

D2 Phase 4 — Part 2

How to Study the Bible



Resolving Apparent Contradictions

Introduction

This section will detail the most noted apparent “contradictions” in the Bible. We will see how to resolve these, and any other apparent contradiction, using the basic rules of Bible study we have learned.

Remember – APPARENT “contradictions” appear throughout the Bible. God placed them there for two reasons as we learned in our last study.

1. First to give a dishonest skeptic a reason to reject God, 2 Thes 2:9-12; Ezek 14:1-11.
2. Second to get the attention of the honest, serious student of the Bible and teach great spiritual truth that remains hidden from the skeptic, Isa 29:11-14; Matt 13:10-15.

What are the myths versus realities about the accuracy of the Bible? One person keeps a notebook of questions so he can pull it out whenever he meets someone who is a pastor. Many people have had teachers who affirmed certain things about the Bible, which they say prove it is an errant, human book—an anthology of myths, or a record of the evolutionary development of religion. You may have your own questions.

Not only will we resolve the contradictions, we will learn the truths God has for us in them, and we will see how the rules of Bible study work like we learned them.

D2 Phase 4 — Part 2

How to Study the Bible



Apparent Contradictions

I. Can God tempt man?

A. The problem:

1. James 1:13-14 says God cannot be tempted with evil, and He does not tempt anyone.
2. Genesis 22:1 says God tempted Abraham.

Is this a contradiction? Is temptation from God?

B. The Solution: 1 Pet 1:6-7; Heb 11:17, Gen 22:1, Jas 1:2-3; Gal 4:13-14, 2 Cor 12:7

RULES TO APPLY:

- *No private interpretations – compare scripture with scripture.
- *Never build a doctrine on one lone verse.
- *God chooses the exact words for a reason.
- *The individual words are the key to the Bible.

C. The lesson learned: Gen 3:1-6; Mat 4:1-11, Jas 1:13-14, Deut 8:2; 1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 1:3-4

There are actually three kinds of temptation in scripture, Psa 11:5.

II. Do the New Testament authors quote the Old Testament properly?

A. The problem:

Matthew 27:9 quotes Jeremiah as saying something, which is actually found in Zechariah 11:12-13 and not in the book of Jeremiah at all.

Did Matthew get his Old Testament prophets mixed up?

B. The solution: Matt 27:9, Matt 2:23, James 4:5, Gen 4:5-6, Gen 6:5; 8:21, Gen 30:1, Gen 37:11, Num 11:29, Psa 106:16, Prov 21:10, Eccl 4:4, John 3:18, Acts 16:31

RULES TO APPLY:

- *God chose the exact words for a reason.
- *The individual words are the key to the Bible.

C. The lesson learned: Rom 1:17 / Hab 2:4, Matt 8:17 / Isa 53:4, Matt 19:18 / Exod 20:13, Matt 22:37 / Deut 6:5

This is the principle of free quotation.

The problem: Gen 46:26-27/Acts 7:14

The solution: in Gen 46:26, Acts 7:14, Gen 46:27

Occam's Razor: The simplest answer is **probably** the correct one

Shelby's Shave: The most believing answer is **always** the correct one

The lesson:

There is always a faith-based answer to be found to a believing mind.

III. Is salvation by works or by grace through faith?

A. The problem:

1. Jas 2:20-24 says, faith without works is dead and Abraham was justified by works.
2. Gal 2:16 says a man is NOT justified by the works of the law.

Which is it?

B. The solution: Gal 1:2, James 1:1, Gen 15:6, Rom 4:11-12, Gen 22:9, James 2:23, Gen 22:17, Dan 12:3, 1 Cor 15:41-42, James 2:1, 2:8, 2:13, 2:15-16; Rom 10:9-10,13

RULES TO APPLY:

- *No private interpretations – compare scripture with scripture.
- *The Bible is written to three groups of people.
- *Determine the context.
- *Rightly divide the Word of Truth.

C. The lessons learned: James 2:21, Eph 2:8-9, Rom 3:26, Rom 4:1-3

1. The importance of context & rightly dividing the Word of God

2. In OT and NT salvation, justification works differently

3. While works still prove our faith before men, they do not justify us before God, Rom 4:1-3

IV. The son of the hated wife.

A. The problem:

1. In Deuteronomy 21:15-17, God clearly says the firstborn son is to be the heir regardless of the man's relationship with his wives in multiple wife situations.

2. In Genesis 21:9-13, God specifically tells Abraham to violate this law.

Why would God contradict himself?

B. The solution: Exod 20

RULES TO APPLY:

*Determine the context.

*Rightly divide the Word of Truth.

C. The lesson learned:

1. Never question the Bible, always question your own assumptions
2. Recognize there is a major division (dispensation) between Abraham and Moses, Luke 16:16

V. The day the sun stood still.

A. The problem:

Joshua 10:12-14 describes a battle where the Lord caused the sun not to set for about an entire day, so Israel could have enough light to finish the job. It mentions three times how the “sun stood still.” Setting aside the fact it is a miracle and all things are possible with God, the complaint is, everyone knows the earth revolves around the sun, so for the Bible to say the sun stood still shows it is not scientifically accurate.

B. The solution:

RULES TO APPLY:

*Always give the Bible the benefit of the doubt.

C. The lessons learned: Joshua 10, Phil 4:19,

C. The lessons learned: Rev 7:1, John 3, Ezek 37

VII. Is the Holy Spirit an “IT”?

A. The problem:

Romans 8:16 says “the Spirit (Holy Spirit) “itself” beareth witness with our spirit...” The complaint is that it should read “the Spirit himself” since the Holy Spirit is a person and not a force.

B. The solution: Romans 8:26, Gen 3:15

RULES TO APPLY:

- *No private interpretations
- *Compare scripture with scripture
- *The individual words are the key to the Bible.

VIII. Where are the missing years? Does God know how to count?

A. The problem:

1. 1 Kings 6:1 says Solomon began building the temple 480 years after the Exodus from Egypt.

2. Paul’s message in Acts 13:18-22 gives a time span in the history of Israel of 573 years for the same events.

Where are the 93 missing years?

B. The solution:

RULES TO APPLY:

- *No private interpretations (compare scripture with scripture)
- *Always give the Bible the benefit of the doubt
- *All Scripture has 3 applications: doctrinal – historical – inspirational.

Cycles of Israel’s Bondage

• Judges 3:5-11	(8 yrs)	to Cushan-rishathaim (Mesopotamians)	1401-1394 BC
• Judges 3:12-30	(18 yrs)	to Eglon (Moabites)	1354-1336 BC
• Judges 4:1-5:31	(20 yrs)	to Jabin (Canaanites)	1316-1296 BC
3:31		to Philistines is simultaneous	1296 BC
• Judges 6:1-8:35	(7 yrs)	to the Midianites	1256-1249 BC
• Judges 13:1-16:31	(40 yrs)	to the Philistines	1161-1121 BC
10:6-12:7		to Ammonites is simultaneous	1161-1143 BC

TOTAL 93 years

C. The lesson learned: 2 John 8, 2 Cor 5:11, 1 John 1:9

IX. Ahaziah's age.

A. The problem:

1. 2 Chronicles 22:2 says Ahaziah was 42 when he began to reign.
2. 2 Kings 8:26 says he was 22 years old when he began to reign. Which is it 22 or 42?
3. Also, 2 Chronicles 21:20 says Jehoram was 40 years old when he died. The next verse, 2 Chronicles 22:1 says Ahaziah, his youngest son, reigned in his stead. The next verse, 2 Chronicles 22:2, says Ahaziah was 42 years old when he began to reign. This makes Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram, 2 years OLDER than his father!

How can this be?

B. The solution: in 2 Kings 8, 2 Chron 18:2, 2 Chron 21:2, 2 Chron 18:1,3

RULES TO APPLY:

- *Always give the Bible the benefit of the doubt
- *No private interpretation (compare scripture with scripture)
- *Never base a doctrine on just one verse

1. Regarding the discrepancy on Ahaziah's age – 22 or 42?
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One Bible fact:

A man can be anointed king before he is actually inaugurated as sole ruler. In other words, anointing and inauguration were two separate things, and co-regency was not uncommon.

Examples:

- Saul was anointed king in 1 Samuel 10:1, he took the kingdom in 1 Samuel 11:15
 - David was anointed king in 1 Samuel 16:13 but did not take the kingdom until 2 Samuel 2:4
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Other Bible facts:

- Ahaziah married into the royal line, 2 Kings 8:27; 2 Chron 22:9
 - Ahaziah was Ahab's nephew, 2 Kings 8:26; 1 Kings 16:28-30
 - Jehoshaphat had *joined affinity* with Ahab, 2 Chron 18:1
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- A son-in-law is equally called a son in the Bible, 1 Sam 24:16; Luke 3:23/Matt 1:16
- A step-son is equally called a son in the Bible, Luke 2:48; 3:23; Matt 13:55
- Ahaziah is anointed at 22 to succeed Jehoshaphat of Judah when affinity is made with Ahab
- He is sole monarch at 42 when Ahab is killed in battle

2. Regarding Ahaziah being 2 years older than his father, Jehoram.

- In the Bible, the word, son, may refer to any male descendant, Matt 1:1; 1 Kings 15:1 (just like daughter may refer to any female descendant, Genesis 24:48, 36:24).
- The word, father, can refer to any male ancestor, Psalm 78:8; 2 Sam 9:7.

- So Ahaziah was son-in-law to Jehoram (Judah) through the affinity he gained by marriage, while he was likely biologically the son of Jehoshaphat (Jehoram's father), one of whose wives had been the daughter of Omri, father of Ahab.

C. Lesson learned:

- God knows how to record genealogies so that, even though we do not have all the facts at this time, it was correct as to history, and God recorded it the way God will account it.
- God has protected the royal line all the way from Abraham, through Isaac, Jacob, Judah, then David, and at bottom line, Jesus is the Messiah seed of David, Rom 1:3; John 7:42; 2 Tim 2:8.

A WORD OF CAUTION, TITUS 3:9; PROV 23:9:

D2 Phase 4 – Parts 1 & 2
Rules and Contradictions



Self-evaluation

What should I have learned from this section?

1. List the 20 rules of Bible study. They do not have to be in order, and you can reword or paraphrase them. When you get stuck, refer to your notes.

Ruled area for writing the answer to the self-evaluation question.

2. All the rules are important. What are the two or three that stand out in your mind as the most important, and why?

3. What are the two reasons God gives for apparent contradictions in the Bible?

4. Can you think of another apparent contradiction not listed in this study? Resolve it using the rules of Bible study, and show the lesson learned.

Key verses to commit to memory:
2 Tim 2:5; 2 Pet 1:20-21; 2 Tim 2:15; John 16:12