4).

Matthew 27:9-10 and Zechariah 11:12

Matthew 27:9-10 says "Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: 'They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price set on him by the people of Israel, and they used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me.'"

Zechariah 11:12 says "I told them, 'If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it.' So they paid me thirty pieces of silver."

Matthew says that Jeremiah spoke these words yet we find the cross reference in Zechariah, not Jeremiah. Why?

Matthew was not a tax collector. His native tongue was Aramaic. Then later, it was written in Greek. The word "tax collector" in Aramaic also means "scribe." The Greek word being ' TELÓNÉS.

Matthew 13:52 says "And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'"

What is a scribe? 1. A man learned in Torah and 2. An interpreter. What Matthew did here in Chapter 27:9-10 was Write a 'Targum.' A Targum is an ancient Aramaic paraphrase or interpretation. When scripture was read aloud in the synagogue, it was translated aloud by a meturgeman, or professional interpreter (hence, the name Targum), for the Benefit of the congregation...

The translator tried to reproduce the original text as closely as possible. But since his object was an intelligible rendering of Biblical text, the Targums eventually took on the character of paraphrase and commentary, leaving literal translation behind.

Targums exist for most the books of the Hebrew Bible. They were used using different words and paragraphs together to Interpret a prophecy. This is what Matthew did. He combined Jeremiah 18:1-4 and Jeremiah 19:1-3 with Zechariah's prophecy which explains why the judgments were coming upon Jerusalem. He strung it all together and called it Jeremiah's prophecy. This is why he said it was spoken by Jeremiah and quoted the book of Zechariah, calling it Jeremiah's prophecy.

Is Abraham's Bosom Purgatory?

In Luke 16, Jesus (Yeshua in Hebrew) tells the parable about Abraham's bosom. Many people erroneously believe Yeshua was trying to teach about the afterlife. However, what Yeshua Taught with this parable had nothing to do with Heaven, Hell or purgatory. He was not even teaching that Abraham's bosom was a real place.

Since the scribes and Pharisees were constantly looking for a reason to put Yeshua to death, Yeshua often veiled the truth in a story called a parable. He told a series of parables given in opposition to the prosperity message of the Pharisees, who equated wealth and health with God's favor.

The parable starts with the rich man clothed in purple and linen living in luxury. The rich man represents the Pharisees. The rich man lived a life of luxury and wealth and was fully fed-just as the Pharisees who assumed they had God's favor.

Lazarus was waiting on the crumbs from the rich man's table. This was the state of the poor, the sick and the widows at the time of Yeshua's ministry, who did not find favor in the eyes of the Pharisees and religious leaders.

The Greek name "Lazarus" comes from the Hebrew name "Eleazar" and means "God has helped." A transition occurs in the parable with the death of Lazarus and the rich man. Lazarus being in paradise represented God's favor while the rich man's suffering represented distance from God's favor, (Lazarus received the favor of God and became an heir of Abraham and to the promise).

In Galatians 3:16, Paul links believers in Christ to being part of the Abrahamic covenant: "If you belong to Christ, you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise..."

A great gulf appears between the rich man and Lazarus. This represents the great gap between the Pharisees and those they looked down on...

Lazarus was not able to comfort the rich man with water, (which represents truth). The Jewish leaders had not listened to Yeshua nor the Law of prophets. So, the raising of Lazarus would not even be able to help the rich man's 5 brothers.

A bosom represents a part of the body where things that are precious are held. Isaiah tells us that the savior will carry the lambs in his bosom.

This indicates a close personal relationship of love. John 1:18 says that Yeshua was in the bosom of the Father, indicating the close personal relationship between the Father and Yeshua.

This also, relates to the second temple period practice of going to the parties of the Pharisees, and reclining and eating in proximity to other guests. These guests laid on the chest of the host and were said to lie in the bosom of Abraham. Each guest leaned on his left elbow so as to leave his right arm at liberty, and as two or more lay on the same couch, the head of one man was near the breast of the man who lay behind, and he was therefore, said to "lie in the bosom" of the other.

Yeshua was not teaching anything about a place between heaven and hell- and he was not saying that the Jews had been replaced by the church (because the Jews rejected him). The truth is that ALL of mankind rejected him.

The Pharisees were constantly boasting about Abraham being their Father, yet in this story, the poor and lowly servant, who was not a son of Abraham, was welcomed by Abraham into his bosom. Yeshua was not trying to teach about death at all, but he was making a bold statement about rich people who refuse to help those in need. This parable was an extreme, Exaggeration used to illustrate his point about wealth. It was not given to build a doctrine about death or purgatory.

The message of this parable is that beggars will receive mercy, while the selfish receive judgment. The righteous are not literally in Abraham's bosom, but they are figuratively, in a place of favor, while the Pharisees who think they have God's favor, are not in Abraham's bosom (and not in God's favor).

2 Chronicles 26:1 and Matthew 1:8

2 Chronicles 26:1 says "Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah."

Matthew 1:8 says "And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Uzziah."

Who was Uzziah's father? Amaziah was the immediate father of Uzziah (also called Azariah). Although, no Hebrew manuscripts of Matthew's gospel exist today, it is clear that he was a Jew writing from a Hebrew perspective and therefore, completely at home with the Hebrew concept of son-ship.

The line goes Joram/Jehoram-Ahaziah-Joash-Amaziah- and Uzziah. Matthew's telescoping of Joseph's genealogy is quite acceptable, as his purpose is simply to show the route of descent. Yeshua is referred to in Matthew 1:1 as the son of David, the son of Abraham. Both the genealogies trace Yeshua's ancestry through both these men, illustrating the usage of 'Son-Ship.' This is how the route of Uzziah's genealogy is done as well... traced through two men.

James 1:13 and Mark 1:13

James 1:13 says "When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone."

Mark 1:13 says "and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him."

Can God be tempted and does he tempt men? The Bible clearly teaches that God does indeed test His children; it's how He grows us through the power of the Holy Spirit. When Yeshua was tempted it was by a human adversary (satan). There were certain Pharisees whose job it was to test candidates for being messiah. These scribes and Pharisees tested Yeshua at least 9 times previously.

It was after he had fasted 40 days and 40 nights that he was tested. This was when the tempter came to him... One of the Rabbinic tests for messiah was turning stone to bread. Then, they took Yeshua up to the pinnacle of the holy city. They said "If you are the son of God, cast yourself down"- this was another Rabbinic test for the messiah. Next, Yeshua was shown all the kingdoms of the world... the Pharisees had a great empire and they offered to share it with Yeshua if we would join them. He could then, be as great as they were. They asked Yeshua to come on board with their ideas and philosophies... to join them and become a great leader in their empire...

Yeshua then says "Satan, get behind me" just as he said to Peter. He called Peter a satan because he was acting for the things of man rather than the things of God... this is what an adversary is. This is what a satan is. Satan is a man who is for the things of man. After Yeshua went into the wilderness to contemplate and fast, he was then, tested by the Pharisees and scribes...Not a cosmic being or a fallen angel.

Does God test people? Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you..." The word Greek word "peirasmos" πειρασμος has two meanings, testing and tempting. So, one must decide the actual meaning in context. God does not tempt the believer to sin, but He does test the believer as he grows.

God may tempt you but you do not have to be tempted. Temptations are all about us constantly, but you are not tempted unless you allow your lust to be enticed by them. God may test, and does, to see if you will be faithful and not be tempted. It appears as though God is tempting or testing Job. Job never blames a "satan" for his trouble. He says, "the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away." In Job 7:20, he asks God why he (God) has made him (Job) a target. God may test us but that doesn't mean we have to sin. God cannot be tempted to sin, but we put him to the test when we sin. In other words, there is no chance that Jesus, who is perfect, would ever give into temptation. The reason the person is subjectively tempted, is attributed to "his own lust," which lust is elsewhere said to be caused by indwelling Sin.

Matthew 27:5 and Acts 1:18

Matthew 27:5 says "So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself."

Acts 1:18 says "With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out."

So, how did Judas die? Both of these statements are true. According to tradition, Judas hanged himself on the edge of a cliff above the valley of Hinnom. Eventually, the rope snapped, was cut or untied- and Judas' body fell to the valley below as Luke described. Let me explain further:

Concerning the field, the Jews bought the field in Judas' name, and was given to him for the betrayal of Christ. The Jews could not use the money that Judas threw at them since it was blood money. This is why it said Judas acquired the field.

Matthew 27:5-6 says the chief priests used the betrayal money that Judas threw on the temple floor to purchase the potter's field, critics contend that a contradiction exists because Acts 1:18 indicates that Judas purchased the field with the blood money. Obviously, Judas could not have purchased the field because he gave the 30 pieces of silver back to the priests before hanging himself. Thus, to say that Judas bought the potter's field is incorrect...right? Wrong!

Acts 1:18 simply informs us that Judas furnished the means of purchasing the field. One is not forced to conclude that Judas personally bought the potter's field.

As in modern-day writings and speeches, it is very common for the Scriptures to represent a man as doing a thing when, in fact, he merely supplies the means for doing it. For example, Joseph spoke of his brothers as selling him into Egypt, when actually they sold him to the Ishmaelites (who then sold him into Egypt). Whether one says that Judas “purchased a field with the wages of iniquity” (Acts 1:18), or that the chief priests “bought with them the potter’s field” (Matthew 27:7), he has stated the same truth, only in different ways.

Judas had sold Jesus for the price of a slave (Exodus 21:32). In desperation, he threw the money on the temple floor and left. The Law would not permit the use of this kind of tainted money for temple purposes (Deuteronomy 23:18).

The leaders were careful to observe the Law even while they were guilty of breaking it. They used the money to buy a "potter's field" where Jewish strangers who died could be buried properly. Judas did not buy the field personally, but since it was his money that paid for it, in that sense, he was the buyer.

And, since the thirty pieces of silver were considered "blood money," the field was called "the field of blood" (Matthew 27:8). It was not Judas' blood that gave the field its name, for the Jews would not use as a sacred cemetery a place that had been defiled by a suicide. Judas hanged himself, and apparently the rope broke and his body (possibly already distended) burst open when it hit the ground.

Mark 15:32 and Luke 23:41

Mark 15:32 says "Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe.' Those who were crucified with him also reviled him."

Luke 23:41 says "And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."

Did the men crucified with Christ revile him or support him, In that, he did nothing wrong?

The Romans were crucifying more than just three people. Those crucified around him reviled him, except for the one thief who either always supported him- or may have started out reviling him, then, changing his mind later.

Exodus 30:6 and Hebrews 9:3-4

Exodus 30:6 says "And thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee."

Hebrews 9:3-4 says "And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant..."

Where was the altar of incense located? Why in Hebrews 9:3-4 is the altar of incense (ἄψευον Εὐοῖα Οὐπταζῖπτοῖ) of the Hebrew sanctuary is placed in the "Most Holy Place" or "Holy of Holies" rather than in the "Holy Place," whose lampstand and table of showbread are mentioned in verse 2. The Holy Place is the location assigned to the altar of incense of Exodus, which specifies that Moses should place it "before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with you" (Exodus 30:6).

This positioning of the altar of incense is further attested by the fact that incense was offered on it daily, whereas the Most Holy apartment of the sanctuary was entered only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, by the high priest alone.

What solutions have been proposed for the apparent discrepancy between Hebrews 9:3-4 and other biblical and historical data of the kind that we have noted above? Perhaps some of the earliest attempts to grapple with this problem are evidenced in the textual emendation represented in the fourth century Codex Vaticanus, wherein the reference to the golden altar of incense is transferred from Hebrews 9:4 to Hebrews 9:2, thus placing it with the objects described as belonging in the Holy Place. The best textual evidence is against this variation, which consequently must be viewed as merely a scribe's attempt to correct the text.

Another solution reaching back to ancient times-and also represented throughout the Christian centuries-is that the term "Βυπτανῖπτοῖ" in Hebrews 9:4 should be rendered as "censer" rather than "altar."

Indeed, "censer" is a legitimate alternative to "altar" as a translation of Ouptazfiptov. But should it be so rendered in Hebrews 9:4? On the strength of similar "frequent earlier and contemporary enumerations of the holy vessels," R. H. Charles feels that Ouptazfiptov in Hebrews 9:3-4 "should be taken . . . in its meaning of 'altar of incense,' and not in that of 'censer'." The majority of translators, commentators, and exegetes obviously have evidenced the same view.

Some commentaries suggest that Hebrews 9:3-4 is simply in error concerning the location of the altar of incense. However, in contrast to this view, certain exegetes have suggested another solution: namely, that the statement in Hebrews 9:3-4 locates the altar on the basis of function rather than specific spatial position.

It was by divine direction that it stood "before" (i.e., to the east of) the Veil, and "before" the Mercy-seat. The reason for this departure from absolute correctness of position is that incense of sweet spices was to be burnt upon this altar every morning and every evening at the time of the offering of the daily burnt sacrifices. Had it stood in its proper place, within the second veil, the Holy of Holies would require to be entered twice daily, instead of once yearly. To guard the sanctity of the Most Holy place from too frequent intrusion by man, the incense-altar was placed "without the veil," means being taken that the smoke of the incense. . . should find its way into the inner shrine, the more immediate dwelling place of Yahweh.

It should be pointed out that the OT itself also mentions the altar of incense in close connection with the Holy of Holies.

First, we may note two references in Exodus 30:6: "And you shall put it before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with you."

Exodus 40:5: "Moreover, you shall set the gold altar of incense before the ark of the testimony, and set up the veil for the doorway to the tabernacle."

In these two texts, specific orders are given regarding the location of the altar of incense within the sanctuary. It is most significant that the location of this altar is given, not in conjunction with the Holy Place or its furnishings, but rather in connection with the Holy of Holies and its articles.

Moreover, an event reference is also given for the altar of incense: "Before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with you." This would seem to imply that the altar of incense is very closely related to the Most Holy Place and to the communication with God spoken of in connection with that inner room.

Another pertinent OT reference appears in 1 Kings 6:19-22, in the description of the construction of Solomon's temple: "The inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high, and he overlaid it with pure gold. He also made an altar of cedar. And Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with pure gold, and he drew chains of gold across, in front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold. And he overlaid the whole house with gold, until all the house was finished. Also the whole altar that belonged to the inner sanctuary he overlaid with gold."

Here both the ark of the covenant and the altar of incense are described in conjunction with the Most Holy Place; and indeed, that altar is also referred to as belonging to the inner sanctuary. Perhaps, the most significant reason why the altar of incense is placed in the Most Holy Place in Hebrews 9:3-4 is that the ministry of the incense of this altar was singularly on behalf of that inner shrine. The smoke of the incense of this altar found its way into the inner shrine, into the presence of Yahweh. Perhaps, the "Altar of incense bore the same relation to the Holy of Holies as the Altar of burnt offering to the Holy Place. It furnished in some sense the means of approach to it." There is a further feature that deserves particular attention in this connection: namely, the fact that the very kind of incense burned upon this altar connected the altar even more closely to the Holy of Holies. It was a special, "inner," incense-distinguished in both its use and composition from the ordinary, "outer," incense. It was burned only in the interior of the sanctuary/temple, whereas the "outer" incense was used in censers in the courtyard ritual.

In fact, only once a year was this "inner" incense burned in a censer; namely, on the Day of Atonement, when the high priest carried it into the Most Holy Place. This incense was indeed "a special kind of incense set apart for the interior of the temple, and for there alone."

The difference is one of ingredients. The incense of the court is always mentioned without any additional epithet, whereas that of the tabernacle is punctiliously referred to as "the incense of sammin." It is so called because, in addition to frankincense, it has three other ingredients, which are the sammim, "spices" (Exodus 30:34-8)-something that is not usual in ordinary incense.

Moreover, because of the special ritual character of this "inner" incense, it is stated that the frankincense added to it must be "pure" -a requirement which is not mentioned in the case of the frankincense added to the ordinary grain-offerings. This incense has two main ingredients.

The first are sammim, which perhaps are not exactly spices, but substances of another kind which serve to improve the mixture of spices when added to it.

The second ingredient is pure frankincense, the same spice which was added to the memorial portions of the grain-offerings. It is only in connection with this incense and with the shewbread, both of which belong inside the tabernacle, that the priestly regulations emphasize that the frankincense must be "pure."

The inclusion of such large quantities of sammim in incense was, at any rate, something exceptional. That is why this incense is associated with them and designated by the conjoint form "the incense of sammim," to distinguish it from the censer-incense, that is, ordinary incense. The fact is that in virtually every reference to the "inner" incense it is punctiliously described as "the incense of sammim."

Just as the incense of sammim must not be put outside the tabernacle. . . , so "strange incense," may not be offered on the altar of gold. . . . In one place the altar of gold is actually given the full epithet of "the altar of the incense of sammim..." (Leviticus 4:7)

The only incense the high priest carried with him into the debir during the Day of Atonement was sammim incense-the exclusive incense of the golden incense altar.

The cloud rising from it would cover the mercy seat, where-upon was manifested the presence of Yahweh; and thus the high priest would be shielded from God's presence and not die.

Accordingly, sammim incense served, then, not only as "inner" incense of the sanctuary, but as verily "innermost" incense by reaching the very presence of God.

Thus, in conclusion, the ritualistic importance and theological significance of the altar of incense in the sanctuary of ancient Israel were derived, not merely from its location in the Holy Place, but also and perhaps more importantly-from the ministry of its incense in the Most Holy Place.

Thus, the description in Hebrews 9:3-4, rather than showing ignorance of the Hebrew ritual, would appear to indicate familiarity and knowledge of that ritual's most minute particulars and subtle meanings.

That is to say, these seemingly problematical verses do not reveal either a textual corruption or any inconsistency or error on the part of an uninformed author, but suggest instead a precise theological interpretation of the function of the altar of incense in the sanctuary services.

This fact becomes even clearer when one remembers the context of the passage in question. The concern there is a spiritual and theological one, expressing the divine reality of Christ's work as High Priest in "the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands" (Hebrews 9:11).

Therefore, it is understandable that even when the earthly sanctuary is described in Hebrews 9:3-4, the emphasis is more in terms of deeper theological meanings, functions, and relationships than on merely the formal structural arrangements.

In short, when the Holy of Holies is described in that passage, the golden altar of incense is mentioned because of the sacral, ritualistic, and intercessory significance of the special incense ascending into the presence of Yahweh enthroned upon His mercy seat.

1 Kings 8:9 and Hebrews 9:4

1 Kings 8:9 says "There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt."

Hebrews 9:4 says "Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant..."

What was in the Ark of the Covenant?

In Hebrews 9:4 we read regarding the ark of the covenant or Testimony, that “in [it] were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant...” However, in 1 Kings 8:9, we read: “There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone which Moses put there at Horeb...” Several explanations are possible which would shed light on these passages, without attempting to create a contradiction.

Some refer to Exodus 16:32-34, saying that a pot with an omer of manna was laid up before the Testimony or the ark of the covenant, and they also refer to Numbers 17:10, stating that Aaron’s rod was placed before the Testimony. In addition, they point at Deuteronomy 31:26, which says that the Book of the Law was to be put “beside” the ark of the covenant (the Authorized Version says, “in the side of”). The explanation goes on to say that the Book of the Law, as well as the manna and Aaron’s rod, were not “in” the ark of the covenant, but “before” or “beside” it.

In that context, Hebrews 9:4 is understood as not stating that the manna and Aaron’s rod were “in” the ark of the covenant or Testimony. It is pointed out that the Greek word for “in” in Hebrews 9:4 literally means, “at which place,” describing the “same location.” The conclusion is that the manna and Aaron’s rod, as well as the Book of the Law of Moses, were kept before or by the side of the ark of the covenant; they were in the same location or the same place as the ark, but they were not in it.

There is also another way of understanding the passages in question. While concluding that the manna and Aaron's rod were not in the ark, the Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary discusses the following two possibilities: In 1Kings 8:9; 2 Chronicles 5:10, it is said there was nothing in the ark of Solomon's temple save the two stone tables of the law put in by Moses. But the expression that there was nothing THEN therein save the two tables, leaves the inference to be drawn that formerly there were the other things mentioned by the Rabbis and by Paul here, the pot of manna (the memorial of God's providential care of Israel) and the rod of Aaron, the memorial of the lawful priesthood (Numbers 17:3, 5, 7, 10).

The expressions 'before the Lord' (Exodus 16:32), and 'before the testimony' (Numbers 17:10) thus mean, 'IN the ark.' 'In,' however, may be used here (as the corresponding Hebrew word) as to things attached to the ark as appendages, as the book of the law was put 'in the side of the ark,' and so the golden jewels offered by the Philistines.

Others follow the rabbinical tradition that the pot of manna and the rod were inside the ark. The commentary of Barnes' Notes on the Bible writes regarding Hebrews 9:4: "In 1 Kings 8:9, it is said that there was nothing in the ark, 'save the two tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb,' and it has been supposed by some that the pot of manna and the rod of Aaron were not in the ark, but that they were in capsules, or ledges made on its sides for their safe keeping, and that this should be rendered 'by the ark.'

But the apostle uses the same language respecting the pot of manna and the rod of Aaron which he does about the two tables of stone, and as they were certainly in the ark, the fair construction here is that the pot of manna and the rod of Aaron were in it also.

The account in Exodus 16:32-34; Numbers 17:10, is, that they were laid up in the most holy place, 'before the testimony,' and there is no improbability whatever in the supposition that they were in the ark. Indeed, that would be the most safe place to keep them, as the tabernacle was often taken down and removed from place to place.

It is clear from the passage in 1 Kings 8:9, that they were not in the ark in the temple, but there is no improbability in the supposition that before the temple was built they might have been removed from the ark and lost. When the ark was carried from place to place, or during its captivity by the Philistines, it is probable that they were lost, as we never hear of them afterward.

It is entirely possible that the pot with manna and Aaron's rod were "near" or "beside" the ark of the covenant, but not in it, while it is also conceivable that they were in the ark at one time, but that they were subsequently removed, so that only the tables of stone were in the ark at the time when Solomon's Temple was dedicated. In neither case would there be a contradiction between Hebrews 9:4 and 1 Kings 8:9.

Whatever the correct explanation, it is true that even in technical details, the Bible does not contradict itself, but we are called upon to search the Scriptures and divide the word.

Acts 9:7 and Acts 22:9

Two descriptions of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus—in the same book—do not agree! How can we understand this apparent Bible contradiction?

Acts 9 tells us that on the road to Damascus, Paul was stopped in his tracks—literally! Jesus apparently subdued Paul and his associates by using a brilliant light. Hearing a voice from heaven, along with the powerful light blast, an astonished Paul perceived someone saying, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”

Jesus then identified Himself, rebuking the up-to-then arrogant Paul, telling the man that by persecuting Church members, Paul had been persecuting Jesus personally!

Humbly, Paul asked what Jesus wanted him to do, and Jesus gave Paul specific instructions. Now we are at the point of the Bible contradiction—or the seeming contradiction.

At this point, the record says, “And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one” (verse 7, emphasis added throughout).

Now, fast-forward many years. Paul has been converted and become a powerful apostle in the Church. The tides were turned when a mob in Jerusalem seized Paul on a false rumor about his faith in the true God.

They were in the same murderous mood he once felt when persecuting believers. Only the last-minute intervention by soldiers assigned to the temple spared Paul from the mob's intentions. But then Paul asked to address the crowd.

This is found in Acts 22. In telling the story of how he came to believe in this way, he recounted the voice from heaven on the road to Damascus. Only he appears to have changed the details. He said, “And those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me” (Acts 22:9).

Jesus said, “the Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35), meaning there are no loose threads, which, if pulled, rip to pieces the authority of the Bible.

Luke is the sole author of Acts. He wrote in Acts 9:7 about Paul’s partners in crime “hearing a voice”—the voice from heaven. Luke later wrote in chapter 22:9 that those with Paul “did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me.”

Do these two accounts of Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus present a Bible contradiction? Let’s take a closer look to see:

The Greek word for “hear” in both Acts 9:7 and Acts 22:9 is akouo. It is the usual word meaning “to hear.” And the same word is used for “voice” in both verses, phone.

The same resource defines it as “a sound” and explains it can be used of the voice of God, humans and even things like the wind. Therefore, researching the original language doesn’t always immediately resolve the seeming Bible contradiction.

Did Paul’s associates hear the voice from heaven? Did they understand the words Jesus spoke to Paul?

In “Acts 9:7, ‘hearing the voice,’ the noun ‘voice’ is in the partitive genitive case [i.e., hearing (something) of], whereas Acts 22:9, ‘they heard not the voice,’ the construction is with the accusative. This removes the idea of any contradiction. The former indicates a ‘hearing’ of the sound, the latter indicates the meaning or message of the voice (this they did not hear).”

But you don’t have to be an expert in Greek grammar to solve the mystery of the apparent contradiction. Do you know what the best interpreter of the Bible is? The Bible itself! We should allow the context to help us determine the meaning. It is unmistakably plain that Paul heard and understood the words, because he responded and acted upon the words.

The solution to the apparent contradiction comes from Paul. He said the people with him “did not hear the voice” that spoke to him. The only way for the two accounts to make sense is that the associates heard only a sound, while Paul heard distinct words.

“They heard a voice, but saw no man; they heard Paul speak, but saw not him to whom he spoke, nor heard distinctly what was said to him: which reconciles it with what is said of this matter, Act 22:9, where it is said, They saw the light and were afraid (which they might do and yet see no man in the light, as Paul did), and that they heard not the voice of him that spoke to Paul, so as to understand what he said, though they did hear a confused noise.”

The men who had accompanied Paul heard the sound but could not understand the words that were being spoken to Paul.

Some might argue that this apparent contradiction shows the book of Acts might not be genuine. To the contrary, writes A. Robertson in Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament, "It is one of the evidences of the genuineness of this report of Paul's speech that Luke did not try to smooth out apparent discrepancies in details between the words of Paul and his own record already in chapter 9."

If Acts was not genuinely inspired, someone attempting to pass it off as such would have attempted to make the distinction plainer by choosing different words.

Not fearing any contradiction, Luke used the same words, knowing that the reader would realize what sense the author meant by the words in each context by comparing the accounts.

"Mystery" solved! There is no Bible contradiction between Acts 9 and Acts 22 in the descriptions of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus.

Mark 2:26

Mark 2:26 says "In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions."

Was Abiathar the High Priest at the time David ate the shewbread? When David ate the shewbread, Abiathar's father, Ahimelech, was serving as High Priest. There are many who believe this to be an error based on Mark saying Abiathar was literally serving as High Priest during the event with David.

Mark says "In the days of Abiathar the high priest" which does not imply he was the High Priest at the time but rather is simply referring to "the days of Abiathar."

Mark does not say "while Abiathar was serving as High Priest." Abiathar was both alive and present at this time and would very shortly assume the role of High Priest. All that the text is saying is that this episode happened in the time of one named Abiathar- who, as a matter of fact, at one time, was a High Priest.

Also, concerning David eating the shewbread... it was not lawful. Jesus (Yeshua) confirms this by asking, "Have you never read how David and his companions ate the consecrated bread, which was not lawful for them to do." It was lawful only for priests for eat the showbread per Biblical Law.

The week old bread belonged to the High Priest and his descendants (Leviticus 24:9) so, David essentially stole it. What the disciples were doing was permissible under the law, and was only unlawful in the eyes of the Pharisees who were going by their tradition or oral law of how to observe Sabbath. The Pharisees were not going by Torah, but by tradition.

The Pharisees held David in high regard, however, he did what was unlawful as well. But, Yeshua and his disciples did not break Sabbath.

Matthew 5:22 and Luke 12:20

Matthew 5:22 says "But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.

Luke 12:20 says "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?"

Are we allowed to call others fools or not? In the OT, the word fool is apparently used to describe atheists: The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." The Psalm is not referring to atheists as we think of them (the modern atheist would be unheard of in the ancient world), but of moral reprobates.

This is not an insult or a slur; it is an accurate description of the state of his mind, since the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom...

When Yeshua says not to call someone fool on the Sermon on the Mount, He is teaching on anger and control of the tongue, Not barring the use of a particular word in the language.

It should be noted that Yeshua is warning us not to call particular people 'nabal'... In Hebrew, nabal has more to do with consistently making bad moral choices.

Both Psalm 14 and 53 use the word nabal <05036> which can be translated: foolish, senseless, fool... It comes from 'nabel' <05034>, which has a literal meaning of: to wilt; generally, to fall away, fail, faint... Perhaps the idea is that such a person is corrupt or morally weak.

Matthew 5:22 seems to be speaking of a person with an empty head. It seems that Yeshua was not making a reference to Psalm 14 and 53, but using a word that would have been an insult that he and his listeners would have been familiar with.

The Sanhedrin were the council or group of Priests. They held courts, judged, etc. They put Yeshua on trial. It was a very tumultuous time politically. The Jews were under Roman rule. The Sanhedrin would be trying to keep a lid on things. Christ had a huge following and was called King, Messiah, and taught about God. He had been a target for some time. Raca was a kind of put down, meaning proud , vain, worthless. So, I guess its use as an insult made the insulter answerable to the Sanhedrin.

Even Paul refers to some people as foolish... Notice what Matthew 5:22 says, and what it doesn't say. It does not say It is always wrong to call people fools.

It says that whoever says 'Thou fool will be in danger of hellfire.' Saying 'Thou fool' can get you arrested and charged and put on trial in a court where the penalty is hellfire.

But that doesn't mean you will be convicted. If you were speaking the truth, you will be exonerated. But one should be very, very careful that one is indeed speaking the truth, and since calling someone a fool tends to involve a judgment of his moral and intellectual faculties, the best course of action -- unless one has some special insight, as Yeshua did -- is to decline to take such a risk.

Calling someone foolish is not what Yeshua is describing in Matthew 5:22 "Exclaiming You fool!" is confrontational; informing a person that he is acting like a fool, or that he is foolishly laboring under false perceptions, in the process of illuminating and instructing him, is not the same thing.

There's also a difference between calling someone You fool! and referring to a group of people, distanced by time and space, as foolish. Also, in 1 Corinthians 15:36, an examination of 15:35 will show that the person to whom Paul says 'Thou fool' is a rhetorical construct, not a real individual.

Romans 3:23 and 1 John 5:18

Romans 3:23 says "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." While 1 John 5:18 says "We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them."

Do all men sin or not? It is true that all men sin. The Bible does not say that the men who are "blameless" such as Noah and David, etc... do not sin. It says they are blameless. This is because God's people have grace- which means they may still sin, but because they have grace, they can still be blameless.

All men do sin, but once one comes to God, they are no longer sinners, nor are they to continue in sin (which is transgression of the law -1 John 3:4).

Just as Paul says, when a Gentile grafts into Israel, they are no longer Gentiles (nor are they Christian Gentiles), they are Israel (by adoption). They are Hebrews (meaning ones who have crossed over).

Many use the verse "all have sinned" and apply it to fellow believers. At one time, that believer was indeed, a sinner. However, they are to no longer be called sinners, nor act like sinners once they are "saved" or in covenant with God.

But, those who are natural branches (Jews) and those who graft in continue in sin and prove themselves sinners, they can lose their place in Christ... God cuts off those branches who do not produce fruit. 'Fruit' means works. If ones faith does not bring forth works, it is not saving faith. There is no such thing as 'once saved, always saved.'

Matthew 28:8 and Mark 16:8

Matthew 28:8 says that women fled the tomb of Yeshua and told the disciples while Mark 16:8 says the women fled the tomb and told nobody. So, which is correct?

I've read that the women might have been too afraid to speak at first but a little later told the disciples. However, my impression from Matthew is that they left the tomb with joy and were headed straight to tell the disciples.

Each of the four gospel writers gives a slightly different version of the events of that morning. Putting a detailed timeline to that day might clear up most apparent discrepancies, but may raise additional questions. Matthew and John were directly part of that story, as disciples. Mark and Luke were not. They got their information from others, both the disciples whom they knew personally, and probably also from the women.

Each of the authors had slightly different aims, and audiences, in mind when they wrote their narratives. Different details would have been included or excluded from the stories. Put yourself in their context: writing a gospel at the time was no doubt a much more time consuming exercise than writing a history of the same length today ... it was all done by hand, with no word processing capabilities of editing, spell checking, moving paragraphs around here and there, sending early editions out to be checked by people quoted, etc.

None of them tried to provide a “full and detailed” report. None of them were writing “reports” at all - rather they were telling the narrative of Jesus life and work.

So, Mark 16:8 says the women said nothing. However, if you read a little further (verse 10) you will notice that Mary did go and tell the disciples. There are other “discrepancies” that you could also find: Mark says that Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene first; Matthew says that when the women were running to the disciples, Jesus met them and they worshipped him. Perhaps both are correct.

Maybe there were more to-ings and fro-ings involved than any of the authors provide. Perhaps the three women went to the tomb together, but after seeing what had happened, they split up, with two running off immediately, while Mary Magdalene waited, looking in the tomb again, was told Jesus was raised, still doubted and asked the “gardner” if he knew where “they” had taken the body. Upon which Jesus said “Mary!” and so on. Perhaps He also met the other two on their way.

John mentions only Mary Magdalene. She got all the way back to Peter and told him that the stone was taken away, the body gone, and she didn’t know where they had moved the body to. Perhaps she went three times, once alone, the second time with the other Mary and Salome, the third time with Peter and John, after which she met the gardener, as related in John. And ran back to the disciples again, with the news that she had met Jesus.

Maybe all these details were not the main point that any of the writers wanted to include, because they would detract from the main point they were making. Ultimately, for those who are concerned about the differences, the question would be ... so what? or rather ... do any of these (to us) discrepancies in any way alter the fact of the resurrection?

One could say, rather, it reinforces it - it illustrates very clearly (at least in my mind) how bewildered and shaken they all were that day.

1 John 4:12 and Exodus 33:11

1 John 4:12 says "No one has seen God" while Exodus 33:11 says Moses talked to God "face to face." First, talking to someone face to face is an idiomatic phrase which means simply understood to mean "intimately." Moses spoke with God familiarly, as a man speaks to a friend.

In Exodus 33:20 it clearly states "But my face you cannot see, because a human being cannot look at me and remain alive." The Hebrew word for face is PANIYM. Now, depending on the context, this word can actually have two meanings. It can literally mean "face" or it can mean "presence" as in God's Spirit was nearby as opposed to be being far away.

If the Scripture is true and cannot contradict itself, I have to go with the interpretation that in verse 11 "face-to-face" means that Moses was intimately communicating with God's presence.

To the Israelites, from their vantage point, in front of their tents, Moses conversing with the pillar of cloud is speaking to God as a man speaks to his fellow.

Exodus 20:8 and Romans 14:5

Exodus 20:8 says "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." And Romans 14:5 says "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

A lot o people think Romans 14 is about Sabbath. Romans 14 Never mentions the Sabbath. It is referring to fasting days in Judaism. Here, Paul is addressing the traditional fast days. Some of the faithful observed them all and others only observed ones they felt like keeping.

In Judaism, there are four fasts:

1. The fast of Gedaliah,
2. The 10th of Tevet,
3. The 17th day of the 4th month, and
4. the 9th of Av.

Now, these fast days are not a commandment but rather, a tradition. Since some of the prophets had started keeping the traditional fasts, and the Jews kept them as law, many were bothered by their conscience to observe them all while others did not feel obligated.

Romans 14:10 "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." In verse 10, the subject is meats sacrificed to idols.

In Romans 14:14-23 and 1 Corinthians 8:4-13, Paul teaches that eating food which has been sacrificed to an idol is not wrong in and of itself; However, it is better to be avoided if the person eating it is weak and by doing so, it may cause them to sin.

While eating food sacrificed to idols is not wrong, idol worship is. Since most of the new converts had come out of idol worship and paganism, they may be tempted to sin if eating food that was sacrificed to an idol. Some worried that the meat they were buying at the market came from questionable sources or had been sacrificed to idols, but since each believer was accountable to God, whether he ate meat that was sacrifice to idols or not, it was between him and God. It was not for anyone else to judge.

Romans 14:13 "Let us not therefore judge one another anymore: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."

Believers had an obligation to judge sin based on God's standard in His word. Therefore, Paul again was not talking about actions prohibited by God's Torah, but other actions, like the eating of meat sacrificed to idols or fast days. The Jerusalem council in Acts 15 had determined a list of four purity related prohibitions that would allow the new Gentile believers to participate in the local body of Yeshua. One of those prohibitions in Acts was the abstaining from meats that had been offered to idols.

Paul, attempting to solve the practical problem of dealing with meats of unknown origin, advised the believers in 1 Corinthians 8 that the eating of unknown meats was perfectly acceptable, unless it would cause another believer to stumble.

Romans 14:14 "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

Here, Paul was making the same point he had made earlier To the Corinthians: just because meat that was otherwise lawful to eat may have been associated with idol worship did Not mean that it was no longer fit for human consumption. Paul's point is that any association of food with idolatrous Activity had no bearing on whether that food was suitable for eating. **Romans 14:15** "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." **Romans 14:23** "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

As we can see from the context, the Gentiles who ate with A guilty conscience would be easy to fall back into sin. Those who ate the meat (sacrificed to idols) should not do so in the presence of the Gentile who is weak. This could cause them to stumble and sin. Paul wasn't discussing dietary laws. Romans 14 is not a retraction of God's Torah regarding clean and unclean food (animals). Paul was not talking about whether to keep the Sabbath or not.

The keeping of the Sabbath and the obedience to the dietary laws were established by God's word and was not optional. The food laws of **Leviticus 11** and **14** never command anyone to eat herbs. The only reason that a believer would eat only herbs was to stay away from any potential meat that had been offered to idols. Paul was saying that one kind of believer was able to eat the meat of unknown origin without violating his or her conscience, while the other kind refrained from all meats and ate only herbs.

There is no justification to use Romans 14 to imply that Paul did away with the dietary laws, In fact, if Paul preached such a thing, he would have been branded a false prophet and seen as one speaking heresy.

Ecclesiastes 1:4 and 2 Peter 3:10

Ecclesiastes 1:4 says "the earth abideth forever." And 2 Peter 3:10 says "the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:10 is speaking of "that day" referring to Christ's coming (which happened in 70 A.D.), (for more on this, read my book "Thy Kingdom Come"). Peter seems to be using hyperbolic Imagery to explain the destruction of Jerusalem. This is not a literal 'burning up all of the earth.' The day of the Lord did come like a thief for many who did not watch.

Leviticus 18:21 and Judges 11:30-31

Leviticus 18:21 says "Thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God..."

Judges 11:30-31 says "though, the tale of Jephthah, who led the Israelites against the Ammonites, is being told. Being fearful of defeat, this good religious man sought to guarantee victory by getting god firmly on his side. So he prayed to god] "... If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering..."

Here, the general made a human sacrifice of his only child to God. Does God allow human sacrifice or not?

Just before Jephthah went into battle against the people of Ammon, he made a vow to the Lord. The vow he made was that if God would grant him victory over his enemies, then "whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace ... I will offer it up as a burnt offering" (Judges 11:31). When Jephthah returned, the first one to come out to meet him was his daughter. Jephthah refused to go back on the vow he had made. But, the Bible clearly states that human sacrifice is an abomination to the Lord. How could God allow Jephthah to offer up his daughter, and then list Jephthah among the champions of faith in Hebrews 11:32?

However, for several reasons, it is not necessary to assume that Jephthah ever offered a human sacrifice. First, Jephthah was aware of the law against human sacrifice, and if he had intended to offer a human sacrifice, he would have known this would have been a blatant rejection of God's law.

Secondly, the text does not actually say he killed his daughter in a sacrificial offering. This is simply inferred by some from the fact that he promised that whatever came out of his house first "shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering." As Paul indicated, human beings are to be offered to God "as a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1), not as dead ones. Jephthah could have offered his daughter to the Lord as a living sacrifice. For the remainder of her life, she would serve the Lord in the temple and remain a virgin.

Third, a living sacrifice of perpetual virginity was a tremendous sacrifice in the Jewish context of that day. As a perpetual virgin dedicated to the service of the Lord, she would not be able to bring up children to continue her father's lineage. Jephthah acted as a man of honor and great faith in the Lord by not going back on the vow that he had made to the Lord his God.

Fourth, this view is supported by the fact that when Jephthah's daughter went out to weep for two months, she did not go out to mourn her impending death. Rather, she went out "and bewailed her virginity."

Finally, if she was facing death at the end of the two month period, it would have been very simple for her to marry some young man and live with him for the two months prior to her death. There was no reason for Jephthah's daughter to mourn her virginity unless she was facing a life of perpetual virginity. Being the only child of Jephthah, his daughter was not mourning her virginity because of any illicit sexual desire.

Genesis 17:10 and Galatians 5:2

Genesis 17:10 says "This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised."

Galatians 5:2 says "if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." First of all, we are talking about two kinds of people. Those who knew the Lord in Genesis were suppose to be followers of God and circumcised in the heart first, so the next Step for them was circumcision of the flesh." In Galatians, Paul is speaking to Gentiles. First of all, Paul is teaching against what the false brethren were teaching, which was circumcision of the flesh to be saved. He was addressing Gentiles who did not know what the Torah said. The Torah says salvation comes by circumcision of the heart (not of the flesh). So, these false teachers were teaching heresy.

The first step was circumcision of the heart. If one was circumcised in the flesh without converting or being circumcised in the heart first, it meant nothing.

Leviticus 20:17 and Genesis 17:15-17

Leviticus 20:17 says “And if a man shall take his sister, his father’s daughter, or his mother’s daughter...it is a wicked thing....”

Genesis 17:15-17 says “And God said unto Abraham, As for Sara thy wife...I bless her, and give thee a son also of her...”

Why did God bless Abraham's marriage with Sarah if she was his sister and incestuous relationships are categorically prohibited in Scripture?

Technically, Sarah was Abraham’s HALF-sister, according to Genesis 20:12: "Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife."

Back then genetics were purer than they are today, and because people lived together in close family units, it was common for a man to find a wife from within their own tribe and family.

The prohibition against marrying siblings (Deuteronomy 27:22, Leviticus 20:17) only became an Israelite law under the Levitical system that was given about 2500 years after creation and more than 400 years after Abraham. It did not exist before.

Thus, there was nothing prohibiting Adam and Eve's children and Abraham marrying their siblings. As time progressed, this restriction was introduced to prevent birth problems (as we now understand). God had plans for Abraham and for Sarah, namely that the Messiah would come through their son Isaac.

Exodus 20:5 and Ezekiel 18:20

Ezekiel 18:20 says “The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father...” and Exodus 20:5 says “I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation...”

Ezekiel says clearly God does not punish the sons for their fathers’ sins, but that “the soul who sins shall die [for its own sins].” However, in Exodus, we are informed that God visits “the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations.” These seem flatly contradictory.

Ezekiel is speaking of the guilt of the father’s sin never being held against the sons, but Moses was referring to the consequences of the fathers’ sins being passed on to their children. Unfortunately, if a father is a drunk, the children can suffer abuse and even poverty. Likewise, if a mother has contracted AIDS from drug use, then her baby may be born with AIDS. But, this does not mean that the innocent children are guilty of the sins of their parents.

Further, even if the Exodus passage implied that moral guilt was somehow also visited on the children, it would only be because they too, like their fathers, had sinned against God.

Exodus 20:12 and Luke 14:26

Exodus 20:12 says “Honor thy father and thy mother...” and Luke 14:26 says “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. ”

Needless to say, this statement by Jesus has been seized by many skeptics and offered as “proof ” that the Bible contradicts itself. What anyone who studies the verse should quickly discover, however, is that the word translated “hate” does not always mean “to despise, detest, loathe, and abhor,” which are synonymous with the general use of the word “hate” in our modern culture. Instead, the word also can include the meaning “to love less.”

The story of Jacob, Rachel, and Leah perfectly illustrates the biblical use of this term “hate” in its meaning of “to love less.” To briefly summarize the story, Jacob loved Rachel, and agreed to work for her father Laban for seven years in order to marry her. At the end of the seven years, Laban tricked Jacob, and gave Leah to him as a wife.

When Jacob discovered the deception, he was given Rachel as a wife, but was forced to work another seven years for her. In Genesis 29:30, the Bible says that “Jacob also went in to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah.” Yet, in the next verse the Bible says, “And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, He opened her womb.” Jacob did not despise, detest, and treat Leah like an enemy, as in the modern use of the word “hate.” Instead, he simply loved Rachel more than he loved Leah.

Job 7:9 and John 5:28-29

Job 7:9 says “...he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.” and John 5:28-29 says “...the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth....”

In Job 7:9, what he meant when he spoke of someone going down to the grave and not coming up is explained in the very next verse. “He shall never return to his house.” Therefore, the body will never come forth again. In other words, those who die do not return to their mortal lives again. Indeed, the resurrection is to an immortal life, not to the same mortal life one had before.

In fact, the passage actually teaches resurrection. For Job simply spoke of being hidden in the grave by God until an appointed time when God would again remember him in the resurrection.

Ecclesiastes 9:7 and 1 Corinthians 7:30

Ecclesiastes 9:7 says “Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart...” and 1 Corinthians 7:30 says “...they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not...”

This really should be an embarrassment to point this out as a contradiction. The passage from Ecclesiastes is talking about "behavior" and the passage in 1 Corinthians addresses attitude. That is evident from the context and from the words used in each passage.

Many people have the impression that the Bible is simply an outdated book of fairytales and contradictions. We are told that biblical stories are fine for children, and perhaps they even contain some moral value. "But, surely" says the critic, "such stories cannot be taken seriously in our modern age of science and technology. After all, there are too many Bible contradictions." Or so they say.

I hope that through this book, I have addressed most of the concerns and so called contradictions in scripture. Shalom.