



8) WHY SO MANY PICTURES OF GOD SOMETIMES ANGRY, SOMETIMES COMPASSIONATE, SO MANY DETAILS ABOUT HIS DIFFERENT WAYS? IS GOD DIFFERENT THAN THE SON?

Hebrews 1: 1-3 “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son ... The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being.” (NIV)

Jesus’ use of the Old Testament as evidence of the truth about Him:

Luke 24:27 “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the scriptures concerning himself.”(NIV)

John 5:39, 40 “You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.” (NIV))

One of the disciples of Christ, Phillip wasn’t concerned about knowing Jesus, He wanted to know how the Father was like. “Is the Father someone we need to fear? We don’t fear you, Lord. Could the Father be like you?”

John 14:8, 9 “Philip said, ‘Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us. Jesus answered: ‘Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” (NIV)

Jesus was saying “don’t misunderstand my Father because of those stories”, we are indeed the same way. Jesus wanted to make it very plain to them about God.

John 16:26 “I do not promise to intercede with the Father for you, for the Father loves you himself. (Goodspeed)

Jesus himself was there in the midst of all those horrible pictures in the old testament, He wasn’t separated from the Father during those times, as we read:

1 Corinthians 10:4 “They all drank from the supernatural Rock that accompanied their travels - and the Rock was Christ.” (NEB)

9) WHAT DOES THIS TELL US ABOUT GOD, EVEN OF JESUS? HOW CAN GOD ALLOW AND COMMAND THESE SEEMINGLY CRUEL ACTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND STILL BE LIKE GENTLE AS JESUS?

Matthew 19:7, 8 “The Pharisees asked him, ‘Why, then, did Moses give the law for a man to hand his wife a divorce notice and send her away? Jesus answered, ‘Moses gave you permission to divorce your wives because are so hard to teach, But it was not that at the time of creation.”

The Principle of Context/the setting is what determines the meaning of the text. Present sin and illness and put it in the setting of the remedy. To be fair to the remedy we must look it as a whole and recreate the setting, the context in which that was presented and then we can understand the reasons why.

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A STATEMENT THE PURPOSE AND METHOD OF BIBLE STUDY, BY GRAHAM MAXWELL, © 1984

“The great purpose of the Bible is to reveal the truth about our heavenly Father that we may be won back to Him in love and trust. This truth, this everlasting good news, is to be in every one of the sixty-six book. But to discover truth we must learn more than just what happened to Samson and Delilah, to David and Bathsheba, to Gideon and his fleece. The all-important question is, what do these stories tell us about God? If one does not ask this question, much of the content of Scripture may seem unrelated to the plan of salvation, even perplexing, sometimes even contradictory. But when one learns to view the Bible as a whole, there emerges a consistent picture of an all-wise and gracious God who seems willing to go to any length to keep in touch with His people, to stoop and reach them where they are, to speak a language they can understand. And the further one reads on, book by book, the more one is moved with love and admiration for a God who would be willing to run such risk, to pay such a price, in order to keep open the lines of communication between Himself and His wayward children. God will save all who trust Him. But He has not asked us to trust Him as a stranger. The Bible - all of it - is a record of God’s revelation and demonstration of infinite trustworthiness.”

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We trust the reality that God is love (1 John 4:8). Love is other-centered, not self-seeking. The full representation of the love of God came in human flesh through the person of Jesus Christ, who created all things in the universe by the word of His mouth, lived a life of service to humanity and saved us from our sins, our rebellion, our own desire to live without Him. By His death and resurrection we have assurance of a future without pain, hurt and selfishness. We also trust the ancient scriptures hold the evidence for the story of this passionate God, how He intended the world to be, what happened to get the world in the mess that it is in and if this mess is ever going to end. Throughout these Friday nights we will present glimpses of evidence that can give us assurance God loves us deeply, has won the hearts of most of the universe, except for this little planet, but His light is shining on the heart of humanity brighter and brighter each day. As restored followers of Christ, we will also show outwardly how to live a life of other-centered love, helping others in physical, material, emotional and spiritual need.

INTRO

The books of the bible show us and explain to us the mess we are in and what God has done. If these experiences were not collected, the world wouldn’t have known the evidence about God’s true character. But a question is raised, why do we trust the bible? What is it about this book that is different? Does it contain everything written about God through the ages? If not, why were these chosen? Since the bible wasn’t written in English, Portuguese or any modern language, can we trust the translations? Do the translations accurately depict the right message, the right meaning of the original words?

The word bible means books, collection of books. The bible is a collection of people’s experiences with manifestations of God throughout the ages. What is most important about the bible, is not the fact that it is a code/rule book that we must follow, it’s not a collection of morally relevant statements and punishments. Every story, every teaching needs to be looked at as a whole, from cover to cover, because the entirety reveals to us who God is. Is He a person we can trust?

1) DO WE HAVE THE RIGHT COLLECTION OF BOOKS IN THE BIBLE?

2 Timothy 3:16. “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching ... “(RSV)
“Every inspired scripture has its use for teaching the truth ... “(NEB)
2 Timothy 3:14, 17. “But for your part, stand by the truths you have learned and are assured of. Remember from whom you learned them; remember that from early childhood you have been familiar with the sacred writings which have power to make you wise and lead you to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Every inspired scripture has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error or for reformation of manners and discipline in right living, so that the man who belongs to God may be efficient and equipped for good work of every kind.” (NEB)

For orthodox Jews there were only 29 books in the bible: (The Cannons)

The Law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

The Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

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The Writings: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles.

2) HOW DID JESUS SEE THE OLD TESTAMENT? WHAT WAS HIS OPINION AND EXPLANATION ABOUT ALL THE STORIES FOUND THERE?

Luke 24:44, “Everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled.” (RSV)

Matthew 5: 17, 18, “Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law (all Old Testament) until all is accomplished.” (RSV)

John 10:34. “Jesus answered them, ‘Is it not written in your law, “I said you are gods.”?’” (RSV) (Quoted from Psalms 82:6)

John 10:34, 35. “Jesus answered ... We know that what the scripture says is true forever.” (GNB)

Jesus believed in the whole Old Testament developed in three canons:

Isaiah 8: 19, 20, “When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.”(NN)

Zechariah 7:12. “They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the Lord Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets.” (NIV)

THE OLD TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA:

I and II Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Additions to Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Susanna, Song of the Three Children, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasseh, I and II Maccabees.

3) HOW DO WE DECIDE WHAT BOOKS ARE TRUE?

SOME BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT PSEUDEPIGRAPHA (MEANING FALSELY ENTITLED):

Testament of Adam, Book of Jubilees, Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Testament of Job, Book of Enoch, Sibylline Oracles, Assumption of Moses, Ascension of Isaiah, Psalms of Solomon, Magical Books of Moses, Story of Ahikar.

SOME BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA (HIDDEN):

Gospel of Thomas, Book of James, Assumption of the Virgin, Acts of John. Acts of Paul, Acts of Peter, Letters of Christ and Abgarus, Letter of Lentulus, Apocalypse of Peter, Apocalypse of Paul.

4) HOW DO WE KNOW WE HAVE THE WORDS ACCURATELY PRESERVED AND ACCURATELY TRANSLATED FROM THE HEBREW, ARAMAIC, AND GREEK?

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THE PRESERVATION OF THE BIBLE:

“The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true Word of God, handed down without essential loss from generation to generation throughout the centuries.” (Frederic Kenyon, one’ time curator of the British Museum)

5) WE HAVE ALL THIS EVIDENCE AVAILABLE IN SO MANY VERSIONS, BUT ARE WE WILLING TO ANALYZE THE EVIDENCE AND CAN WE TRUST THE INSPIRATION OF THE WRITERS? MORE IMPORTANTLY, CAN WE SEE THROUGH THOSE THE EVIDENCE WE NEED TO TRUST GOD?

The King James Bible’s original preface: “Hath the Kingdom of God become words and syllables? Why should we be in bondage to them when we may be free?”

Let’s take the bible, the versions we are most comfortable with, using multiple ones to understand harder passages and always pray for understanding of the original meaning.

6) IF WE HAVE THE RIGHT BOOKS AND WORDS AND TRANSLATIONS SO HOW ABOUT THE MEANING? SINCE THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN IN OTHER LANGUAGES AND OTHER CULTURES DURING A DIFFERENT TIME HOW CAN WE UNDERSTAND WHAT IT SAYS?

Habakkuk 2:7 “Thou shalt be for booties unto them.” (KJV) – Baby socks? Spoils of war

Job 41:18 “By his neesings a light doth shine.” (KJV) – Sneezing

Exodus 28:11 “Ouches of gold.” (KJV) – Settings

Luke 17:9 “I trow not.” (KJV) - Suppose

Romans 1: 13 “Oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto).”(KJV) - prevent

1 Thessalonians 4:15 “We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.” (KJV) - precede

John 20: 17 “Jesus saith unto her, ‘Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.’” (KJV) – The Greek means, “don’t cling to me.”

John 2:4 “Jesus saith unto her, ‘Woman, what have I to do with thee?’” (KJV) - In the Cultural context of Jesus’ time – Woman=Wife or Mother why do you bring this problem to me?

7) WHY DOES THE BIBLE HAVE SO FEW THEOLOGICAL STATEMENTS IN THE BIBLE? WHY IS THERE SO MUCH HISTORICAL DETAIL?

God’s way is by demonstration. Not mere claims. He shows us the reasons why He acts in certain ways different than others sometimes, those details are in the context of the history around.

Matthew 11:4-6 “Jesus gave them this reply, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see - that blind men are recovering their sight, cripples are walking, lepers being healed, the deaf hearing, the dead being raised to life and the good news is being given to those in need. And happy is the man who never loses his faith in me.’” (Phillips) (See Isaiah 35 and 61.)

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