

CHRISTIAN SCHOLARS RECOGNIZE CONTRADICTIONS IN THE BIBLE (PART 5 OF 7): BEGINNING TO BE A LITTLE MORE HONEST

Rating: 5.0

Description: Some newer translations to the Bible are now beginning to mention the contradictions and the doubtfulness of the passages.

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Well, where do all of these Bibles come from and why the difficulty in defining what is a truly "inspired" word of God? They come from the "ancient manuscripts" (also known as MSS). The Christian world today boasts of an excess of 24,000 "ancient manuscripts" of the Bible dating all the way back to the fourth century after Christ (But not back to Christ or the apostles themselves). In other words, we have with us gospels which date back to the century when the Trinitarians took over the Christian Church. All manuscripts from before this period have strangely perished. All Bibles in existence today are compiled from these "ancient manuscripts." Any scholar of the Bible will tell us that no two ancient manuscripts are exactly identical.

People today generally believe that there is only ONE Bible, and ONE version of any given verse of the Bible. This is far from true. All Bibles in our possession today (Such as the KJV, the NRSV, the NAB, NIV,...etc.) are the result of extensive cutting and pasting from these various manuscripts with no single one being *the definitive* reference. There are countless cases where a paragraph shows up in one "ancient manuscript" but is totally missing from many others. For instance, Mark 16:8-20 (twelve whole verses) is completely missing from the most ancient manuscripts available today (such as the Sinaitic Manuscript, the Vatican #1209 and the Armenian version) but shows up in more *recent* "ancient manuscripts." There are also many documented cases where even geographical locations are completely different from one ancient manuscript to the next. For instance, in the "Samaritan Pentateuch manuscript," Deuteronomy 27:4 speaks of "mount Gerizim," while in the "Hebrew manuscript" the exact same verse speaks of "mount Ebal." From Deuteronomy 27:12-13 we can see that these are two distinctly different locations. Similarly, Luke 4:44 in some "ancient manuscripts" mentions "Synagogues of Judea," others mention "Synagogues of Galilee." This is only a sampling, a comprehensive listing would require a book of its own.

There are countless examples in the Bible where verses of a questionable nature are included in the text without any disclaimer telling the reader that many scholars and translators have serious reservations as to their authenticity. The King James Version of the Bible (Also known as the "Authorized Version"), the one in the hands of the majority of Christendom today, is one of the most notorious in this regard. It gives the reader absolutely no clue as to the questionable nature of such verses. However, more recent translations of the Bible are now beginning to be a little more honest and forthcoming in this regard. For example, the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, by Oxford Press, has adopted an extremely subtle system of bracketing the most glaring examples of such questionable verses with double square brackets ([[]]). It is highly unlikely that the casual reader will realize the true function these brackets serve. They are there to tell the informed reader that the enclosed verses are of a highly questionable nature. Examples of this are the story of the "woman taken in adultery" in John 8:1-11, as well as Mark 16:9-20 (Jesus' resurrection and return), and Luke 23:34 (which, interestingly enough, is there to confirm the prophesy of Isaiah 53:12).....and so forth.

For example, with regard to John 8:1-11, the commentators of this Bible say in very small print at the bottom of the page:

"The most ancient authorities lack 7.53-8.11; other authorities add the passage here or after 7.36 or after 21.25 or after Luke 21.38 with variations of text; some mark the text as doubtful."

With regard to Mark 16:9-20, we are, strangely enough, given a *choice* of how we would like the Gospel of Mark to end. The commentators have supplied both a "short ending" and a "long ending." Thus, we are given a *choice* of what we would prefer to be the "inspired word of God". Once again, at the end of this Gospel in very small text, the commentators say:

"Some of the most ancient authorities bring the book to a close at the end of verse 8. One authority concludes the book with the shorter ending; others include the shorter ending and then continue with verses 9-20. In most authorities, verses 9-20 follow immediately after verse 8, though in some of these authorities the passage is marked as being doubtful."

Peake's Commentary on the Bible records;

"It is now generally agreed that 9-20 are not an original part of Mk. They are not found in the oldest MSS, and indeed were apparently not in the copies used by Mt. and Lk. A 10th-cent. Armenian MS ascribes the passage to Aristion, the presbyter mentioned by Papias (ap.Eus.HE III, xxxix, 15)."

"Indeed an Armenian translation of St. Mark has quite recently been discovered, in which the last twelve verses of St. Mark are ascribed to Ariston, who is otherwise known as one of the earliest of the Christian Fathers; and it is quite possible that this

tradition is correct”

Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts, F. Kenyon, Eyre and Spottiswoode, pp. 7-8

Even at that, these verses are noted as having been narrated differently in different “authorities.” For example, verse 14 is claimed by the commentators to have the following words added on to them in some “ancient authorities”:

“and they excused themselves saying ‘This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who does not allow the truth and power of God to prevail over the unclean things of the spirits. Therefore, reveal your righteousness now’ - thus they spoke to Christ and Christ replied to them ‘The term of years of Satan’s power has been fulfilled, but other terrible things draw near. And for those who have sinned I was handed over to death, that they may return to the truth and sin no more, that they may inherit the spiritual and imperishable glory of the righteousness that is in heaven’.”

comment

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