

# Reliability Of The Canon

## Chapter -- 1

### Reliability Of The Canon

**A**s we write these words, even the last book of the Bible is almost two thousand years old. The earliest book would be over 3500 years old. Perhaps no other book of such antiquity enjoys the same widespread use or such spiritual status. This makes it a book frequently attacked by rationalists and the so-called "modernists".

True, many other books also claim such ancient origin but there is a difference between them and the Bible. First, the claimed antiquity of these books has not been sufficiently established. Second, these books (such as the Vedas) deal primarily with philosophy and not with history. The historical content of these non Christian books is minimal, and these historical passages have almost no bearing upon their philosophical message. Their philosophical message is not dependent upon the reliability of their historical content.

On the other hand, the theology and philosophy of the Bible is intricately and inseparably linked with the reliability of its historical narrative. The history in the Bible might perhaps be able to survive without the theology, but the theology of the Bible cannot survive without its history. Thus if the historical content of the Bible is destroyed, or if it is falsified, the theology of the Bible is automatically destroyed. The radicals and atheists were quick to understand this, and this is why they have spent immeasurable amounts of time and energy to attack the historical reliability of Bible and its narratives.

On the other hand, history is a subject more tangible than philosophical speculation. Thus while the critic finds history a good ground for attacking the Bible, the apologist realizes that the tangible nature and the general reliability of historical information can be used for defending the Bible in a more definite and confident manner. What's more, here is an area which can be handled even by those people who have no background or training in sciences.

The word Canon means measuring rod. Thus it is used in a given subject for a collection of information which becomes the standard by which everything in that field is measured. For the Christian apologist, Canon is a word commonly used to denote the Bible. The attacks against the Canon of the Bible centers around the following points:

#### **Purity/Integrity Of The Cannon** **Accuracy Of The Information In The Canon**

In the last two to three hundred years the critics have tried their best to attack the Bible on all these points. Initially they even seemed to win, but the close of the nineteenth century and the dawn of the twentieth century brought so many archaeological and historical discoveries that today none can question the Canon on these points. Thousands of manuscripts, tens of thousands of references to the history recorded in the Bible, and even entire nations with their libraries have been discovered. Thus today Bible stands as the most vindicated and amazing ancient book in the world. It would be profitable to discuss some of these subjects in greater detail.

### **Purity Of The Canon**

Questions have been raised frequently about the purity and integrity of the biblical Canon. Most of these questions have come from three sources: the radicals among Christians, the rationalists/atheists, and the Muslims. Ahmadiya Muslims are quite vocal about corruption in the biblical Canon, with the outrageous claim that there are more than 60,000 errors in the Bible. These questions have been adequately answered by Christian scholars but in spite of this they been circulated by ignorant people, and thus they are widely heard today. On the other hand, many critics of Christianity know the truth but in spite of that they keep repeating these question with the sole aim of intimidating the ignorant lay people.

So much information is available on the subject of the purity and integrity of the Canon that several volumes can be filled. Thus what is mentioned on this subject in a small section like this of this book should be considered only as a pointer to what is available.

**THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS:** Bible itself reminds in many places that it is book inspired by God. "All scripture is given by the INSPIRATION of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). Since the origin is God Himself, we can be confident that what has reached us is holy, free from all kind of error, and without any admixture with any kind of falsehood.

Bible is not a collection of profound human insight or wisdom, but rather a book given by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit controlled the human writers in such a way that they wrote exactly what the Holy Spirit wanted to be recorded. According to 2 Peter 1:20, 21: "...no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake [as they were] moved by the Holy Ghost". Consequently, the information contained in the Bible is free from any kind of error, conceivable or inconceivable.

Bible records much information about the unknown past. For example, much of the details in Genesis ten chapters are from the earliest historical times, for which much record is not available. Inspiration guarantees the accuracy of these records. Similarly, though Bible is not meant to be a textbook of history, the historical narratives in the Bible are all totally accurate.

Inspiration guarantees that the information recorded in the Bible about divine will, attributes, and attitudes are accurately portrayed. It also guarantees that when God's expectations, demands, and instructions are mentioned, they are not human speculation but an accurate presentation of what the true God expects from mankind.

In addition to what God said and what the righteous people did, the Bible also records what the unrighteous people, fallen angels, and even rebellious believers did. This is not to endorse error, but to give us an accurate record of error so that we might be warned to flee from such things and lead a righteous life.

**PRACTICAL ASPECTS:** Right from the earliest times Jews recognized that the inspired word of God is to be handled carefully and respectfully. Thus Priests and leaders of the Jews carefully preserved and transmitted the text from generation to generation. Eventually highly trained priest-scribes like Ezra began handling the job of copying and transmission (Neh. 8:9). After the time of Babylonian exile many of the Jews became concerned about the preservation of the Scriptures, and this is the time when professional scribes became numerous.

There were many large groups of scribes wherever the Jews lived, and these people faithfully copied not only the Old Testament but also commentaries and other books used among the

children of God. Scribes were the preservers of the Law. They were professional students of the law and its defenders. This was specially so during the Hellenistic period when the Jewish priests became corrupt. Eventually they became so obsessed with preserving the Scriptures that they developed elaborate rules and regulations for their profession. These rules contained stipulations regarding both the behaviour of the scribes as well as the way in which the Biblical manuscripts were to be handled.

With dispersion, Greek became the language of many Jews and this is the time when an important translation of the Old Testament was produced in the Greek language. Known as the Septuagint, many of the New Testament writer quoted from this translation. Aramaic translations were also made, and this was the spoken language which Jesus and many of His disciples used.

With the wide dispersal of the Jews, they almost ceased to exist as a nation in their motherland. Hundreds of thousands of Jews scattered around the world adopted the local languages as their language of communication. With this came the gradual elimination of Hebrew as a spoken language. This introduced many difficulties to the religiously minded people. The Jews used the old way of writing the Hebrew language till about AD 500. This system used all capital letters, without spacing, without word-divisions, and without vowels. For example, the God was written as GD in Hebrew. The vowels were supplied by the reader at the time of reading.

The old system of writing was fine as long as Hebrew was used as an everyday language, but it became very difficult with the disuse of Hebrew. The Old Testament text without vowels and without word-divisions was now liable to be misinterpreted by the ignorant. Thus the word GD cited above could be read either as GOD or as GUIDE, because the original text did not contain the vowels. Thus only a person thoroughly familiar with the text of the Old Testament would know which pronunciation to use in a particular place. The concern over these issues resulted in the rise of a group of experts called Massorates. These outstanding Old Testament scholars had their heyday between AD 500 to 1000.

The Massorates carefully compared the handwritten copies available to them and made very accurate copies of the Old Testaments. They developed and introduced vowel marks so that there is no confusion left about what a certain word was. They also developed an elaborate code for copyists and the copies. The copyists had to follow certain rigorous rules about bathing, cleanliness, and self-preparation before they copied the divine text. They also had to check the text of each page of the copy so that it matched horizontally and vertically with the original text. Texts not meeting the stringent integrity criteria were usually destroyed so that they might not corrupt future texts through ignorant people. The text produced and left by them for the progeny is called the Massoratic Text, or MT.

The Old Testament in the King James Version and that in all Indian translations are based upon the Massoratic Text. Many critics and radicals gleefully attacked this fact, claiming that the MT must be full of errors compared to the originals. They based their argument on the premise that even the earliest MT text was produced only 1000 years AFTER the original was written. Many undiscerning even accept such careless pronouncements and became very disturbed. However, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the forties changed the whole picture.

Dead Sea Scrolls were produced almost two hundred years before the time of Christ. Which meant that many of the Dead Sea scrolls were as much as 1200 years older than the Massoratic Text. A comparison of these two families of manuscripts showed that the MT was unusually accurate. Thus the work done by Jewish scholars in preserving the purity of the Old Testament Text was demonstrated once again.

As far as the New Testament text is concerned, it is of more recent origin. The art of writing was widely practiced, and writing materials (though highly perishable) were plentiful. Consequently, numerous copies, translations, and versions were produced. So many of them survive today that it overwhelms Bible scholars. More details about manuscripts of OT and NT available today would be given in another section.

## **Integrity Of The Canon**

**While** radicals and atheists attacked the accuracy (purity) with which the Canon was transmitted, another group was busy in attacking the integrity of it. They claimed that not all books in the Canon are canonical, while many books that are canonical have been excluded from it. Ahmadiya Muslims are one group that would want some books of their interest (such as the Apocrypha book falsely labeled The Gospel Of Barnabas). These claims have resurfaced at the dawn of the twenty-first century, and many are innocently swept by such baseless argument. Part of the reason is the ignorance of the layman concerning the Canon and how it was formed.

**THE NEED TO FIX THE CANON:** There was no need to fix the Canon in the period before 400 BC because people generally knew which books came from divine source. However, after the last book of the Old Testament was written, many Jewish people felt the need to clearly spell out the books that were part of the Canon.

The first reason was distance from the original events. People who lived during the times of Prophets and great High Priests recognized the way God communicated with them. However, as new generations came up there was a great time-gap between them and the original revelation. This gap would automatically make them less familiar with the Scriptures, specially if these books were not introduced properly to the posterity.

Further, this distance would also enable forgers and cheats to advance their writings as Scriptures. Thus it was necessary for the posterity to know the boundary. Thus the Jewish fathers were alert to recognize and organize the Canonical books. Of course the correct order of their actions should be realized: these books did not become Canonical by the recognition of the fathers. Rather, when non Canonical books started to claim divine authorship, the Jewish fathers felt it necessary to recognize the books that demonstrated Canonicity. Thus it is not the recognition that brought Canonicity, but it is their Canonical nature that brought recognition to them. The fact that Lord Jesus and the Apostles honoured this Canon demonstrates that the Jewish Fathers were spiritually competent to recognize the Canonical books.

Recognizing Canonical books was necessary also for protecting them from being lost accidentally or through deliberate destruction. People attacked divine revelation both in the Old as well as in the New Testament period. The rationalist Porphyry wrote more than 12 volumes to attack the Bible. In 320 AD the Roman Emperor Diocletian ordered that all religious books be destroyed. In all such cases it became necessary for the children of God to know which books to hide and protect from destruction.

Many other practical considerations also contributed to the demand to spell out the Canon. Thus when the Jews who adopted Greek as their mother-tongue wanted the Scriptures in this language, it was necessary to know which books to translate. With the easy availability of writing materials and the wider dissemination of the Scriptures, the demand to spell out the Canon became all the more important.

As mentioned above, the recognition of the Canonical books was not done randomly or arbitrarily. Rather, the people of God used very strict criteria for recognizing which books

were divine. Further, many of these books were given to the children of God under such circumstances that they were recognized as inspired Scriptures soon after these books were written. The divinity of these books helped them to be included in the Bible.

**OLD TESTAMENT CANON:** The earliest books of the Old Testament were written almost 1400 years before the Christ, while the last book Malachi was written about 400 years before Christ. Since these books came from authoritative sources, people were quick to recognize their divine origin. The sacred books of divine origin were given special honour and protection by the Jews. The priest as well as the people of God always stood up when a public reading of the Scriptures was done.

Many spurious books began to claim divine authorship for them about a hundred years after the completion of Malachi. The Jewish leaders were quick to realize that these writings are not from God, and thus they guarded the books of Bible against all kind of infiltration.

## **The Apocrypha**

The Apocrypha books are not part of the Canon. Thus none of the things said in this chapter are applicable to them. These books are neither inspired by God, nor are they in any sense a part of the Bible.

There is a mistaken belief among some that the Apocrypha books were part of the Bible, and that these were rejected by the Protestant Reformers. On the contrary, the Apocrypha books were never a part of the Old Testament Canon. Thus there is no question of the Reformers dropping out some books from the Canon. Rather, it is the Roman Catholic Church which ADDED these books to the Canon by a proclamation made at the Council of Trent. The story is something like the following.

When the Hebrew Old Testament was translated into Hebrew, a number of other books were also translated. These were translated as a help to the Jews who did not know Hebrew or Aramaic. Many of the translators felt that the additional books would benefit the readers by providing them historical and background information about the Jews and their culture. Some of these books were appended to the Septuagint by them. The addition was not as part of the Canon, but as study helps. This is similar to the large number of articles often added at the end of study Bibles like the Scofield, Thompson Chain Reference, Dake's Bible, or The Ryrie Study Bible. Though these articles are placed within the same Cover, and though the outer cover contains the word "Bible", none of the modern readers confuses them with the Scripture.

All the contemporary readers know that the study-helps and articles are not part of the Canon. In the same way the readers of Septuagint also knew that these books in the appendix are not part of the Canon. These books found a place in the translation known as Vulgate, which was commonly used by Roman Catholics. In spite of its presence in the Vulgate, the Catholics did not accept the Apocrypha as part of the Canon.

With the Protestant Reformation, many of the Reformers challenged the Catholic church to prove their doctrine by supporting these from the Canon. To their dismay the Roman Catholics discovered that many of their doctrines are not derived from the Canon. At the same time they realized that at least some of these erroneous doctrines are supported by the Apocrypha. Thus for their survival it became necessary to add the Apocrypha to the Canon.

In 1545 the Roman Catholic Church convened what is called the Council Of Trent. Here they

passed numerous resolutions, including many curses against the Protestant Believers. In April 1545 the Council declared that the Apocrypha are also part of the Bible. Thus for the first time in history the Apocrypha books were ADDED by the Roman Catholic church to the Bible. This was done in order to justify their doctrinal errors (for which support was available only in the Apocrypha), and also to oppose the Protestant believers. The first Vatican Council held 1869-70 reaffirmed the decision of the Roman Catholic Church to add the Apocrypha to the Canon.

Historically and theologically the Apocrypha was never part of the Canon. Protestant Reformers were very zealous about the doctrine of Sola Scriptura (Everything is to be tested in the light of Bible, and Bible alone). Thus they did not allow any kind of leaven to be mixed with the Bible.

The Apocrypha books contain numerous historical, chronological, and doctrinal errors. Some of these are:

**1-Prayers And Offerings For The Dead:** The Apocrypha encourages prayer for the dead and also the offering of money for the souls of the dead people. It should not be forgotten that the Roman Catholic Church collects millions in money every year on the pretext of praying for the dead that they might be transferred to heaven.

The Catholic Church needed the non-canonical Apocrypha in their Bibles to support such practices that are actually not found in the Canon. 2 Maccabees 12:41-46 is the passage that supports this. Verse 46 says, "It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sin". This is a blasphemous idea.

**2-Atonement And Salvation By Almsgiving:** Salvation is by grace alone and through faith alone (Eph. 2:8,9; Titus 3:5; 1 John 1:9). However, the Roman Catholic Church adds "good works" as a condition, and collects billions in money worldwide from gullible people seeking salvation. Apocrypha books support this (Ecclesiasticus 3:33. Ecclesiasticus of the Apocrypha is different from Ecclesiastes in the Bible). According Tobit 4:11 of the Apocrypha, "For alms deliver from all sin, and from death and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness".

**3-Preexistence Of Souls:** The doctrines that souls have always existed and that the human body receives a preexisting soul is taught in Apocrypha (Wisdom of Solomon 8:19, 20). This is contrary to what is taught by the Canonical books.

**4-The Doctrine Of Emanations:** Emanation is the theory that just as the web used by the spider comes out of the spider's own being, the Universe and everything in it is an emanation from God. This idea is contrary to what the Bible teaches, but the Apocrypha teaches it (Wisdom Of Solomon 7:25).

**5-Suicide Justified:** Bible is totally opposed to suicide, and warns believers against contemplating such activities. The Apocrypha justifies it (2 Maccabees 14:41-46).

**6-Cruelty To Slaves Justified:** While the Canon asks believers to be merciful to slaves (Deu. 23:15,16), the Apocrypha says that the best way to treat a slave is to pile work upon him. It also justifies cruelty to them when needed (Ecclesiasticus 33:25-29).

**7-Other Fallacies And Blasphemies:** There are numerous historical errors, doctrinal errors, and even blasphemies. Hatred for Samaritan people, sanction for lying, encouragement for magical incantations, assassination, the power of angels to intercede for man, and many other s are found there.

Worse of all, the doctrine of Purgatory has also come from Apocryphal sources. This is a doctrine totally opposed to all what the Bible says.

## **Summary**

Though many people claim that books of the Bible have been altered and manipulated, the historical data opposes this idea. Right from the beginning the Canonical books received special preservation and protection from the Jews as well as the Christians.

The Apocrypha are not part of the Canon. These books were never considered by the Jews or by Christians as part of the Canon. It is the Roman Catholic Church which ADDED these non-canonical books to the Canon in 1545 as a reaction against the Protestant Movement. They needed to do this to justify their doctrinal errors.

The Canon of God is pure, free from error, and preserved for our instruction and edification.

### **The Biblical Stand**

***Sola Scriptura (Bible Alone Is God's Word)***

***Sola Fide (Faith Alone Is The Way Of Salvation)***

***Sola Gratia (Grace Alone Is The Divine Means)***

***Solus Christus (Christ Alone Is The Saviour)***

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## **Chapter -- 2**

# **Inerrancy Of Bible**

Right from the time of the Old Testament, believers have held that the Word of God is Inerrant. Inerrancy means that in producing the original manuscripts, the sacred authors were guided by Holy Spirit in such a way that they transmitted perfectly, without error, the exact message which God desired to record for men. Since the Word of God is infallible, it cannot err. And since it is Inerrant, it contains no mistakes.

The doctrine of Inerrancy arises out of the nature and declarations of the Scriptures themselves. Biblical books everywhere present themselves as being the Word of God. When the Lord speaks, He cannot lie; neither can He teach truth by means of error. His veracity as well as His power is at stake. If he spoke erroneously at the beginning or mingled the true with the false, what could we think of Him ? He would be an unreliable God, delivering an unreliable message. Even the non-believer knows this implication, and that is why the rationalists spend so much time to somehow show that the Bible contains errors.

With our eternal salvation standing or falling on the testimony of Bible, what certainty could we find in a Revelation that can contain error ? Or what if God, after giving to the sacred authors a message exact in every detail, had showed Himself unable afterwards to effect its transmission in a way worthy of confidence ? This would only mean that He had deceived us. And in that case, His initial revelations would have become untrustworthy by now.

Inerrancy is a fundamental belief of evangelical Christians, and every Apologist should both

understand as well as defend this doctrine.

## **THE BIBLE'S TESTIMONY TO ITS OWN INERRANCY**

Bible repeatedly claims that it is the infallible and inerrant word of God. But no sooner we mention this, someone might raise objections against it. Thus it would be well to consider these objections before going further.

First of all, they might ask, is it legitimate for us to base our faith in inerrancy on the Bible's own testimony? Isn't this just a vicious circle: like dispensing with a debate simply on the declarations of the accused or merely on the basis of the statements of the interrogated witness? No, for here we have the Lord Himself, who attested the Scripture as the only sources of all true spiritual knowledge. Thus, Just as we go to Scripture for all the doctrines concerning judgment, salvation, the future, etc, we can deduce from the revelation a sure teaching concerning the written Word. Since the Lord Himself proclaimed the Scriptures as authoritative, our first question regarding any subject must be "What do the Scriptures have to say about this" (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 4:30).

About 3,808 times the Biblical books claim to be transmitting the words of God. After the giving of the law, Moses declared: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it" (Deut. 4:2; also 6:1-2, 6-9 and 12:32). The psalmist says over and over: "The law of Jehovah is perfect.... I trust in thy word.... I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad... Thy word is very pure; therefore, thy servant loveth it... Thy law is truth... All thy commandments are truth... The sum of thy word is truth; and every one of thy righteous ordinances endureth for ever... Let my tongue sing of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness" (Ps.19:7; 119:42, 96, 140, 142, 151, 160, 172).

Christ specifically confirmed the whole Old Testament as true. He did not find any error that needed to be eliminated, nor did He express the slightest doubt about any part of it. He consistently based His arguments and exhortations on the Old Testament Scripture. He declared: "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished" (Matt. 5:18). Discussing a single word with the Jews, He said: "The Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). And he exclaimed towards the end of His days on earth: "Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

The holy Apostles also witnessed to the perfection of the Scriptures. Paul said of the law that it is holy: "and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good" (Rom. 7:12). The apostle's teaching is so explicit (e.g., Gal. 3:16-17) that any error in the Scripture cited would take away the very foundation of that teaching.

For the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Word of God is living, effectual and penetrating, goes so far as to judge even our feelings and our innermost thoughts (Heb. 4:12). It is not our prerogative to set ourselves up as its critics. James, describing the Word speaks of it as "the perfect law, the law of liberty" (James 1:22-25). Convinced of its supreme authority, he addresses to us this solemn warning: "Think ye that the scripture speaketh in vain?" (James 4:5).

Finally, John brings the written revelation to a close with these words: "If any man shall add unto them (the things which are written), God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life" (Rev. 22:18-19). If it is the Lord who has given a message from Himself, who could have the audacity to attempt to "complete" it or to delete any of it, even those parts which he might think of slight



importance?

A testimony as clear and as unanimous as this is truly impressive. Nowhere does Scripture in one place declare erroneous what it given in another place, and this holds true for even the smallest details like the very words, jots and the tittles. As it unsparingly recounts the faults and failures of men in general and of the people of God as well, its total silence about errors in the work of the sacred authors undeniably has great weight.

## **THE EXTENT OF BIBLICAL INERRANCY**

It is evident to anyone acquainted with the facts that the biblical text in our hands now is not without some problems. This is why, before going into the objections raised against the doctrine of inerrancy, we should specify what the doctrine implies and what it does not.

***1-Inerrancy does NOT mean uniformity in all the details given in analogous accounts written by different authors:*** The books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles all belong in large measure to the same historical period, but both their points of view and their expressions vary sometimes. The four Gospels all recount the life of Christ, but with different details. In the Acts, each of the three treatments of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus (Acts chapters 8,22,26) is distinguished from the others in certain definite respects.

Such differences have often been greatly exaggerated by radicals: there are even those who promptly go on to call them contradictions and errors. In reality, although the doctrine of inspiration and inerrancy of the Scripture requires that each author write only the truth, it leaves each one free in the choice of actual incidents which illustrate what he purposes to each.

Verbal identity between multiple witnesses to the same event is not to be expected. If four independent witnesses in court parrot syllable by syllable the same story, made up of a series of complex facts, those men would at once be charged with collusion. Their very uniformity would make their testimony suspect. For it is a psychological fact that, due to inevitable differences in points of view, observation and individual emphasis, several individuals, each completely honest, will tell the very same events in quite different ways and words. This can also be said of the biblical authors. Inspired, they wrote nothing false. Everything they saw and reported was true, even though they did not always see and report the same details or in identical words. Rather, each writer had his own personality and was far from being a mere robot.

Let us take, for example, the accounts of the resurrection as recorded in the Gospels. The essential facts are identical: Christ arose; the tomb was empty; the Lord was seen alive by different groups of disciples in various places; His new body was not subject to the limitations of an ordinary human body; after a certain number of days, He went away from the earth again. This is the general framework on which all the Gospels agree. But each person's report differs in certain details and in the presentation of some of the secondary facts. The accounts are nonetheless authentic for this, and the truth taught is well established.

***2-Inerrancy does not exclude the use of symbols and figurative language:*** Although everything in the Bible is inspired, it does not follow that every statement in it must be taken literally. The plain meaning of many passages is clear from a historical, practical legal and moral point of view. But there are also many passages where the language is obviously symbolical: for example, many things in Psalms, the Song of Solomon and the Prophets, as well as the parables in the gospels and in Revelation are figurative. Besides, thousand of expressions in both the Old and New Testaments are closer to poetry than a prose. (This is

why the style of the Bible always has vital and magnetic quality).

Therefore, belief in the inerrancy of Scripture in no wise requires a slavish adherence to an unnecessary and absolutely literal interpretation. Belief in inerrancy does not automatically impose a circumscribed and slavish adherence to hyper-literalism that shuts out those wider horizons where picture and symbolism have been used by the Holy Spirit to strike fire to the imagination of men.

The repeated accusation of an obligatory literalness looms up partly from the false idea which radical critics hold about the Biblical position. They think that the concept of verbal inspiration forces interpreters to consider every word by itself, irrespective of the context, as being the object of an independent interpretation. Nothing could be further from the truth. No language, no literature, could be subjected to such treatment. Words, vehicles of thought, are arranged and bound together to express one unified whole. The context will help to determine whether the interpretation is literal, spiritual or symbolical.

Further, many of the radical critics impose hyper-literalism upon Bible interpretation not because the Bible demands it, but because this is essential for them to attack the Bible conveniently. They realize that imposing such an unnatural restriction upon the Bible would give them plenty of additional opportunities to attack the Sacred book. However, their own writings betray this bias and nothing needs to be said further about it.

***3-Inerrancy does not imply the use of an exact technical vocabulary, conforming to present scientific terminology:*** The Biblical authors were all men of antiquity. They employed the language of their times, not claiming to foresee modern science. But when they did set down facts in the realm of science, they expressed themselves without error in regard to fundamental principles. For example, the Biblical record of the creation touches on the following areas: geology, astronomy, biology, meteorology, zoology, physiology and several others. The expressions used in the Bible for these things do not claim to be technical ones. Still, every page remains not only more magnificent but also more logical than any other attempted explanation of the origin of the universe.

It is also clear that Scripture uses popular expressions in the fields of astronomy, geology and other scientific domains exactly the way our modern scholars do in current conversation. The preacher said, for example, that the sun rises and the sun goes down (Eccles. 1:5), precisely as we ourselves have kept on expressing the idea even AFTER discovering that it is not the sun which rises or sets.

***4-Biblical message must be put back into its own historical setting:*** Certain declarations of Scripture were true when they were made, although the circumstances are different now. This is very obvious in historical matters, where what was in existence till yesterday might not be there today. When we read in the book of Joshua that the twelve stones set up in the midst of the Jordan "are there unto this day" (Joshua 4:9), this obviously means that they were there at the time those things were written.

One contentious subject is that of the chronology of the Old Testament, which the radical critics keep judging as erroneous. What is certain is that the ancients did not count the way we do and had no fixed, universal calendar. The exact length of the reign of Kings was often counted differently in different cultures, and that also on differing calendars. Thus any attempt to reconcile those dates without taking those methods of reckoning would yield only conflicting results. On the other hand, when we follow the ancient ways of calculating and dating, we see in Scripture an unusually greater precision than in other ancient authors. Much work has been done in this subject in the second half of the twentieth century, showing that the Biblical chronologies are accurate. The work is very technical, and thus most of this work has not come into the attention of the layman.

The question of grammar and style is also in harmony with the historical framework. We do not have any statement that Bible came down dictated from heaven. Rather, the Holy Spirit used writers belonging to different cultures and generations without obliterating their individualities. Thus the differences in grammars and styles of individual writers is definitely discernible.

**5-Inerrancy has to do with the whole of the Biblical message:** Contrary to what many compromisers claim, the doctrine of inerrancy applies to the whole Bible and not merely to the parts having to do with "faith and practice". If this were not so, one would have to consider Scripture fallible in places where subjects other than "faith and practice" are discussed.

Let us take an example from history: God intervened our world events. He initiated His plan of redemption in the incarnation and consummated it in specific historical facts. If the Bible is wrong about these facts, what is there for our faith to rest upon? We must notice what Paul says about the resurrection of Christ, as well as about the history of Israel (I Cor. 15:14-19; 10:11; Rom. 15:4). There is no way for separating the "doctrinal" parts of the Bible from the "non doctrinal" parts.

The historical facts are so intimately tied in with spiritual realities that it is impossible to separate the two. We have seen that the same is true of the account of the creation and also areas where Bible deals with the natural sciences (geology, astronomy, biology etc.). The creation account, and also that of paradise, the fall, the deluge etc, we find fully confirmed by Christ and the apostles. If these events were mere myths, then the doctrines based upon them also have to be labeled as mere myths. It ought to be clear, however, that inerrancy extends only to the text itself, not to the often absurd interpretations given by humans to it.

In the realm of geography, likewise, the extraordinary exactitude of Scripture has been attested to by archaeology and by an improved understanding of antiquity. Clearly, the Bible does not claim to be a manual of science or of history; its supreme domain is that of faith and life. It is the book of salvation; its aim is to lead us to God and to enable us to live with Him, first down here and then forever in heaven. Yet it never errs when it makes a comment in the realm of science or history.

**6-Inerrancy does not imply omniscience on the part of the Biblical authors:** The Biblical writers were not acquainted with all facets of the subjects they treated. Thus their declarations are true but not always comprehensive or complete. One illustration is the case of the Four Gospels. Each one has played its part in filling in, adding to and putting the finishing touches on canvas portraying the life of Jesus. This principle explains why the Bible does not always provide a full account of a given event or the well-rounded, all-comprehensive enunciation of a truth, such as one might expect from omniscience. The Scriptures were written by men who were kept away from recording error, but who were not endowed with the perceptive faculties which belong to God alone.

It was, moreover, not necessarily the aim of the biblical records to tell absolutely everything or to provide total information on every subject. For example, the Gospels give us practically nothing about Jesus from the time He was twelve until the day He was baptized by John the Baptist. Such information would certainly have a popular appeal if we may judge by the Apocryphal "gospels", but this information was not seen as necessary according to the purpose of either the Holy Spirit or the writers themselves. John in his gospel makes it clear that producing a comprehensive record of Jesus' life and ministry was humanly not possible. Thus he chose only those events that would help the readers to accept Jesus as their personal Saviour.

## **The Evidence From Christ's Use Of the Old Testament**

The way in which Jesus Christ looked at the Old Testament provides additional insights into the question of inerrancy. Not surprisingly, our Lord used historical incidents in the Old Testament in a manner which evidenced His total confidence in their factual historicity.

He acknowledged that Adam and Eve were created by God, that they were two real living human beings, not merely symbols of mankind and womankind, and that they acted in specific ways (Matt. 19:3-5; Mark 10:6-8).

He verified as historical events connected with the flood of Noah's day; namely, that there was an ark and that the flood destroyed everyone who was not in that ark (Matt. 24:38-39; Luke 17:26-27).

On two different occasions, He authenticated God's destruction of Sodom, and the historicity of Lot and his wife (Matt. 10:15; Luke 17:28-29).

He accepted as true the story of Jonah and the great fish (Matt. 12:40) and acknowledged the historicity of Isaiah (Matt. 12:17), Elijah (Matt. 17:11-12), Daniel (Matt. 24:15), Abel (Matt. 23:35), Zechariah (Matt. 23:35), Abiathar (Mark 2:26), David (Matt. 22:45), Moses and his writings (Matt. 8:4; John 5:46), Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matt. 8:11; John 8:39),

Christ did not allude to these as mere moral stories, but He authenticated the events in them as factual history to be completely trusted. These events include many of the passages of the Old Testament against which radicals have raised, controversies like Creation, the Flood and major miracles including Jonah and the giant sea-monster.

Obviously, our Lord felt that He had a reliable Bible, historically true, with every word being trustworthy. If we find that He used or taught only in a general way about the Bible, then we must conclude that He believed in its reliability only generally. On the other hand, if we find that He relied on the minutiae of the Bible as accurate, then we must conclude that He believed it to be inerrant down to its minutest details.

### **Some Concrete Biblical Evidences For Inerrancy**

**1-THE EVIDENCE OF MATTHEW 4:1-11:** The account of the temptation of our Lord reveals some important matters concerning His view of the Bible.

First, Jesus accepted the plenary inspiration of the Bible; when first approached by the devil to turn stones into bread, our Lord replied that man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4 quoting Deut. 8:3). He did not say "some words" but "EVERY word". If Scripture is breathed out from God (II Tim. 3:16), then all Scripture must be included in what sustains man. Not merely parts of Scripture but all of it.

Second, Jesus' response to Satan's attacks negates every view of errancy. He said, "It is written" (Matt. 4:4,7,10). He did not say, "It witnesses". He relied on statements from the Bible to convey truth in and of themselves and to convey it accurately.

**2-THE EVIDENCE OF MATTHEW 5:17-18:** "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law until all is

accomplished". The verse is not only a statement of fact, but also a promise about the Bible made by the Lord Jesus Himself. Several things should be noticed.

First, what is the promise ? It is that the Law and the Prophets will NOT be abolished, but be fulfilled. Christ is guaranteeing that the all the guarantees and statements of the Bible shall surely be fulfilled.

Second, what all is included in this promise ? The "Law and the Prophets" included all of the Old Testament, our Lord's Bible. "Law" in verse 18 means the same thing (compare the use of "Law" in John 10:34 where it includes more than the Mosaic Law).

Third, in what detail will all the promises of the Old Testament be fulfilled ? The Lord said we can count on all the Old Testament promises being fulfilled down to the very jots and tittles (KJV). An explanation of "jot and tittle" would be helpful to the non-Hebrew readers.

**THE JOT:** The jot is the Hebrew letter titled YODH. It is the smallest of all the letters in the Hebrew alphabet. It would occupy proportionately about the same amount of space that an English apostrophe takes up in a line of English type. Actually, the Hebrew letter looks very much like an English apostrophe. Though it is the smallest of the Hebrew letters it is as important as any other letter, for letters spell words and words compose sentences and sentences make promises. If we spell a word one way, it is that word; if we spell it another way, even with only a single letter differently, it is a different word. For example, "Tough" means strong. One letter changed spells as "touch". One letter added makes it "though". Single letters are enough to change words. Thus our Lord promised that not one jot would fail. Every promise will be fulfilled exactly as it has been spelled out.

Many people (influenced by the radical theologians) believe and teach that Biblical writers were inspired only with 'concepts' and that inspiration did not extend to the words used by the Biblical writers. We must observe here that Christ does not start with concepts and then allow for optional words to be used to convey those concepts (contrary to what proponents of "concepts-inspiration" teach). He begins the other way around. The promises are based on the words as spelled out in the Holy Writ and those words can be relied on fully and in detail.

Neither did our Lord say that the promises would be fulfilled provided they were culturally relevant at the time of fulfillment. In some theological circles it has become fashionable today to say that promises and commands of the Bible are to be culturally reinterpreted. This is a subtle attempt to invalidate the original promises as spelled out in the Old Testament.

**THE TITTLE:** A "tittle" is even more MINUTE than a Jot. Whereas a Jot is a whole letter, a "tittle" is only a PART of a letter. The presence of a tittle forms a certain letter, but its absence causes that letter to become a different one. For example, the Hebrew letter BETH and KAPH look very similar. The only difference between the two letters is that the bottom horizontal line on the BETH extends slightly to the right of the vertical line, whereas no extension appears on the KAPH. That extension (not the entire bottom horizontal line but only the part of it that extends to the right of the vertical line) is a tittle. If it is present then the letter is a BETH; if it is absent, it is a KAPH. And whether you use a BETH or a KAPH will decide what word it would ultimately be. According to the Lord, even such tiny differences were there by God's ordinance.

There are many other places where the presence or absence of the tittle makes a difference. While it is easy for an ordinary copyist to overlook the presence of the tittle, the Lord made it very clear that it is an important part of the inspired scriptures. The Lord's affirmation was that all of the promises of the Old Testament will be fulfilled precisely as they were spelled out, in their minutest details.

In English we might illustrate a tittle this way. Suppose I invite you to my house to have some "Fun". You might rightly wonder what I consider fun. If I put a tittle or small stroke on the F, then you might conclude that I like to "Pun". Punning is fun to me. There's nothing like a fast repartee of puns with someone. But you may not enjoy making puns, so I'll put another tittle on the letter. Now I have spelled "Run". To run is fun for some, but not to me. So I'll add another tittle and now I am inviting you over to have a "Bun". The difference between Fun, Pun, Run and Bun is just the addition of a tittle in each case. But four entirely different words result, and with them, four different invitations:

**3-THE EVIDENCE OF JOHN 10:31-38:** Often minute things do make a difference. Towards the end of His earthly ministry the Lord again reaffirmed His total confidence in the reliability of the minutest elements of the Scripture. At the temple celebration of the Feast of Dedication, or Hanukkah (instituted in 165 B.C to commemorate the cleansing and reopening of the temple after its desecration by Antiochus Epiphanus three years earlier), the Jews asked Jesus to tell them plainly if He is the Messiah (John 10:24).

His answer was, "I and the Father are One." The words "one" is neuter, "one thing", not "one person". In other words, He did not assert that He and the Father are identical but that He and the Father possess essential unity together, that He enjoys perfect unity of nature and of actions with His Father. The Jews had asked if He were the Messiah. His answer was more than they had bargained for, for in it He claimed also to be equal with God.

This was certainly the way they understood His claim, for immediately they prepared to stone the Lord for what they considered to be blasphemy. In order to restrain them the Lord appealed to Psalm 82. He called this portion of the Old Testament "the Law" (John 10:34), as He did on two other occasions (John 12:34 and 15:25). In that Law, He said the judges of Israel, human beings, were called "gods" by virtue of their high and God-given office. Then, He concluded, if that Psalm can apply the term "gods" to human beings, then certainly the term "Son of God" may be rightly applied to the One whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world. In other words, if the title Elohim is applied to men, how much more appropriate it is to apply it to Himself, since He does possess essential unity with the Father.

Though this argument is highly sophisticated, certain claims Christ made here about the Bible can clearly be deduced:

The Bible is verbally inspired: He pointed the Jews to what had been written. God's Word came in written prepositional statements, not merely in concepts, thoughts, or oral tradition. It is the written record that was inspired and that can be relied on.

The Bible is inspired even in what looks as minor statements: Psalm 82 is not what would be considered a major Old Testament passage. It is not a psalm of David nor a messianic psalm. This is not said to demean the psalm in any way for, of course, it is equally inspired with all other parts of the Bible, but it is to emphasize that the Lord did not pick up an outstanding passage on which to base His argument. Indeed one might say, without being disrespectful, that He chose a rather ordinary, run-of-the-mill passage. Of course, He could not have done so if He did not believe that even such passages are God's inerrant and inspired Word. Furthermore, from that ordinary passage He focused on a single word, "gods". He could not have done so unless He believed in the verbal inspiration of the minutest part of the Bible and also on any word in any part of the statement.

The Bible is authoritatively inspired: In the midst of His sophisticated arguing the Lord threw in almost incidentally the statement: "and the Scripture cannot be broken". What does this mean ? Simply that the Scripture cannot be emptied of its authority. The only way it could

fail to have complete authority would be if it were erroneous, but Christ said that here it is both authoritative and inerrant. Christ was here staking His life on the reliability, accuracy, and authority of just one word of Scripture when His enemies were about to stone Him.

**4-THE EVIDENCE OF MATTHEW 22:23-33:** Just as in John 10:34 in the present passage also he based His argument on the written Word: not upon general concepts, but upon specific written words. Specifically, He based His case on how God identified Himself to Moses at the burning bush: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Matt. 22:32). That proves, the Lord went on to say, that God is the God of the living, which means that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were still alive though they had died long before.

How does that identification prove the doctrine of life after death? Simply by the use of the present tense, "I am". Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had died several hundred years before God spoke this way to Moses. Yet God said that He was still their God at the time He was speaking to Moses. This would not have been possible if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob ceased to exist upon their death. It was only possible if, contrary to the Sadducees' doctrine, death does not end it all.

The difference between "I am" and "I was" is only a matter of verb tense. This argument was based on a present tense to support the doctrine of resurrection. The difference is only in the tense of the verb used similar to we had or we have or I was their God or I am their God.

This interpretation of Christ has many ramifications, and let us observe carefully some of them here:

1-He assumed as true the historicity of God's appearance to Moses.

2-He assumed that God's revelation came in a propositional statements, not merely through non-verbal ideas.

3-He assumed that every word of that statement could be trusted to be precisely accurate.

4-He assumed that doctrinal truth has to be based on historical accuracy. The Bible cannot be inaccurate in matters of history and yet be accurate in doctrine.

5-He assumed that one could use even seemingly insignificant passages of Bible and trust their accuracy.

**5-THE EVIDENCE OF MATTHEW 22:41-46:** Later that same day, when the Pharisees had joined the crowd of antagonists, the Lord became the aggressor, asking a straight-forward question to them: "About the Christ, whose son is He, (Matt. 22:24). Theirs was an immediate answer: "The Son of David". The answer was correct but incomplete. Christ is the son of David as far as His humanity is concerned, but He also is the Son of God, and the Lord wanted the Pharisees to acknowledge this as well. So He asked them, "Then how does David address Him as Lord. He quoted Psalm 110:1. In that Psalm "the Lord (that is, the Father) said to my Lord (the Messiah who was David's Lord): 'Sit at My right hand (the Father's) until I (the Father) put Thine (the Messiah's) enemies beneath thy feet'.

How could David call Messiah his Lord if Messiah were only David's son? The only answer is: because Messiah was also David's God. In other words the Messiah had to be both God and man. As man He was David's son; as God, David's Lord. The pronoun "my" links David to his Messiah-Lord.

Natural procreation links Messiah to David as David's descendant. The pronoun "my": in

Psalm 110:1 links Messiah to David as David's Lord God. And the pronoun "my" is simply a YODH that smallest of Hebrew letters, attached to the word "Lord". We learn several things about the Scriptures from our Lord's attitude toward the Bible:

1-The spelling of words can be trusted completely, and not one promise will be fulfilled in any way different from how it was spelled out.

2-The only way the Scripture can lose its authority is if it contains errors, but Christ taught that the Scripture cannot be broken. Thus He must have believed it did not contain errors.

3-The Lord built sophisticated arguments on single words and even the tense of a verb.

Who can say he fully follows the Lord without accepting His teaching concerning the inerrancy of the Scriptures?

## Summary

The word of God is not only alive and powerful, but is also infallible and inerrant. Thus in the original writings produced by the forty writers, even the words used came there by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Inspiration gave such an integrity to the original text that even the smallest jot and tittle was there by God's guidance.

Doctrines of inerrancy and infallibility apply only to the original autographs of the Bible. Using tens of thousands of manuscripts that archaeologists have discovered, scholars have been able to get very close to the original autographs of the Bible. All what we said in this chapter applies to the original autographs.

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## Appendix I

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## **Contend Earnestly For The Faith How Far Can We Trust The Bible?**

**By Bob Passantino, Copyright 1992.**

"Is the Bible the inspired Word of God, or merely a number of documents man-written? If it were divinely inspired by an all- good, never-changing God, these contradictions would not be in it...[no wonder that] more than 65 million Americans...are not church members."

This is the statement of the Society of Separationists, Inc., the group of atheists following the "revelations" of their "priestess," Madalyn Murray O'Hair. Many agnostics and atheists today dismiss the Word of God instantly by appeal to the "innumerable contradictions" they have found in it. "How," they ask, "can you expect us to believe in an all-powerful God who can't keep his own revelation straight?"

These people, however, are speaking out of a deep ignorance. They simply don't know whereof they speak. Most of the ones who cry out about the "millions of contradictions" in the Bible can't list more than three or four at the most of which they have any personal knowledge. The old adage that "many put down the Bible before they pick it up" is sadly too true.

Aside from those who have no specific knowledge of the so- called contradictions in the Bible, what about those who actually claim to be able to produce them for our scrutiny? They must be dealt with. It is one thing to say, "No one has every been able to produce one absolute contradiction," and it is quite another thing to be able to back up your statement with evidence. What would the average Christian do, for example, with Dewey Beegle's *Scripture, Tradition, and Infallibility*, which spends a good number of its pages on example of what Beegle calls contradictions? It is from a desire to share the principles I have learned for resolving contradictions such as this that this article was born. There are valid, reasonable, and solid explanations for these apparent contradictions with which we are faced.

Remember, the art of resolving contradictions is only a tool of evangelism. It cannot, by itself, draw someone to Jesus Christ. Only the Holy Spirit can. However, it can break down some of the prejudices one might have against the gospel. As it is said, "a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

Also, do not be discouraged if answers are much harder and longer than the questions. After all, questions are derived from ignorance: answers are derived from knowledge.

First of all, just what is a contradiction? W. Arndt in his *Does the Bible Contradict Itself?* (p. viii) says that a contradiction is "The principle that it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be at the same time and in the same sense....This agrees in substance with the famous definition of Aristotle....'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.'" In the vernacular we might say, "it can't be a hot, cold, wet, dry, sunny, dark day in the same place at the same time."

Logically it is expressed as "A cannot be non-A." In order to resolve an apparent contradiction in the scriptures, we need only present one other possibility. If one says that he has never stolen anything, we only have to show that he has stolen once to prove him wrong. It doesn't matter if he has stolen once, ten times, or thousands of times. It's still more than never. In the same way, one who says the Bible is contradictory is saying that no one can ever find any possible solution. As soon as we can bring up even one possibility, we

have refuted his contradiction. Other possible resolutions only serve to increase the ridiculousness of his position. Sometimes there are five or more resolutions to one alleged discrepancy and the believer is at liberty to choose the one he thinks is the best.

Another consideration to keep in mind as we study supposed discrepancies is often referred to as "Aristotle's Dictum," John Warwick Montgomery in *History and Christianity* (p. 29) summarizes his dictum as "the benefit of the doubt is to be given to the document itself, not arrogated by the critic to himself." In other words, the author probably knows more about the event than the critic does, and so we should allow him the benefit of the doubt unless we have clear evidence to the contrary.

Some of these "contradictions" can actually be viewed as God's way of allowing the Bible to triumph in an almost impossible situation. If the gospels, for example, were exactly the same, the critics would immediately cry, "Scheme! Collusion!" And yet, if the gospels did contradict each other, the critics would cry even louder, "Fraud! How can a true God lie?" God has chosen the perfect road between these two positions. He has directed the minds and hearts of the scripture writers to write exactly what he wanted but in their own styles. This allows for differences without contradictions.

That is one possible explanation for the variety of written testimony in the Bible. Another explanation was ably put by Bishop Richard Whately (*On Difficulties in the Writings of St. Paul*):

The seeming contradictions in scripture are too numerous not to be the result of design; and doubtless were designed, not as mere difficulties to try our faith and patience, but as furnishing the most suitable mode of instruction that could have been devised, by mutually explaining and modifying or limiting or extending one another's meaning....Instructions thus conveyed are evidently more striking and more likely to arouse the attention; and also, from the very circumstance that they call for careful reflection, more likely to make a lasting impression.

We should never forget that just because we do not have a particular answer is no reason to admit defeat and say there is no answer. Many young Christians have started to read the Bible only to put it down in frustration with their faith damaged because they were unable to answer their own questions about Bible passages that apparently had problems. None of us knows all of the answers. I have not read everything written on alleged discrepancies or their resolutions and yet I can confidently say that since I began my study I have never found a "contradiction" that I have not been able to either answer myself or find an answer for. If I were unable to find an answer, the testimony of my previous experience would lead me to doubt my own study, not to doubt the Bible ("In the multitude of counsel there is wisdom--" Proverbs 11:14; 15:22; 24:6)

Finally, there is a much more direct way to answer the common objections to the inerrancy of the Bible. Christianity is unique among all of the religions of the world. All religions make sweeping claims about truth and reality and yet none except Christianity can point to historical evidence to verify those assertions. Christianity claims that God has revealed himself to us through his written Word and in the person of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1). Christianity has proved this claim in the historically verifiable event of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Although it is not my purpose in this article to explore this area of defending the Christian faith, this has been done capably in several books that are readily available to Christians.[1] Once we have proved that Jesus is God the Son by his historical bodily resurrection (Romans 1:3, 4), then we need only verify that he supports the verbal plenary inspiration of the

scriptures. If he said that the Bible is without error, then there cannot be any genuine contradictions in it. Jesus did declare that the Bible was God's infallible Word. He endorsed the Old Testament in Luke 24:25-27, 44, and the New Testament prophetically in John 14:26. Surely the word of God of all creation is more trustworthy than the word of a sinful human critic two thousand years after the events!

My approach to this study is perhaps unique. Rather than a hit-or-miss approach that deals with specific problems, my approach deals with principles. The advantage of this method is that when one is prepared with the proper principles, he can answer supposed contradictions he has never even encountered before. Remember, God commands us to not only preach the gospel but also "to content for the faith" (Jude 3) and part of our defense must be to answer those who claim that the Bible contains contradictions.

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[1] See J. N. D. Anderson's **Christianity: The Witness of History**, London: Tyndale

J. N. D. Anderson, **A Lawyer Among the Theologians**, Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company

M. C. Tenney, **The Reality of the Resurrection**, Chicago, IL: Moody Press

Gary Habermas, **The Resurrection of Jesus: An Apologetic**, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House

Gary Habermas and Anthony Flew, **Did Jesus Rise from the Dead? The Resurrection Debate**, New York: Harper and Row.

For further information on solving alleged Bible contradictions, we recommend John Haley's **Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible**, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.