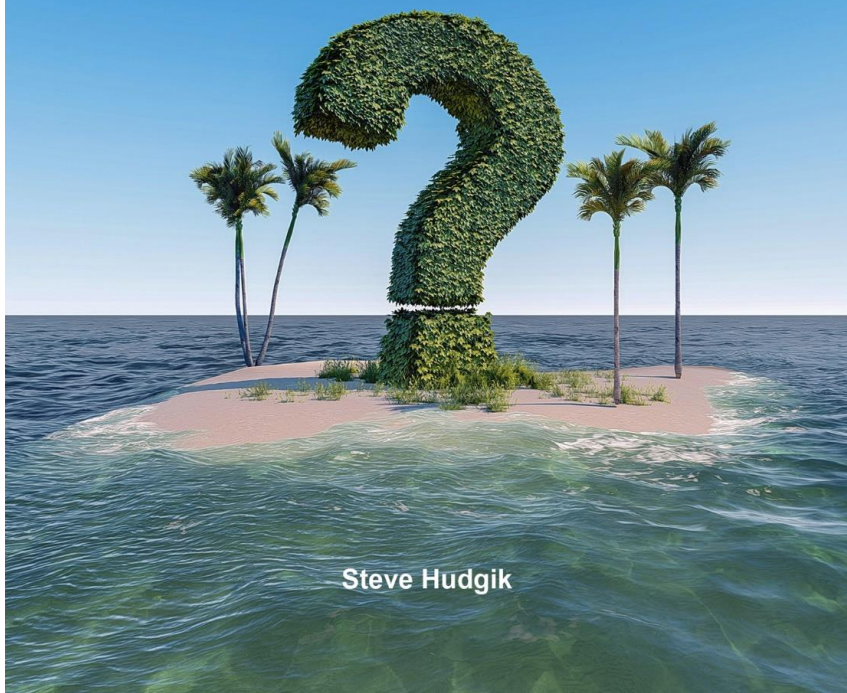


ANSWERS TO 180 HUMANIST ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE BIBLE

Volume I
Errors, Contradictions and God's Cruelty



Steve Hudgik

Answers to 180
Humanist Accusations
Against The Bible
Volume I
Errors, Contradictions and God's Cruelty

Steven Hudgik

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to Dorian who asked the question that got me started answering these accusations.

If you continue in My word, then
you are truly disciples of Mine;
and you will know the truth and
the truth will make you free.

~ John 8:31b-32

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME I – Errors, Contradictions and God’s Cruelty

Introduction	1
1 – Why do Humanists Reject the Bible?	7
2 – Contradictions in the Order of Creation?	11
3 – What Does the Word Day Mean?	15
4 – Sun, Moon & Stars Created When?	19
5 – Did God Create Plants Twice?	21
6 – How Were Birds Created?	23
7 – 2 or 7 Pairs of Birds?	27
8 – When did the Mountaintops Appear?	31
9 – When was the Ground Dry?	33
10 – David’s Census – God Contradicts Himself?	37
11 – Did God Command Animal Sacrifices?	41
12 – Are Jesus’ Genealogies Contradictory?	45
13 – Where did they go After Jesus’ Birth?	51
14 – What Happened to the Money Judas Was Paid?	55
15 – Who Carried Jesus’ Cross?	59
16 – Did Just One or Both Criminals Taunt Jesus?	61
17 – What Were Jesus’ Last Words?	65
18 – Who Got to the Tomb When?	69
19 – What Really Happened that Sunday Morning?	73
20 – Did Paul Really Hear God Speak?	77
21 – Does the Bible Approve of Cruelty?	81
22 – Is Cursing the Entire Creation Evil?	85
23 – Did the Flood Drown Innocent People?	91
24 – Did God Torment Egyptians (And Kill Babies)?	95
25 – Did God Command Extermination of Seven Nations?	101
26 – Why Did God Kill David’s Baby?	105
27 – God Required His Son to be Tortured and Murdered	109
28 – Non-Christians are Tortured Forever	113
29 – God Commands Israel to Kill All Amalekites	117
30 – God Orders the Jews to be Killed	121
31 -- God Makes Samaria Desolate	125
32 – God Kills Israelites, Including Virgins	127

33 – God Commands Women Captured In Wat Be Killed	131
34 – Day of the Lord: Children Are Dashed to Pieces	133
35 – Multiple Examples of Biblical Sadism Refuted	137
36 – God’s Punishments are Grossly Disproportionate	149
37 – People are Punished for Mere Disbelief	163
38 – God Incites Human Violence	169

PART I APPENDICES

A – Humanist View: Morality Comes From... People?	175
B – God, The Only Valid Source of Morality	181

VOLUME II – Science, Prophecies & History

Introduction	197
39 – Biblical Teaching Violates the Laws of Nature	203
40 – The Bible Opposes Scientific Principles	211
41 – Humanist Hypocrisy	217
42 – The Supernatural: Examples of the Impossible	225
43 – More Supernatural Examples of the Impossible	229
44 – The Supernatural: It’s Unbelievable!	235
45 – Is Believing in the Supernatural Harmful?	241
46 – Does Believing in the Supernatural Spread Disease?	245
47 – Believing in the Supernatural Causes Plagues	253
48 – Supernatural? Science is Better	257
49 – Does the Bible Hinder Science?	263
50 – Does the Bible Teach Geocentricity?	267
51 – Does the Bible Teach the Earth is Stationary?	271
52 – Does the Bible Teach the Earth is Flat?	277
53 – Humanists Don’t Give Up: More Flat Earth Claims	281
54 – Does the Bible Teach the Sky is Solid?	289
55 – Does the Sky Have Windows?	295
56 – Are there Signs in the Heavens?	299
57 – Other Scientific Errors in the Bible	305
58 – Does the Bible Say a Bat is a Bird?	313
59 – Myth of the Historical Effect of the Bible on Science	317
60 – Humanist Accusation: Adam Didn’t Die	321

61 – What was Jacob’s Name?	325
62 – How great was Solomon’s Wealth?	329
63 – What Happened to Damascus?	333
64 – How long was the 70 Year Babylonia Captivity?	335
65 – Did any of These Prophecies Fail?	339
66 – New Testament Prophecies Not Fulfilled	345
67 – Jesus Made a Mistake about His Time in the Tomb?	349
68 – Wish Upon Jesus?	353
69 – Did Noah’s Flood Really Happen?	357
70 – Did the Exodus Really Happen?	361
71 – Is the Story of Esther Historical?	365
72 – Was Belshazzar King?	371
73 – Was there a Roman Census?	375
74 – What is the Age of the Earth?	379
75 – Why Didn’t Herod’s Killing Babies Make the News?	383
76 – Was there Darkness when Christ was Crucified?	387
77 – Was Jesus a Real Person?	391
78 – Humanist’s Concluding Statement: Part 1	397
79 – Humanist’s Concluding Statement: Part 2	401
80 – Humanist’s Concluding Statement: Part 3	409

PART II APPENDIX

Humanists’ False Apologist: Andrew D. White	415
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All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work

— 2 Timothy 3:16-17

INTRODUCTION

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say...”
– Genesis 3:1

That is where it starts. Satan’s question: “*Did God really say?*” is still the approach he uses today. Satan deceived Eve by getting her to doubt the truth and trustworthiness of God’s word. Satan knew if he could get Eve to doubt God’s word, the battle was over. He has not changed his tactics to this day. Why? Because it works. According to a 2020 survey by the Cultural Research Center (Arizona Christian University), just 54% of Christians identify God as the basis of truth. If Satan can get you to doubt the truth of God’s word... if he can get you to listen to and accept his accusations against scripture, Satan becomes the lord of your life. Satan’s tactics are the tactics what humanists use. If they can get you to believe God’s word cannot be trusted, they have won the battle.

The problem humanist’s face is that God’s word is true. How do you take what is true and prove it false? The most common tactic is elephant flinging. Throw out so many accusations that people are overwhelmed, do not bother investigating, and start thinking... where there is smoke there must be fire... right? There are so many accusations; some of them must be true.

Combine elephant flinging with a host of distortions, out-of-context quotes, and other propaganda techniques, and you get a huge list that repeatedly asks Satan’s favorite question, “Did God really say?”

Introduction

He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" – Genesis 3:1

Notice the wording of Satan's question. Even in his question, Satan distorted the word of God. He added the word "any." God actually said, *'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.'*"

By changing the wording, Satan makes it sound as though God is some sort of monster, prohibiting them from eating from ANY tree. This is a common tactic humanist's use, and the answer is "No, God did not say that. Look at what scripture actually says. Get the truth instead of believing Satan's lie.

What is This Book?

This book is a response to every accusation against the Bible made in a rather long article (elephant flinging) on the American Humanist's web site. I go through all of the accusations and answer them one-by-one. The web page is located here:

www.AmericanHumanist.org/what-is-humanism/reasons-humanists-reject-bible/

I am responding to the web page as it was in January 2018. This book was originally published in 2018 as "Did God Really Say?" and was retitled and updated as a two volume set in 2020.

What is Humanism?

What are we talking about when we say "humanism?" Here is the dictionary definition:

Humanism: an outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or supernatural matters. Humanist beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human beings, emphasize common human needs, and seek solely rational ways of solving human problems – www.Merriam-Webster.com

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

The use of the word “rational” in above definition bothers me. This definition implies that other belief systems, such as Christianity, are not completely rational. The problem is, the opposite is true. Christianity is rational. Humanism actually turns away from reality and rational, logical thinking. We will see that as I answer their accusations. However, I am jumping ahead. Let's start at the beginning of the story.

While this book serves as a reference to refute Humanist attacks on the Bible, it is more valuable than that. The questions and answers provide a framework that will help you go deeper into scripture, and help you grow in your knowledge of God and His word. That is why I love answering questions. I always learn something new. I hope the answers in this book also help you to learn and gain new insights into God's word.

While this book intended to be read from beginning to end, you may also use it as a reference and skip around. Each chapter stands on its own.

Dear humanist, I am glad you are reading this book. My challenge to you is to be patient, read at least a dozen chapters (they are short), and do so with an open mind. Set aside, for a moment, the presuppositions of humanism and consider the truth of what the creator God of the universe says. Setting aside bias can be difficult for all of us (me included), because it is hard to see our own presuppositions. However, it is worth the effort. Thank you for making the effort.

Humanists, This Book is for You!

While this book is intended for Christians, I hope a few humanists will be interested enough to read it.

Reading the humanist web site, I can see the author is intelligent. A lot smarter than I am. However, that does not mean that what he says is right and that it accurately reflects reality. Smart people can be wrong. Sincere people can be wrong.

I challenge you... if you are a humanist... be honest and set aside your presupposition. As you read this book, you will see that, when

Introduction

looked at objectively, many of the accusations are contrived and baseless. Is that a foundation for truth? No. So be honest with yourself, be honest in your evaluation, and seek truth... the whole truth, and you will be set free.

Study Tip:

Each chapter starts with a quote from the American Humanist web site. Notice the wording. Many of them use emotion-packed words intended to get you to draw conclusions based on emotions, not rational, logical thinking. This leads to unsupported and unbiblical conclusions based on an emotional response. Remember what scripture says:

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? - Jeremiah 17:9.

On the other hand, Christianity is not an emotion-based religion. It is a rational, knowledge-based, logical worldview. It is an informed faith based in reality and history.

About this Book

My response to the accusations on the humanist web page are in two volumes. Although I have tried to keep the responses as short as possible, providing just enough information to demonstrate the humanist's accusations are false, their web page is so long (elephant flinging) that answering them required two volumes.

In this first volume, I address accusations about errors in the Bible, contradictions, and that God is cruel.

In the second volume, I answer accusations based on science, prophecy, and history.

The complete table of contents and indexes are included in both volumes.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Thus says the Lord God,

*“Because your heart is lifted up
and you have said, ‘I am a god,
I sit in the seat of gods
In the heart of the seas’;
Yet you are a man and not God,
Although you make your heart like the heart of God—
Behold, you are wiser than Daniel;
There is no secret that is a match for you.
By your wisdom and understanding
You have acquired riches for yourself
And have acquired gold and silver for your treasuries.
By your great wisdom, by your trade
You have increased your riches
And your heart is lifted up because of your riches—*

*Therefore thus says the Lord God,
‘Because you have made your heart
Like the heart of God,
Therefore, behold, I will bring strangers upon you,
The most ruthless of the nations.
And they will draw their swords
Against the beauty of your wisdom
And defile your splendor.
They will bring you down to the pit,
And you will die the death of those who are slain
In the heart of the seas.*

*‘Will you still say, “I am a god,”
In the presence of your slayer,
Though you are a man and not God,
In the hands of those who wound you?
You will die the death of the uncircumcised
By the hand of strangers,
For I have spoken!’ declares the Lord God.*

- Ezekiel 23:2b-10

Introduction

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

*Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?
Tell Me, if you have understanding. - Job 38:4*

CHAPTER 1 WHY DO HUMANISTS REJECT THE BIBLE?

I will respond to the humanist's allegations in the order they are on the web page. This first section of alleged "contradictions" begins with:

"The Bible is an unreliable authority because it contains numerous contradictions. Logically, if two statements are contradictory, at least one of them is false. The biblical contradictions therefore prove that the book has many false statements and is not infallible."

Is this the real reason humanist reject the Bible? On the other hand, is it an attempt to justify their rejection of God? Our creator God knows what we are thinking, and knows our hearts better than we do. He explains what is going on in Romans chapter 1. They are intentionally suppressing the truth. This is not about contradictions in scripture; it is about justifying a humanist desire for God not to exist. That God exists is plain to everyone, and the reality is that we all are without excuse.

That which is known about God is evident within them, for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. – Romans 1:19

The issue is not one of demonstrating the Bible is reliable. The issue is a heart issue. There is no rational reason to reject the Bible.

Why Do Humanists Reject the Bible?

Humanists blindly reject the Bible because they do not want it to be true. They do not want to be accountable to God.

The Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. - John 3:19

Scripture says they “suppress the truth by their wickedness” (Romans 1:18b). To suppress something indicates an action of the will. They are willingly and intentionally blind. This becomes clear as we work our way through their accusations against the Bible. Many are so flimsy, contrived, and obviously false that it is hard to believe an intelligent person would raise them as objections. However, when you try to prove what is true to be false, what choice do you have? You have to put your faith in flimsy arguments and empty accusations.

Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools – Romans 1:22

Why Not Do This Right?

What is interesting is that every objection, contradiction and accusation against the Bible has been answered hundreds of times, and in many cases answered well over 1000 years ago. So what is the problem? Even though most answers are readily available, humanists repeatedly bring up the same accusations. They seem to be blind to the fact that their questions have been answered.

If humanists wanted to truly demonstrate there are contradictions in the Bible, they would state the contradiction; then give the best Biblical response that refutes it (not a strawman response), then refute that response—if they could. However, I have never seen that type of a scholarly, sound approach to discussing the Bible. Humanists seem to prefer a "hit and run" approach, such as the web page we will be looking at, often without fully explaining their supposed contradictions.

However, we will take what they say at face value. They say they reject the Bible because there are contradictions. If it can be shown there are no contradictions in the Bible, humanists will believe the Bible and become Christians. That is the logical conclusion, is it not?

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Yes, and it sometimes happens. However, not because of a book such as this. Salvation is a supernatural creative work of God, not a result of our works. So no one may boast.

So let's do it. Let's find out if there is an answer to every accusation and question the humanists use to attack the Bible.

Watch my 30 SECOND video: "The Question for Atheists."
Go to: www.SciencePastor.com/thequestion

Why Do Humanists Reject the Bible?

CHAPTER 2 CONTRADICTIONS IN THE ORDER OF CREATION

The HUMANIST’S FIRST ACCUSATION: Genesis chapter 1 says the first man and woman were made at the same time, and after the animals. But Genesis chapter 2 gives a different order of creation: man, then the animals, and then woman.

Humanists love to take parts of scripture, read into them whatever meaning they desire, and then claim there are contradictions. There is little or no effort to understand the context nor what scripture is actually saying. Words are important, and word choice in scripture is important... even in our English translations.

Background: There are three creation accounts in Genesis chapters one and two. The first, Genesis 1:1 provides a broad overview. It is a summary of what God did. In many respects, it is like a title for this section of scripture:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. - Genesis 1:1

Hebrew does not have a word for “universe.” The phrase "the heavens and the earth" is a way of saying everything in the universe. In these ten words, God is saying that He created everything. Other verses in the Bible, such as Colossians 1:16, confirm this:

Contradictions in The Order of Creation

For by Him [Jesus - God] all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities [or humanists]; all things were created by Him and for Him. – Colossians 1:16

Genesis 1:2 through 2:3 narrows the focus, describing the creation week from the viewpoint of someone on the earth. It starts with the earth being formless and void, and moves through each of the six days of creation. As Genesis 1:1 and Colossians 1:16 make clear God created everything, even those things that are not visible to us, such as seraphim and cherubim (angels). However, Genesis 1:2 through 2:3 just describes things that are visible, providing an overview of the creation week.

Genesis 2:4 through 2:24 narrows the view. These verses include a brief summary of creation, but their focus is on day six of creation and the details of mankind's first day.

So, does Genesis 2 give a different order of creation than Genesis chapter 1 as the humanists claim? No. Here is a verse-by-verse description of what Genesis 2:4 through 2:7 is describing:

Summary of Genesis 2:4 – 2:7

2:4-5 – An introduction to creation that gives a broad summary in verse four, with verse five giving some details that are related to mankind.

2:6 - This verse, as part of the introductory summary, provides important information describing how the earth was watered, and thus how life would be sustained.

2:7 - We are now in day six, and a detailed description of what God did when He created man.

The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. – Genesis 2:7

God did not need to use dust to make man, but by creating man this way, He gives us a picture of a loving master artisan shaping a work of art to which He gives life. This also establishes mankind's direct relationship to the earth, in the sense of this being the place where we belong.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

The humanist's accusation states that chapter two describes God as creating the animals after man. I assume this is a reference to Genesis 2:18-19

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.

What they do not understand is that this is not the original creation of the animals and birds. What is the subject of these verses? That *it is not good for man to be alone*. So what is God doing? He is showing Adam all of the animals and birds so he can name them AND find out if any of them are a suitable helper.

In chapter one scripture states that birds were created on day five, and the beasts of the earth (field) were created before Adam on day six. In Genesis 2:18-19 Adam had just been created. God wants Adam to see all of the animals, name them, and determine if any are a suitable helper. What is the best way to do this and do it quickly? God forms them out of the ground at Adam's physical location. There is nothing wrong with doing that. It does not contradict Genesis 1. This is not a second creation.

God shows Adam the various kinds of birds and animals, but no suitable helper was found. So God makes Eve (Genesis 2:21-22). This is still day six of creation. God created them male and female, and He did it all on day six of creation. No contradiction.

More detailed information is available online from: Creation Ministries International: www.tinyurl.com/y8ymzjkjv and the Institute for Creation Research: www.icr.org/article/339

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction. Genesis chapter one describes creation. Genesis chapter two provides details about day six and the creation of mankind.

NEXT ACCUSATION: Here is the humanist claim: "Genesis chapter 1 lists six days of creation, whereas chapter 2 refers to the "day" that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens."

Contradictions in The Order of Creation

I could answer this simply by saying, “Yes, that’s what it says. What’s the problem?” Then move on. Given the way it is presented, that is a legitimate response. As is common, the humanists do not explain themselves. We will need to make some assumptions. The accusation seems to be that the word “day” always means a 24-hour day. Of course, everyone knows that is not true. The word ‘day’ is defined by its context. Let’s go to the next chapter and see if we can figure out what’s going on.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT DOES THE WORD DAY MEAN?

HUMANIST ACCUSATION: Genesis chapter 1 lists six days of creation, whereas chapter 2 refers to the “day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.”

The humanists have made a statement and left it to you to assume there is a contradiction, as well as assume there is proof backing up that accusation. By making these types of statements, the humanists are halfway to making their point with no effort. The reader is to assume there is a contradiction, and assume the details of the contradiction. You, the reader, do all the work, based on an assumption there is contradiction or error, without that actually having been demonstrated.

To answer an accusation, we need the specifics of the accusation. Based on the above, we do not know for sure what the humanists are claiming. I will take a guess. I think they are saying the word “day” always means a 24-hour day. We all know that is absurd. We all know the word “day” has various meanings depending on its context. However, that is the best I can come up with given the available information.

The Answer – And Unlike the Humanists I Give Proof

Let’s start with scripture. Here is what Genesis 2:4 says:

What Does the Word Day Mean?

This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven.

We know that the meaning of the word “day” varies depending on its context. For example:

- 1) In my day, we were polite and respectful.
- 2) It was a three-day hike to the lake.
- 3) It took all day to drive to Miami.

In each of the above examples "day" has a different meaning, and the meaning is clearly understood from the context:

1) In example #1 "day" means a time in the past. How far in the past depends on how old the speaker is.

2) A three-day hike could be a hike that started at 10 AM on Friday, and ended upon arrival at a lakeside campground at 2:00 PM on Sunday. It included parts of two separate days, and all day Saturday. It is still called a three-day hike.

3) In this case "day" refers to a time period within a 24-hour day. I used this example to show that “all” does not always literally mean all 24 hours. The drive could have taken just the major portion of the daylight hours, or it may have involved some driving at dusk or night. However, whatever the specific details are, we understand that the word “day” in this context refers to approximately the daylight portion of a 24-hour day.

And, of course, “day” can refer to a 24-hour day.

What Is the Context?

In Genesis chapter one the word "day" is always used with a number (one day, a second day, a third day, etc.). This context tells us it is a 24-hour day. When days are counted in the Bible, they are always 24-hour days.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

What is interesting is that God gives a second context. It is as though He wants to be sure we understand these are ordinary, 24-hour days. The second context is the phrase "*there was evening and there was morning.*" What does evening and morning define? A 24-hour day. For the Israelites the new day started with sunset (evening), defining the nighttime portion of the day. Then came morning, defining the daylight portion of the day.

God has given us two ways to know, for sure, these are 24-hour days.

What is the Context of Genesis 2:4?

The context of 2:4 tells us that "day" in this case refers to a time in the past, similar to example #1 above. Just as the first verse of Genesis summarizes all of creation, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" verse 2:4 is also a broad summary of creation.

Here is the way the Christian Standard Bible translates Genesis 2:4:

These are the records of the heavens and the earth, concerning their creation. At the time that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. (CSB)

At times reading a different translation can help clarify our understanding of scripture. In this case the CSB is a reliable optimal equivalence translation, and it gives a clear translation of "yom" (day) in the context in which it is used.

Genesis 2:4 is part of a summary of creation, and in that context the proper understanding is that "day" means a time in the past.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: For their next Bible "contradiction", humanists bring up an oldie. How can there be light on day one of creation when the sun did not exist until the fourth day?

What Does the Word Day Mean?

WHY?

Why do people present bible contradictions that are easily answered? It is not because there are actually contradictions in the bible. It is because they do not want the Bible to be true.

If you are not fully trusting Jesus Christ, I urge you to believe what the bible says. Trust Jesus today. The bible says you deny scripture because you love your sin (John 3:19). There is a sin (or sins) you know you will need to give up if you believe the bible, and you do not want to give them up. Turn away from disobeying God (repent).

Trust Jesus. He paid the penalty you have earned for all your sin. He paid that penalty in full so you can be free from sin. Trust Jesus today.

CHAPTER 4 SUN, MOON & STARS CREATED WHEN?

HUMANIST ACCUSATION: Genesis 1:2-3 claims that God created light and divided it from darkness on the first day; but Genesis 1:14-19 tells us the sun, moon, and stars weren't made until the fourth day.

Everything stated above is 100% correct. However, I am guessing they are expecting us to make an assumption that light can only come from the sun, moon, or stars¹. Since they were not created until day four, how could there be light on day one?

To start, we need to make sure we make the correct assumptions. Is it true that light can only come from the sun, moon (reflected from the sun), or stars? Can you think of any other light sources? Light bulbs? Fire? Maybe God Himself?

Genesis 1 describes God creating by simply speaking things into existence. That is power. However, God does not even need to speak... He can create everything or anything in a single blink of a fraction of a microsecond with no effort at all. Think about it. Does the creator God need a sun to make light? No.

¹ Once again, the humanist author has not provided a specific accusation. He has left it to the reader to assume there is a contradiction.

Sun, Moon and Stars Created When?

One thought is that God Himself is the source of the light. Scripture talks about God's glory being a source of light. For example, Revelation 21:23-24 describes the New Jerusalem that will exist in the new heaven and new earth:

And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.

Scripture does not identify the source of the light in Genesis 1:2-3, but it could very well be that God's glory was the source, just as described in Revelation 21. On the other hand, God might have done it another way. Do not limit the Creator of the universe based on your limited human assumptions.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: The next contradiction appears to be a question of timing. When were fruit trees created? What do you think? The answer is in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5 DID GOD CREATE PLANTS TWICE?

HUMANIST ACCUSATION: Chapter 1 reports that the fruit trees were created before the man, while chapter 2 indicates they were made after him.

Words are important, and to understand scripture you need to pay attention to what the words actually say. In this case, if you read what scripture says, without adding other ideas to it, it is easy to see there is no contradiction. Genesis chapter two does not say God is creating fruit trees. It is talking about God making a place for Adam and Eve to live... the Garden of Eden. Let's start our study with Genesis chapter one:

Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them"; and it was so. ...and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a third day. - Genesis 1:11-13

From the above we see that God spoke fruit trees into existence on day three of creation. So what does chapter two say?

Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. The Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the

Did God Create Plants Twice?

garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. - Genesis 2:7-9

What does chapter two say God did? He planted a garden for Adam and Eve to live in. He did this by causing plant life, and specifically "every tree that is pleasing to sight and good for food" to grow there. The context is that of creating Adam and then providing for his needs (food in this case).

BTW, is this something God could do today? Could He pick a place on earth and make "***every tree that is pleasing to sight and good for food" to grow there?***" Yes, of course He could. Would that be a new creation? No. Those same kinds of trees already exist in other places. What God is doing is supernaturally making a functional place... "planting" a garden that is suitable for people to live in and that provides everything they need to live.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: This one raises a question about the creation of fowl (birds). With this question, we see how the Bible translation can make a difference. In this instance, the use of archaic language can open the door for some people to claim there is a contradiction.

CHAPTER 6 HOW WERE BIRDS CREATED?

HUMANIST ACCUSATION: Genesis 1:20 says the fowl were created out of the waters; Genesis 2:19 alleges they were formed from the ground.

You should already know how to figure out the answer based on what you have learned in the previous chapters. Genesis 1:20 describes the creation of birds and in Genesis 2:19 God is showing the birds to Adam to see if any might be a suitable helper. See? The answer is simple.

However, let's not move on so quickly. As Satan did, the humanists have misrepresented what God said. That is not something we can just let pass. Let's read the verses the humanist is referencing. Here is the first one:

Then God said, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens." - Genesis 1:20 NASB

This is straightforward. God spoke, and it happened. He filled the lakes and oceans with fish and created the birds (and other flying things) so that they could fly through the skies. All of them created by God speaking them into existence, not by God making them out of water. I am using the New American Standard Bible (NASB) translation. However, maybe the humanists are reading a different translation. Let's see what the KJV says:

How Were Birds Created?

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven." – Genesis 1:20 KJV

I suppose the phrase "*let the waters bring forth*" could imply fish, and possibly fowl that fly, were created from water.

You may have noticed that the NASB translation is different from the KJV. No, the Bible was not changed. The KJV is an English translation done nearly 400 years ago. Language changes. The meaning and use of English words change and current translations reflect that.

I recently heard someone claim the Bible is like the telephone game, each English translation is based on the previous translation in a long chain going back thousands of years. With each new version, they claimed, errors invariably are introduced and accumulated over time. That is absurd. New translations are made directly from the oldest and best Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament) manuscripts. For example, when the King James was translated (1611) the Dead Sea Scrolls had not yet been discovered. The Dead Sea Scrolls date from the third century BC and they were discovered in the 1940's. They are typically consulted for modern translations². BTW, the Dead Sea Scrolls did not change anything in the Bible. God has preserved His word throughout the millennia.

Also, consider this; if the English Bible was translated in the manner of the telephone game, each new translation being based on the previous English translation, and new translations in other languages proceeded in the same way, think about what would happen. After a while the Spanish, German, and the various Asian and African language versions would read differently than the English version. They would gradually diverge in different directions as errors crept in. However, what you read in Spanish, Russian or French is the same as the English Bible. Not because they are translations of the English, but because they use the same Hebrew and Greek source materials.

Have you ever wondered what the original Hebrew says, if it was literally translated? Unlike Greek (the original language of the New

² Read the notes in the front of your Bible to learn which sources were used in making the translation you are reading.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Testament) Hebrew translated word-for-word is difficult to read in English. Some languages are like that. Here is a word-for-word translation of Genesis 1:20

And birds life that has the moving creature the waters Let bring forth abundantly God And said God And created of the heavens firmament the open in the earth above [that] may fly the waters teemed [with] which that moves living creature every and great sea creatures - www.BibleHub.com/interlinear/genesis/1.htm

Hard to read, isn't it? There are languages in use today that are similar, in that the word order is very different from how we speak in English. As a result, an exact word-for-word translation does not work well.

However, translating the Hebrew directly to English reveals the structure of the original. It is a structure that is common in Hebrew. It starts with a broad overview, the creation of flying things (birds³) and fish. Then it provides some details: these came about because "God said." Then there is still greater detail: the moving creatures in the water are to reproduce abundantly, and the birds are to fly in the sky. Finally, it returns to a broader view again, the waters are teeming with every kind of moving creature, including—emphasizing here that there was every kind of sea creature—great sea creatures. This "hourglass" structure is common in Hebrew. A broad view at the top, a narrow view in the middle, and returning to a broad view at the end.

The original language makes it clear flying things and fish were not created from water. They were spoken into existence.

I apologize for jumping into the Hebrew. We did not need to go there to prove humanist's accusation is false. However, it is interesting to see how structure, in addition to words, can be important to understanding the meaning. If you need help understanding a verse, there is a way to get another view of the verse without knowing Hebrew... look at multiple quality translations. For example, I am using the NASB in this book. You could also check the KJV (as we did),

³ The Hebrew word translated as "birds" in English actually is referring to flying things in general. God classifies life in a different way than we do. This applies to "fish" also. Our human created classification system distinguishes between fish and mammals that live in the water. God does not make that distinction.

How Were Birds Created?

and that helped reveal the source of the problem. Other good translations are the NKJV, ESV and CSB. You do not need to buy all of these; you can read them online at web sites such as www.BibleGateway.com or www.BibleHub.com. The archaic wording and structure of the KJV, although perfectly clear to people 400 years ago, is not clear to most of us today. Reading the NASB it is clear that scripture IS NOT saying God created fowl out of water. God spoke them into existence as He did with everything else.

I have spent much more time on this than I anticipated, but I hope you have learned a little about Bible translation. Let's move on to the second verse they reference:

Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. - Genesis 2:19

Once you have read the verses the humanist references, what next? Read the context of those verses.

What is the context of verse 2:19? It is day six of creation. In a search for a helper for Adam God is showing Adam all the animals, and Adam is naming them. How does God do this? One option would have been to teleport the animals to Adam's location. That, however, was not the option God chose... and besides, it might have been a little traumatizing for the animals.

What God did was to form an example of each animal, and each type of bird, from the ground. This was not a new creation. It simply was God's way of showing the animals and birds to Adam.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: Was Noah ordered to bring two of every kind of animal onto the ark, or seven of every kind? What would you say is the first thing we should do? If you said, read the referenced scripture, in its context, you are right.

CHAPTER 7 2 OR 7 PAIRS OF BIRDS?

HUMANIST ACCUSATION: According to Genesis 6:19-22, God ordered Noah to bring “of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort . . . into the ark.” Nevertheless, Genesis 7:2-3 relates that the Lord ordered Noah to take into the ark the clean beasts and the birds by sevens, and only the unclean beasts by twos.

This is so simple that I would be embarrassed to bring it up as a contradiction. All we need to do is look at everything the referenced verses say. I cannot help but think the humanist author is coming up with whatever he can simply to pack the web page with accusations (elephant flinging). However, the truth is I think he is sincere... and these are blind people trying to lead blind people.

...they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit. – Jesus speaking in Matthew 15:14

Let's start by seeing what the verses the Humanists reference are actually saying. Here they are:

And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. Of the birds after their kind, and of the animals after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive. As for you, take for yourself some of all food which is edible, and gather it to yourself; and it shall

2 or 7 Pairs of Birds?

be for food for you and for them." Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did. - Genesis 6:19-22

You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female; and of the animals that are not clean two, a male and his female; also of the birds of the sky, by sevens, male and female, to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth. - Genesis 7:2-3

Genesis chapter six clearly says to bring two of every kind of animal and bird. Chapter seven supplements that by adding six additional pairs, if the animal is in the category of being a "clean" animal to be used as a sacrifice.

Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. - Genesis 8:20

Notice that Genesis 6 does not say to take ONLY two of every kind. If it did, there would result in a contradiction.

Notice that chapter seven says, "*of the birds of the sky, by sevens, male and female, to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth.*" If Noah had taken just one pair of each kind of bird, and he used a bird as a sacrifice. What would have happened? It would be the end of that kind of bird. No reproduction. Taking seven pairs was important.

Here's an example from everyday life that may help: If my wife calls and asks me to pick up some groceries on the way home from work by saying: "Please pick up one gallon of each type of milk... and please get three gallons of 2% milk." Is there any problem with that? I will bring home one gallon each of skim, 1%, whole milk and chocolate milk, and three gallons of 2% milk. What she wants is easily understandable.

Historical Background

Although not needed here, in some cases it is helpful to know about the historical setting and culture. For example, as is true in many cultures, a common approach to explaining something was to provide a broad description first, and followed by a more detailed one that focused on the most important aspects of what was being said.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

We saw that in an earlier question in which Genesis one provides the overview and Genesis two focuses on the details of day six.

The broad view (Genesis 6) is that of two animals of every kind. The detailed view (Genesis 7) focuses on those animals (a smaller group) used for sacrifice where more are needed for reproduction... the clean animals and birds.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: I love this next one. How could the ark have come to rest on a mountain top, but the mountain tops are underwater (not visible) until almost three months later? Do you see the answer?

2 or 7 Pairs of Birds?

CHAPTER 8

WHEN DID THE MOUNTAIN TOPS APPEAR?

HUMANIST ACCUSATION: Genesis 8:4 reports that, as the waters of the flood receded, Noah's ark rested on the mountains of Ararat in the seventh month. The very next verse, however, says the mountaintops could not be seen until the tenth month.

What is the best first step? Look at what the verses actually say. Here they are:

In the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat. The water decreased steadily until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains became visible. - Genesis 8:4-5

Carefully read what the above says. Can you see why there is no contradiction? Remember, words are important, and reading scripture without reading our biases into scripture is important.

Maybe this one is so easy because I live on the coast. What happens when a ship gets into shallow water? It is called running aground. The bottom of the ship contacts the bottom of the river (or channel, or bay, etc.) and the ship becomes stuck. Is the ship still in the water? Yes. It is surrounded by water, but it is resting on solid ground under the water. It is stuck.

Noah's ark was huge. As the flood waters receded the bottom of the ark contacted one of the mountains of Ararat. The ark stopped floating, but it was still surrounded by water. It took another

When Did the Mountain Tops Appear?

eight to ten weeks (approximately) for the water to recede enough such that the tops of the mountains became visible. There is no contradiction here.

I am going through all of the "contradictions," in the order they are presented on the humanist web site. I am tempted to skip some, such as this one, because they are so easy to answer. However, if I did that someone would complain I skipped it because it could not be explained. Therefore, I will answer every one... no skipping allowed.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: The next question is a bit more difficult because answering it requires knowing a little Hebrew. It has to do with the timing of when the ground was dry after Noah's flood.

CHAPTER 9 WHEN WAS THE GROUND DRY?

HUMANIST ACCUSATION: Genesis 8:13 describes the earth as being dry on the first day of the first month. But Genesis 8:14 informs us the earth was not dry until the twenty-seventh day of the second month.

Here are the two verses they reference:

Now it came about in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first of the month, the water was dried up from the earth. Then Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the surface of the ground was dried up. In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.
- Genesis 8:13-14

A fact the humanists ignore is that the Bible was not written in English. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, with a few sections in Aramaic. The New Testament was written in Greek.

Greek follows a logic similar to our own and lends itself to a word-for-word translation much better than Hebrew. However, in the above verses we are dealing with Hebrew.

First... if you are not carrying a bias against the Bible (that bias being that the Bible is full of contradictions), you probably would not see a problem with this English translation. Notice the first sentence says the water was dried up. The standing water is gone, but, that does not mean the earth is dry.

When Was the Ground Dry?

Those of us who live in Oregon, where it rains A LOT, understand what is being said. While there may not be water running through the streets, and the streets may even be dry, there still is mud and muck... a lot of it.

What these verses are saying is that the water was gone by the first day of the first month, but the ground was still muddy and mucky. It took until the 27th day of the second month for the ground (earth) to be dry and firm.

Another Way to Get the Answer - Hebrew

If we look at this from a technical view, going to the original Hebrew we see that two different words are used.

In verse 13 the Hebrew word "charab" is translated as "dried up." A more detailed translation would be "*the face of the ground was dry.*" That means the standing water is gone. In verse 14 the Hebrew word "yabesh" is used. This word literally means "*to be desolate*" and in this context it means to be without moisture. So in verse 14 the ground is described as completely dry and firm.

I assume you do not read Hebrew. So how can you know there are two Hebrew words, having different meanings, used here?

I hope that you are attending a good (conservative Biblically) church, and are able to ask your pastor or an elder. When you have a question, going to the leaders of your church is a good first option. One of the purposes of the church is to help you grow in your knowledge of God and the Bible.

A second option is to have a reference book, like the one you are reading now. However, a more versatile solution would be to have a good study Bible, such as a *MacArthur Study Bible*. In addition to a study Bible, an excellent reference book is Strong's Concordance. It includes both a Greek and Hebrew dictionary to help you understand the original words used in scripture.

A third option is to use multiple Bible translations. We are using the NASB for this book, which is a word-for-word translation. However, since it is difficult to translate Hebrew word-for-word, often a paraphrase translation will provide a better understanding of the Old Testament. For example, the Christian Standard Bible (CSB) translates these verses this way:

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the water that had covered the earth was dried up. Then Noah removed the ark's cover and saw that the surface of the ground was drying. By the twenty-seventh day of the second month, the earth was dry. - Genesis 8:13-14

That makes it a little clearer. Here is what the NIV translation says:

By the first day of the first month of Noah's six hundred and first year, the water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry. By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry.

Be careful, there are many poor and deceptive translations. Good word-for-word translations include the, KJV, NASB, NKJV, and ESV. The CSB is in the middle and is an optimal equivalence translation. Good paraphrase translations are the NIV and NLT.

A fourth option is to turn to the internet. To see what was available I did a search for "Bible Contradiction Genesis 8:13" and found the following web site: <https://answersingenesis.org/the-flood/times-of-recession>. It is okay to get help on the internet, BUT it is risky. Be sure the web site you use is one that is Biblically solid. There is A LOT of bad information on the internet. For example, Wikipedia often comes up at the top of the search listings, but it is not a reliable source of information about the Bible nor Christianity. The web sites I recommend for these types of questions are:⁴

www.GotQuestions.org
www.ApologeticPress.org
www.Creation.com
www.AnswersInGenesis.org
www.ICR.org
www.SciencePastor.com

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

⁴ See the "About The Author" page at the end of this book for a listing of my web sites.

When Was the Ground Dry?

NEXT ACCUSATION: I am going to quote what the humanist wrote for this one: “The Old Testament contains an interesting contradiction in the story of the census taken by King David and the resulting punishment of the Israelites. God was so angered by the census that he sent a plague that killed 70,000 men.”

Is there anything wrong with taking a census? It depends. Let's find out what was happening.

CHAPTER 10 DAVID'S CENSUS: DOES GOD CONTRADICT HIMSELF?

HUMANIST ACCUSATION: The Old Testament contains an interesting contradiction in the story of the census taken by King David and the resulting punishment of the Israelites. God was so angered by the census that he sent a plague that killed 70,000 men. According to II Samuel 24:1, the Lord had caused David to take the census – which makes the punishment appear even more nonsensical. But an attempt was later made, at I Chronicles 21:1, to improve God's image by claiming that Satan incited the census.

That is what the humanists say. Let's find out what's really happening. Here is the scripture:

Now again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and it incited David against them to say, "Go, number Israel and Judah." - 2 Samuel 24:1

Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel. - 1 Chronicles 21:1

Remember, words are important. However, sometimes the words do not tell us everything we would like to know. What does 2 Samuel 24:1 say? Read it carefully. Why does David order a census?

Israel was being punished by God. They were under God's wrath. The sins the nation of Israel had committed included rebellion (2 Samuel 15:1-2 and 2 Samuel 20:1-2) as well as strife and murder

David's Census—God Contradicts Himself?

among David's commanders (2 Samuel 16:7-13 and 1 Kings 22:20-23), and so the *"anger of God burned against Israel."*

Notice 2 Samuel 24:1 says, *"It incited David..."* To what is the word "it" referring? We cannot say for sure. Some say it is God, others say it is God's anger. What we know is that David was angry. That opened the door for Satan to tempt him, and David gave in to the temptation. As a result, David made the decision to conduct a census of Israel. The Lord did not command David to take a census.

In 1 Samuel 13:14 David is called *"a man after God's own heart."* If he was that close to God, why would he intentionally disobey God? 1 Chronicles gives us the reason... Satan. He saw an opportunity, and Satan took advantage of David in a weak moment. While he was unjustly upset with God, Satan moved David to number Israel.

Why was taking a census a problem? First, only the one who owned what was to be counted had a right to count it. For example, even today could you go to your neighbor's home, open a drawer, and count their money. No! It is not yours, it belongs to them. You have no right to count their money. The people of Israel belonged to God. Only God could order a census.

Secondly, God had established rules for a census. Exodus 30:12 states:

When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, so that there will be no plague among them when you number them.

David was conducting a census on his own initiative, with a wrong motive, and doing so in violation of God's commands for how a census was to be conducted.

Why was Israel punished? In his anguish over his sin, David asked God this question in 2 Samuel 24:13. However, God does not provide David with an answer. So we do not know God's reasoning.

. There is no contradiction. God never commanded David to conduct a census. David decided to conduct a census. That census did not conform to God's requirements. David knew scripture, and knew he had violated God's commands for a census.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Now David's heart troubled him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done." - 2 Samuel 24:11

There were consequences for what David did.

So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning until the appointed time, and seventy thousand men of the people from Dan to Beersheba died. - 2 Samuel 24:15

All you need to do is to carefully read what scripture says. David decided to conduct the census. Yes, Satan moved David to do it, but David—the king of Israel—made the decision and ordered the census.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: The humanists now say there is a contradiction concerning whether the Lord commanded the Israelites to sacrifice animals. Does God contradict Himself? Go to the next chapter to see the verses the humanist use to support this accusation, and learn why the humanist author is wrong.

David's Census—God Contradicts Himself?

CHAPTER 11

DID GOD COMMAND ANIMAL SACRIFICES?

HUMANIST QUESTION: The Old Testament is contradictory as to whether the Lord commanded the Israelites to sacrifice animals to him. At Jeremiah 7:22, God denies he ever gave the Israelites commandments about animal sacrifices. In contrast, Exodus 29:38-42 and many other verses depict God as requiring the Israelites to offer animal sacrifices.

What is the first thing you need to do? Look up the referenced scripture. There are multiple places in scripture where it is plain that God commands the Israelites to make very specific sacrifices. There is no doubt about that. So what does Jeremiah say?

For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. - Jeremiah 7:22

Let's define the word hyperbole. It means *an obvious and intentional exaggeration. An extravagant statement or figure of speech not intended to be taken literally, as "to wait an eternity."* — from: www.dictionary.com

Hyperbole is a normal device we use in our writing as well as in day-to-day speech. It is an exaggeration used to make a point. That is what we have here. Let's read this verse in its context:

Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, "Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat flesh. For I did not speak to your

Did God Command Animal Sacrifices?

fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you will be My people; and you will walk in all the way which I command you, that it may be well with you.' Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked in their own counsels and in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have sent you all My servants the prophets, daily rising early and sending them. Yet they did not listen to Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck; they did more evil than their fathers."- Jeremiah 7:21-26

God is upset with Israel. Why? Because Israel is disobeying God. Because Israel is not listening to God's commands, nor to the prophets God has sent. Why? Because of their hard hearts, they prefer to walk in their own counsels (human wisdom). Because of their evil hearts, they are going backwards, not forward.

What is the point? Sacrifices mean nothing if you have the wrong heart. "Wrong heart" means having a wrong attitude. The Israelites were making the required sacrifices, but they were just going through the motions. Making the sacrifices, but turning away from God in their hearts, is acting in opposition to what the sacrifices represent—obedience to God in heart, mind and action. Making sacrifices, with an attitude of rebellion against God instead of an attitude of obedience, is a waste of time. It is as though God had not commanded the sacrifices... and that is the point God is making. There is no contradiction.

How Do You Know This?

What happens when you encounter an alleged contradiction such as this? Maybe you are a new Christian and do not have the Biblical knowledge needed to know what is going on. What do you do? Here is a summary:

- 1) Do not assume the humanists are right and there is an error in scripture. Begin by trusting that what the Bible says, and assume you do not have the complete story. Ask the leaders of your church, your pastor, or a church elder, to help you.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Or, you may have a friend who is more knowledgeable, and they can help.

- 2) Have good reference books in your home (or on your Kindle or Nook). Having a good commentary available is very helpful. However, they can be expensive. Check your church library to see if they have a good commentary. If a commentary is not possible, a good study Bible, such as a MacArthur Study Bible is helpful. In addition, an excellent and affordable reference everyone should have is a Strong's Concordance.
- 3) Check other translations of the Bible such as the KJV, NKJV, ESV, NASB or CSB. Different translations may use different wording that will help you understand what scripture is saying.
- 4) The final option is the internet. For example, in this case a quick search for "Jeremiah 7:22 Bible contradiction" brings up a number of web sites with the answer. Be careful. I have said this before; there is a lot of bad information on the web. Pick a search result for a web site you know you can trust. I listed several of them in chapter 9.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: This one is a common accusation. The claim is that there is a contradiction between the two genealogies of Jesus. We tend to think of genealogies as boring, but they include some surprisingly interesting information. Always keep 2nd Timothy 3:16 in mind:

All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God will be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Why do some people want there to be contradictions in the bible?

Because they need an excuse. An excuse to dismiss the bible... and dismiss Jesus.

However, Jesus and the Bible will not go away. Why? Because the bible is true and Jesus is THE truth, the way, and the source of life. If you are hoping some of the humanist accusations are true, I beg you to turn to real truth. Your conscience tells you that you have done wrong. You have told lies, taken things that do not belong to you, coveted what is not yours, and lusted. (Jesus said that lust is adultery of the heart.) You know you have disobeyed God and you are on the path to the eternal lake of fire. Jesus can take you off that path. Trust Jesus to save you from God's wrath and justice.

www.911Christ.com

CHAPTER 12

ARE JESUS' GENEALOGIES CONTRADICTORY?

HUMANIST ACCUSATION: In the New Testament, there are contradictions between the genealogies of Jesus given in the first chapter of Matthew and the third chapter of Luke.

Both genealogies begin with Jesus' father, who is identified as Joseph (which is curious, given that Mary was supposedly impregnated by the Holy Ghost). But Matthew says Joseph's father was Jacob, while Luke claims he was Heli. Matthew lists 26 generations between Jesus and King David, whereas Luke records 41. Matthew runs Jesus' line of descent through David's son Solomon, while Luke has it going through David's son Nathan.

I am going to put the two genealogies on the next two opposite pages so they will be easy to compare

Again, we start with the question: What does scripture say? First, notice, unlike what the humanists say, one genealogy starts with Abraham and the other with Joseph. There is a reason for this.

Yes, there are obviously differences in the two genealogies, but instead of just proclaiming there are differences, and stopping there, we should ask why.

Also, consider this, if what the humanist claims are true, this is an obvious and glaring contradiction. Why wasn't it noticed 2000 years ago? You will get answers, but first read the genealogies on the next two pages.

Are Jesus' Genealogies Contradictory?

Matthew 1:1-17

¹ *The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham:*

² ***Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. ³ Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram. ⁴ Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon. ⁵ Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse. ⁶ Jesse was the father of David the king.***

David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba who had been the wife of Uriah. ⁷ Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa. ⁸ Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah. ⁹ Uzziah was the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah. ¹⁰ Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah. ¹¹ Josiah became the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

¹² *After the deportation to Babylon: Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel. ¹³ Zerubbabel was the father of Abihud, Abihud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor. ¹⁴ Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud. ¹⁵ Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob. ¹⁶ Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.*

¹⁷ *So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.*

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Luke 3:23-38

*²³When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, the son of Eli,
²⁴ the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, ²⁵ the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Hesli, the son of Naggai, ²⁶ the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda,*

²⁷ the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, ²⁸ the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, ²⁹ the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, ³⁰ the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,

*³¹ the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, ³² **the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon, ³³ the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,***

*³⁴ **the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham,** the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, ³⁵ the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Heber, the son of Shelah, ³⁶ the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,*

³⁷ the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, ³⁸ the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

At the time Matthew and Luke wrote, genealogical records were very important to the Jews. They determined inheritance rights. They played a role in taxation. They were the basis for the principle of kinsmen redemption. In addition, your genealogy determined your rights to own land, based on the original division of the land among the twelve tribes. Because of their importance, the Jews kept detailed genealogical records. People needed access to these records, so they were publicly available in the Temple in Jerusalem. Both Matthew and Luke most likely based their genealogies on those records, and it would have been very easy for anyone to check what Matthew and

Are Jesus' Genealogies Contradictory?

Luke wrote with the public records. If there were any errors, they would be glaring and obvious.

In the first century Christianity's enemies would have used anything they could to destroy Christianity. This fact alone is enough to end this discussion. It is impossible for there to be a contradiction in the genealogies. If there were, the obvious genealogical misrepresentation (lie) would have been quickly revealed 2000 years ago. Christianity would have been dead before it got started.

Yes, the two genealogies are different. That is because they are looking at two different lines. There are important reasons for this.

Background

Matthew and Luke are writing to different groups of people, who have different ways of looking at history. Matthew is writing to the Jews and Luke is writing to Gentiles (non-Jews).

Matthew starts with Abraham, and goes forward to the birth of Jesus. Luke starts with the birth of Jesus and goes backwards to the first man, Adam. Why do they do this?

Matthew's Genealogy

Who was Abraham? He is the father of the Jewish nation. The Jews trace their heritage back to Abraham. It was important for Matthew, who was writing to Jews, to start Jesus' genealogy with Abraham.

Notice that Matthew's genealogy ends in verse 16 with Joseph. It is the genealogy of Joseph, the husband of Mary. However, Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus, and scripture never identifies him as the biological father. Keep in mind words are important. Read scripture carefully. Notice that in verse 16 Matthew does not identify Joseph as the father of Jesus, as the humanists claim, but as *"the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born."*

However, Matthew's genealogy ends with Joseph, identifying it as the genealogy of Joseph. What is Matthew saying? He traces Jesus' line from Abraham to Joseph, who was Jesus' LEGAL father, although not his natural father. Jesus is legally the first son of Joseph. This establishes Jesus' legal right as king of Israel. That is important,

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

as the Messiah is the king of the Jews. The king must legally be from the line of David:

[Jesus speaking] *You correctly say that I am king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world.* - John 18:13

Luke's Genealogy

Luke, writing to the Gentiles, had a different purpose. He is showing Jesus' solidarity with the entire human race. That is why he takes the genealogy back to Adam, and thus ultimately God. Luke does this by giving us the genealogy of Mary. Here comes that "W" question again... why?

Luke is demonstrating that the bloodline of Jesus is a human bloodline. Jesus is related by blood to all of us, through Adam. This is his racial lineage. To what race does Jesus belong? The human race.

Notice in Luke verse 23 that Jesus is described as the "supposed" son of Joseph. Neither Matthew nor Luke identify Jesus as the physical son of Joseph. However, Jesus is a physical "son" of Adam.

Finally notice the sections in bold in the two genealogies. They are nearly identical. The lineages of both Joseph and Mary pass through David. The Messiah had to be a son of David, and Jesus is of the line of David... on both sides of His family. There is no doubt, based on His genealogy, Jesus is qualified to be the Messiah.

However, Matthew says Joseph's Father was Jacob, While Luke Claims he was Heli.

This is a legitimate question. Let's put these two sections of scripture right next to each other so we can clearly see why the humanists are raising a question:

Luke: *Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, the son of Heli,*

Matthew: *Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born,*

It does look as though there is some confusion about Joseph's father... but there is not.

Are Jesus' Genealogies Contradictory?

Who were Heli and Jacob? Heli is Mary's father and Jacob was Joseph's father.

In the Greek there is an article before each son in Luke's record, except for one. It says "the son of..." except for Heli. It literally reads as: "*Joseph, son of Heli.*" This indicates the relationship is not as close as a biological father and son. In addition, there is no word for "son-in-law" in ancient Greek. The "son-in-law" is considered a son by marriage. This now brings us back to the importance of Jesus being a descendant of David. He was the son of Jacob (father of Joseph), who was in the line of David. He was also son of Heli (father of Mary), who was also in the line of David. This is the point both Matthew and Luke are making. Jesus is a descendant of David and thus is qualified to be king and Messiah.

CONCLUSION: There are no contradiction in the genealogies of Jesus.

NEXT ACCUSATION: Now we get to the birth of Jesus. Did Joseph and Mary flee to Egypt immediately after Jesus' birth (Matthew 2:13-15), or did that happen sometime later (Luke 2:22-40)? Of course, there is an answer. It has to do with the people Matthew and Luke were addressing in their gospels.

CHAPTER 13

WHERE DID THEY GO AFTER JESUS' BIRTH?

HUMANIST QUESTION: The story of Jesus' birth is also contradictory. Matthew 2:13-15 depicts Joseph and Mary as fleeing to Egypt with the baby Jesus immediately after the wise men from the east had brought gifts.

But Luke 2:22-40 claims that after the birth of Jesus, his parents remained in Bethlehem for the time of Mary's purification (which was 40 days, under the Mosaic law). Afterwards, they brought Jesus to Jerusalem "to present him to the Lord," and then returned to their home in Nazareth. Luke mentions no journey into Egypt or visit by wise men from the east.

The above makes the assumption that Matthew and Luke were both writing a complete, day-by-day account of what happened to Jesus as an infant. However, that is a false assumption with no basis in the text nor in history. Each writer was addressing a specific audience, and each had a specific purpose in writing. As any reasonable writer would do, they only included information that was relevant to their message.

Matthew was writing to Jews... people who knew both the history of Israel and the Old Testament. For example, Jews would be familiar with the Messianic prophesy in Hosea 1:11 about the Messiah coming out of Egypt: "*When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.*"

In addition, because of the exodus, coming out of Egypt was significant for Jews. It brought to mind that God saved them from

Where Did They Go After Jesus' Birth?

slavery by bringing them out of Egypt. That is what the Messiah was going to do... what Jesus Christ would do. Bring those who believe in Him out of slavery to sin and into His kingdom. The fact that Jesus came out of Egypt was important for Matthew's Jewish readers.

On the other hand, Luke was writing to Gentiles who did not know the history of Israel, nor were they familiar with Biblical prophecy. The fact that Jesus came out of Egypt is meaningless to a Gentile. The overall theme of the first few chapters in Luke is that of presenting witnesses, as though this were a court case, proving that Jesus was who He claimed to be—God and the Messiah who had come to save sinners. It was important for Luke to show that Jesus was sinless. Jesus obeyed all of the law. He even records how Jesus' parents fully met the requirements of the Mosaic Law. Notice that He specifically mentions the Mosaic Law. That is something he would not need to do if he were writing to Jews:

And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord. - Luke 2:22

Here is the sequence of events, starting with Jesus' birth:

- Jesus' birth.
- Mary's purification.
- Jesus presented to the Lord in the temple.
- Jesus' family stays in Bethlehem for about two years.
- The Magi arrive in Jerusalem where they tell Herod why they have come. They then go to Bethlehem.
- An angel warns Joseph to flee with his family to Egypt (and they leave ASAP).
- Herod has all infants in Bethlehem, two years old and younger, killed. Why two years old and younger? Because the signs the Magi had seen, and described to Herod, pointed to the Messiah having been born within the past two years.
- Herod dies, and it is safe to return to Israel. Jesus' family travels from Egypt to Nazareth.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

CONCLUSION: There are no contradictions.

NEXT ACCUSATION: Here comes another common one, so it is good to know the answer. It has about the money paid to Judas and Judas' death.

Where Did They Go After Jesus' Birth?

CHAPTER 14 WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MONEY JUDAS WAS PAID?

HUMANIST QUESTION: Concerning the death of Judas, the disloyal disciple, Matthew 27:5 states he took the money he had received for betraying Jesus, threw it down in the temple, and “went and hanged himself.” To the contrary, Acts 1:18 claims Judas used the money to purchase a field and “falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.”

Let's look at scripture to see what it actually says. I will quote more than what the humanist reference so that we have the context. We will start with Matthew 27:3-7

Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” But they said, “What is that to us? See to that yourself!” And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, “It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood.” And they conferred together and with the money bought the Potter’s Field as a burial place for strangers.

Here is Acts 1:15-19

What Happened to the Money Judas Was Paid?

At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, "Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry." (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out. And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

The answer is rather simple. Do you see what it is?

In asking the question, the humanists leave out important facts, and that makes this a deceptive question. Matthew makes it clear the chief priests did not accept the pieces of silver Judas threw down. While they did physically handle it, the money remained the property of Judas and they used it to buy the Potter's Field. Thus, the price of Judas' treachery paid for a field, just as Luke reports in Acts 1. The chief priests were the agents in purchasing the field. They could not purchase the field themselves, as that would mean accepting blood money into the temple treasury. Since that was forbidden, they could not legally keep the money. They needed to do something to get rid of the money. They decided to act as representatives of Judas and purchased the potter's field in his name.

It may seem like a legal technicality, but it was important, and it means Judas did purchase the Potter's Field.

So how did Judas die? Did he hang himself or did he "fall headlong and burst open in the middle?" To get the answer the humanists could have done a quick Google search for: "How did Judas die?" Multiple web sites with the answer will pop right up.

Here is the answer...

Remember, Luke is a physician, he tends to provide more medical details.

From what Luke reports it appears Judas died in the field that was purchased with the 30 pieces of silver.

Matthew specifically says that Judas hanged himself. Luke says he fell headlong, burst open in the middle, and all his intestines gushed out.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

If Judas had fallen off a cliff, what would happen? His body would have a lot of bruises, gashes, and broken bones. He would be dead, but his body would not have burst open with his intestines spilling out. That is not what happens when a living body falls from a great height.

It appears that Judas hanged himself in the Potters Field, and no one took him down. Nobody wanted to touch Judas' body and be defiled. The body started to decay, fell, and the partially decayed body burst open. That fits both the cultural context and the physical evidence as described in scripture.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: We come to the cross, and the question of whether Jesus carried His cross or someone else did. **The answer is in the next chapter.**

What Happened to the Money Judas Was Paid?

CHAPTER 15 WHO CARRIED JESUS' CROSS?

HUMANIST QUESTION: In describing Jesus being led to his execution, John 19:17 recounts that he carried his own cross. But Mark 15:21-23 disagrees by saying a man called Simon carried the cross.

Do you have the answer? I think we might be able to figure out what happened without looking at scripture.

Jesus starts to carry the cross. He had been severely beaten. He is very weak, and He keeps stumbling. A man named Simon, standing in the crowd, is "volunteered" and carries the cross the rest of the way. If we look at the details of scripture, does this answer make sense? Yes!

They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between. - John 19:17-18

Here is how Mark describes what happened:

After they had mocked Him, they took the purple robe off Him and put His own garments on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him. They pressed into service a passer-by coming from the country, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), to bear His cross. - Mark 15:21-23

Who Carried Jesus' Cross?

John states that Jesus "went out" bearing His own cross. That means He started the walk to Golgotha carrying His cross. Mark mentions that the Romans pressed Simon of Cyrene into service to bear the cross. What obviously happened was, Jesus started to carry the cross, was unable to, and Simon was pulled out of the crowd by the Romans and forced to carry the cross.

However, John does not mention Simon. Why? Because John's gospel is not about who carried the cross, nor how Jesus got to Golgotha. John is focused on the crucifixion. He simply writes that Jesus started out by carrying His own cross, which is true. On the other hand, Luke tells us more:

When they led Him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, coming in from the country, and placed on him the cross to carry behind Jesus. - Luke 23:26

It is clear. Simon of Cyrene⁵ was visiting Jerusalem. Being from Cyrene indicates he was from an area near Alexandria, Egypt. He was a stranger in town who was a part of the crowd outside Pilate's palace. As John reports, Jesus went out carrying His cross, but it became apparent He was too weak to continue to carry it. Simon, a random stranger in the crowd, was pulled out of the crowd and pressed into service.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: We are now at the cross. In Matthew two criminals taunt Jesus. In the Gospel of Luke just one taunts Him. There is a contradiction! This is another easy one, if you read the context in Matthew. Keep going to next page for the answer.

⁵ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Simon-of-Cyrene.html>

CHAPTER 16 DID JUST ONE OR BOTH CRIMINALS TAUNT JESUS?

HUMANIST QUESTION: As for the crucifixion, Matthew 27:44 tells us Jesus was taunted by both criminals who were being crucified with him. But Luke 23:39-43 relates that only one of the criminals taunted Jesus, the other criminal rebuked the one who was doing the taunting, and Jesus told the criminal who was defending him, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Do you have the answer to this one? It is another easy one. If you read more of the scripture than what was referenced by the humanist, you will see that it started with both criminals taunting Jesus. One was then saved by God. With his immediate change of heart, he began defending Jesus while the other thief continued to curse Him.

Let's look at scripture and find out why Matthew recorded one part of the story and Luke recorded a different part of the same story.

Matthew 27:41-45

In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him and saying, "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him. He trusts in God; let God rescue Him now, if He delights in Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of

Did Just One or Both Criminals Taunt Jesus?

God.” The robbers who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words. Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour.

Luke 23:33-35 & 39-44

33-35: When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. But Jesus was saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves. And the people stood by, looking on. And even the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, “He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One.”

39-44: One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, “Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!” But the other answered, and rebuking him said, “Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” And he was saying, “Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!” And He said to him, “Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.” It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour.

What Was Going On?

As we did on a previous accusation, we need to keep in mind that Matthew and Luke are writing to two different types of readers... Matthew was writing to Jews and Luke to Gentiles. As a result, Matthew and Luke had different objectives. Matthew is showing Jesus is King, and Luke is presenting proofs that Jesus can and will save Gentiles.

Mathew – Jesus Is King

In Matthew, I started with verse 41 so you can see the context. What were the scribes and elders (the Jewish leaders) saying to mock Him? *“He saved others but cannot save Himself.”* The robbers insulted Him with the same words. Do you see what they are saying? They are admitting that Jesus saved others. They are admitting He performed

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

supernatural miracles! If He resurrected people from the dead, certainly, he can save himself from the cross.

During His ministry, Jesus' miracles testified to who He was. Jesus did things that only God could do. For example, just before Passion Week Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Lazarus had been in the grave four days and had begun to stink from decay. He was dead... there was no doubt about that. Yet Jesus saved Him, raising Lazarus from the dead. A large crowd saw that Lazarus was dead, and that four days later he walked out of the tomb alive. They had seen Jesus heal people, and now they saw Him "heal" someone who was dead. Yet they still denied He was God and crucified Him.

They knew Jesus ruled over death... that He was truly God. Only God rules over death. Even as they crucified Him and He was dying on the cross, they gave testimony that He was God... stating, "**He saved others** [from death]."

Matthew's point is that Jesus is God... Jesus is the Messiah... Jesus is the King and even those who hated Him and caused Him to be crucified, admitted that the evidence was true. By saying what they did, they confirmed that His miracles were real. It was undeniable. Jesus had done what only God can do.

Luke – Jesus' Death Saves All Who Believe

In Luke I've also included the context. Notice as He was being crucified Jesus says, "**Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.**" He asks the Father to forgive the Gentiles (the Romans) who are crucifying Him. Instead of seeking vengeance on His enemies, Jesus shows them love.

We see the same love in what Jesus does for one of the gentile thieves crucified with Him. Both thieves are insulting Him the same way the Jewish leaders had... and then Jesus saves one of them. It happened instantly, and in a situation in which the thief could not do anything to save himself. One moment he was insulting Jesus; the next moment he was defending Jesus.

It is Jesus who saves. As that thief hung on the cross, Jesus washed away his sin and gave him a new heart.

NO ONE ever came off a Roman cross alive. However, that thief did live. While his body died he was alive in Christ, and he proclaimed that truth as his body was dying.

Did Just One or Both Criminals Taunt Jesus?

What is interesting is that Jesus, although He was innocent, refused to save Himself from God's punishment. Instead, Jesus saved others, including the thief, by NOT saving Himself.

What Jesus did is incredibly beautiful: while on the cross, Jesus answered the accusation that He could not save Himself... by saving the thief. If Jesus had saved Himself, no one else, including us, could be saved. Jesus had to die to pay our penalty for sin. So in answer to the accusations, Jesus demonstrated his power to save AND why he had to die on the cross... by saving someone else who was at that moment dying on a cross.

What a powerful testimony demonstrating that Jesus is our Savior. That is the point Luke is making. Jesus will save all who believe, even a criminal hanging on a Roman cross.

In summary: both thieves were insulting Jesus on the cross. Jesus saved one of them and that thief instantly stopped insulting Jesus and began to defend Him. It is a beautiful picture of Jesus' saving power.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: What were Jesus' last words? Do the gospels make different claims for Jesus' last words? This one is interesting. Can we know exactly what Jesus' last words were? Start reading the next page to find out.

CHAPTER 17

WHAT WERE JESUS' LAST WORDS?

HUMANIST QUESTION: Regarding the last words of Jesus while on the cross, Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34 quote Jesus as crying with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Luke 23:46 gives his final words as, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." John 19:30 alleges the last words were, "It is finished."

The way to start, as we have been doing, is to see what scripture says, including a little more than what the humanists reference so we have some context.

About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" - Matthew 27:46

And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, "This man is calling for Elijah." Immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink. But the rest of them said, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him." And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. - Matthew 27:47-50

Apparently, the humanist who wrote this question did not read past verse 46. In Matthew 27:50, the last sentence in the above quote states: "*Jesus cried out again with a loud voice.*" That means "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*" were not his last words. He

What Were Jesus' Last Words?

“cried out again” loudly after taking a drink of sour wine. However, Matthew does not record what He cried out. John 19:29b-30 does:

...so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth. Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

When Jesus cried out, "*It is finished!*" what did that mean? It did not mean he had died. Jesus was stating, “mission accomplished!” This was not a last gasp before dying, but a shout of triumph! God's holy wrath against sin had been satisfied. Every prophecy had been fulfilled. Satan was defeated and rendered powerless. The work of redemption was accomplished. Everything that needed to be done was done... and nothing could be added to it. It was finished!

However, Jesus had not yet died. Next, He bows His head. John does not say whether Jesus says anything after that. However, that he bowed His head, instead of His head simply falling forward, shows the motion was intentional and Jesus was still alive.

John does not say whether Jesus said anything between when He bowed His head, and when He gave up His spirit. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, John's focus was on the cross. Jesus' work on the cross is finished, so there is nothing more for John to report. However, Jesus does speak again.

As we continue, please notice that Jesus voluntarily gave up His life at the moment He choose. He willingly went to the cross and He chose to give up His life only after His purpose for coming to earth had been accomplish.

For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.” - John 10:17-18

Luke is the one who records Jesus' final words. With His mission accomplished, Jesus can now give up His physical life so that He can demonstrate there is life after death. While His mission of redemption was accomplished, He still needs to die physically so that three days later He can demonstrate that eternal life is real. Luke records:

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." Having said this, He breathed His last. - Luke 23:46

After saying these last words, Jesus gives up His physical life. On the third day He will demonstrate to the world there truly is life after death. No one ever came off a Roman cross alive (physically). That was true of Jesus. There was no doubt He was dead. However, physical death is not the end.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: The humanists now write: "There are even contradictions in the accounts of the resurrection – the supposed event that is the very foundation of the Christian religion."

Really? The humanists will need to make some strong arguments on this one. Turn the page to find out what they say... and what the answers are. Is there proof the resurrection is just a story? A "fictional" event that Jesus' followers made up? Or... is it real history?

What Were Jesus' Last Words?

CHAPTER 18

WHO GOT TO THE TOMB WHEN?

HUMANIST QUESTION: There are even contradictions in the accounts of the resurrection – the supposed event that is the very foundation of the Christian religion.

The Humanists follow the above accusation with three examples concerning the Sunday morning when the tomb was empty. I will answer them one at a time. Keep in mind there were a number of different people coming to and going from the tomb that morning. The empty tomb was shocking... unbelievable... There was a lot of confusion and people were running back and forth, to and from the empty tomb.

Contradiction #1: Mark 16:2 states that on the day of the resurrection, certain women arrived at the tomb at the rising of the sun. But John 20:1 informs us they arrived when it was yet dark.

Here is what Mark recorded:

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might come and anoint Him. Very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. - Mark 16:2

John, on the other hand, only mentions Mary and says that it was still dark.

Who Got to The Tomb When?

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb. - John 20:1

Who is right? Did they arrive at the tomb while it was still dark, or was it after the sun had risen?

Let's add some information not mentioned in the humanist's question. Matthew and Luke also report that the women came to the tomb at dawn. Here is what Matthew wrote:

Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. - Matthew 28:1

What happened is that as dawn was just beginning Mary Magdalene got to the tomb before the other women. Most of the sky was still dark, but the eastern horizon was just starting to glow.

John, although writing in a simple style, tends to go deeper in how he describes events. In this case it is interesting that the Greek word used by John, and translated as "dark" (Strong's 4653) is also associated with the idea of unhappiness or ruin⁶. As is typical of how John writes, in his choice of words he is describing more than just the sky. He is describing the mood of the women. The women, as well as the apostles, were in despair. They felt as though they had given up everything for a lie. The Messiah was dead. The woman did not yet know Jesus had risen, so their mood was still dark

Contradiction #2: Luke 24:2 describes the tomb as open when the women arrived, whereas Matthew 28:1-2 indicates it was closed.

Here are the applicable scriptures:

Luke 24:1-2

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb...

⁶ Spiros Zodhiates, Complete Word Study Dictionary, page 1297

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Matthew 28:1-4

Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men.

Pay close attention to what Matthew wrote. He states that the women arrive at dawn, then he talks about the earthquake in the past tense. Matthew fills in the details that explain why the women found the grave open. They were surprised that the stone had been rolled away. They had not been expecting this. Matthew is not saying the tomb was closed, he is explaining how the heavy stone was moved (past tense).

Contradiction #3: Mark 16:5 declares that the women saw a young man at the tomb, Luke 24:4 says they saw two men, Matthew 28:2 reports they saw an angel, and John 20:11-12 claims they saw two angels.

The first question is; what do angels look like? The answer is, angels do not have a physical form, but they do have the ability to appear in human form. For more about the appearance of angels visit: www.gotquestions.org/angels-look.html

Here is a good question. If I said, "I saw a man wearing a white suit sitting on the park bench" does that mean he was the only man sitting on the bench? No. Does that mean there were no men standing next to the park bench? No. All you know is that there was a man in a white suit sitting on the bench. There could have been other people there.

As I have said before, be aware that each gospel writer addresses a different audience, and each may be answering different questions. In this case Matthew and Mark are explaining how the stone was rolled away, and Luke and John are addressing the question of what happened to the body. As a result, the information they report has a different focus.

There are no contradictions here. There were two angels. That Mark and Luke refer to the angels as men is not a problem. That is

Who Got to The Tomb When?

what they looked like and scripture often identified angels as men (based on their appearance), such as in Genesis 18:1–2 and Daniel 9:21. In this case, Mark and Luke are reporting that the woman at first thought they were looking at men. My guess is that if an angel appeared to you right now, in the form of a man, your first thought would be that you were looking at a man. Your reaction would be, "Where did that man come from?"

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: The humanist continues trying to find contradictions in the resurrection story. The answers to these “contradictions” are similar to what you just read.

CHAPTER 19

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED THAT SUNDAY MORNING?

HUMANIST QUESTION: Also in the resurrection stories, there are contradictions as to the identity of the women who came to the tomb, whether the men or angels the women saw were inside or outside the tomb, whether the men or angels were standing or sitting, and whether Mary Magdalene recognized the risen Jesus when he first appeared to her.

Let's see if we can solve a murder mystery... a typical TV show type of murder mystery. A body is found in a swimming pool near a tall apartment building. The dead man had an apartment on the 20th floor, and the window facing the pool is broken. It looks like he fell through the window into the pool.

In the room with the broken window the police find the fingerprints of four people, and they interview each one separately. Each tells exactly the same story, down to the smallest details. The man was distraught and angry with the four men because a business deal had gone bad. He had smashed things in the room, throwing objects at the walls, tripping and banging his head on a lamp. The four men tried to help him, and he scratched the face of one and tore the clothes of the other. The four men went out into the hall to talk over what was happening. When they reentered the apartment, the man had apparently smashed the window with a chair and jumped to his death.

What Really Happened That Sunday Morning?

Each of the four stories was the same. Every detail matched perfectly. All four tell exactly the same story. What does the police detective do?

He arrests all four men for murder. Why? If four witnesses tell exactly the same story, they must have colluded and prepared their stories in advance. Normally with four witnesses, you get four different stories. Each is true. However, each witness will tell the story from a different perspective, having noticed different details. That is what we have in the four Gospels as they describe the scene at the tomb on the Sunday morning after Jesus was crucified.

If the four Gospels had each recorded exactly the same description of what happened that morning, we should be suspicious. Most likely they had talked it over and agreed that would be their story, and they were sticking to it. However, instead we get what would be expected in real life... four stories... giving us four perspectives of what happened early that Sunday morning.

Not all of the women arrived at the same time. When some arrived, they immediately went off to tell the disciples, then returned to the grave. There were women coming and going. What they were seeing was shocking... unbelievable. It was a highly emotional scene. With the coming and going, some of women saw different events than others. (The angels did not just sit around as if posing for pictures.) What we get in the four resurrection stories is a description of the mystery, confusion, excitement, and the running around that happened that Sunday morning.

In recording the events of that morning, the gospel writers do not try to list all of the women. Each only mentions the women who are important to their telling of the story. All four do mention Mary Magdalene, who appears to have arrived first and then left to tell Peter and John. Meanwhile the other woman arrived and entered the tomb and encountered the angel, and then left to tell the disciples. Then Mary arrives back at the tomb with Peter and John. Peter and John leave to find the other disciples, leaving Mary alone at the tomb where Jesus appears to her.

Assuming everything took place in a calm, orderly fashion, as the humanists do, is a wrong assumption. There was confusion, people coming and going and rushing about; some disbelief; some wonder and amazement, and lots of excitement. What the four Gospels paints a realistic picture.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

NEXT ACCUSATION: The humanist is going to keep us in the New Testament for one more “contradiction.” What really happened to Paul on the road to Damascus? BTW, all accusations quoted at the beginning of each chapter, are unedited, direct quotes from the American Humanist web site.

What Really Happened That Sunday Morning?

Yes, There Are Answers

There are no contradictions in the Bible. There are only people who desire God to be a myth... who desire to escape accountability for everything they have done wrong... who, as scripture says, know there is a God but love their sin (Romans 1:20-22).

We cry out to you... please turn to Jesus, trusting him as your Savior from the wrath of God that will be poured out on YOU as the just penalty for your breaking God's laws.

Look at the Ten Commandments. Have you ever told a lie? Have you ever taken something that did not belong to you? Have you ever looked at another person with lust? In Matthew 5 Jesus said that to look with lust is to commit adultery in your heart.

You have broken God's laws and deserve the just punishment, separation from God forever.

Do you understand what that means? Everything that is good comes from God. If you are separated from God, you have nothing good. That is eternal torment, called hell. Imagine what nothing good is like. You are totally alone. In darkness. In constant pain (the lake of fire.) That is separation from God. There is NOTHING good. If you are a humanist this is what you have been asking for... separation from God... but it's not what you truly want.

Only Jesus can save you. Trust Him to save you. Repent, turn away from disobeying God and put your trust in Jesus. There is no other way.

CHAPTER 20

DID PAUL REALLY HEAR GOD SPEAK?

HUMANIST QUESTION: As a final example of a New Testament contradiction, the conflicting accounts of Paul's conversion can be cited. Acts 9:7 states that when Jesus called Paul to preach the gospel, the men who were with Paul heard a voice but saw no man. According to Acts 22:9, however, the men saw a light but didn't hear the voice speaking to Paul.

As we have been doing, the first step is to look at what scripture actually says:

The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. - Acts 9:7 (NASB)

And those who were with me saw the light, to be sure, but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me. - Acts 22:9 (NASB)

There is no problem. Scripture does not say what the humanists claim it says. In Acts 9:7 the men who traveled with Paul heard a voice. Then in Acts 22:9 we learn that although they physically heard the voice, they did not understand what the voice was saying. Why would the humanist say there is a contradiction here?

Maybe the problem is in the translation they were using. Let's look at Acts 22:9 in the King James Version:

Did Paul Really Hear God Speak?

And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid, but they heard not the voice of him that spoke to me. - Acts 22:9
(KJV)

Ah... the problem is that how we define words (in English) has changed with time. In a more current translation, the NASB, the Greek word translated as "hearing" in Acts 9:7 is the same Greek word in Acts 22:9 that is translated as "understand." In the KJV it is translated as "heard" in both verses. That word is "akouo" (Strong's 191). Why does the NASB use two different words to translate the same Greek word?

The answer is, to make the meaning clear in English the way we speak today.

So what is with the KJV? Is there a difference in meaning between the NASB and KJV? No. Paul heard the voice and understood what it said. Others heard the voice, but did not understand what it said. Recall that the KJV was translated in 1611 and updated in 1769. Some of the words used in the KJV have different meanings than they have today. An English word or phrase that was appropriate in 1769 might not convey the desired meaning today.

Translation of the Original Greek

First, although ancient Greek usually can be translated word-for-word, there is not always a perfect word-for-word correlation. As in any language, some words have nuances and variations in meaning. The same is true for English words, and those nuances change with time. The result is that no two translations use exactly the same English words, in particular if there is a significant time gap between two translations.

Second, in translating you need to be familiar with the culture of the people who spoke the original language. The meaning of words is dependent on the culture. I am reminded of a friend of mine who did translations from English to Russian. He was translating a sermon in which the preacher said, *"It is like Grape Nuts, no grapes and no nuts."* Translating those words directly into Russian made no sense. What my friend did was to translate "Grape Nuts" as "Bird's Milk." So, my American reader, does *"It is like Bird's Milk, no birds and no milk."* have

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

any meaning for you? It does for a Russian. They have a popular candy called "Bird's Milk" that has nothing to do with birds nor milk.

Third, just as in English, individual Greek words may have multiple meanings. What a word specifically means depends on the context. To learn more about "akouo" (Strong's 191) I turned to my copy of one of the most authoritative Greek dictionaries, *"The Complete Word Study Dictionary (New Testament)"* by Spiros Zodhiates. It gives seven definitions for "akouo." Here is a summary:

- To hear in general
- To hear with attention.
- To have the faculty of hearing
- To obey
- To be informed by hearing
- To hear in a forensic sense (such as a court hearing)
- To understand or comprehend

The Greek word "akouo" can mean physically "hearing" and it can mean "to understand." If you hear, but do not understand, it is the same as not hearing at all. In the Hebrew way of thinking this made sense. If you physically heard something, but did not understand (for example, it was in a language you did not know), it was just as though you did not hear it, because there was no understanding.

At the time the KJV was translated, to "hear" also carried the meaning of understanding. At that time, it was the appropriate word to use. Today we use the word "hear" in a more limited sense, so current translations use the word "understand." The men with Paul did hear with their ears, but they did not understand what they physically heard.

CONCLUSION: There is no contradiction.

The humanists now move on from contradictions in the Bible to cruelties in the Bible. The following is their introduction to this topic. There is a fundamental error in what they say. Can you spot it?

Did Paul Really Hear God Speak?

“Humanists also reject the Bible because it approves of outrageous cruelty and injustice. In civilized legal systems, a fundamental principle is that the suffering of the innocent is the essence of injustice. Yet the Bible teaches that God repeatedly violated this moral precept by harming innocent people.”

Did you spot the error? If not, start reading the next page to learn what is wrong with the above statement.

CHAPTER 21

DOES THE BIBLE APPROVE OF CRUELTY?

HUMANIST STATEMENT: Humanists also reject the Bible because it approves of outrageous cruelty and injustice. In civilized legal systems, a fundamental principle is that the suffering of the innocent is the essence of injustice. Yet the Bible teaches that God repeatedly violated this moral precept by harming innocent people.

The above statement introduces a section on the American Humanists web site that lists supposed "instances of cruel and unjust behavior by the biblical God." We will continue to look at what they say item by item. However, we first must examine their introductory statement. It includes a fallacy that, if left standing, biases everything that follows.

What is the Problem?

Is there anyone who is innocent? Is there anyone who has ever walked on the earth, who is innocent? Yes... just one... Jesus Christ. He was perfectly innocent. He never did anything wrong. He never disobeyed God. However, He is the only one. No one else is innocent.

What about babies? Aren't babies and little children innocent?

Anyone who has had children knows that a two-year old is a disobedient handful. They can be defiant terrorists..., which is why it is

Does The Bible Approve of Cruelty?

called the terrible twos. Kids most certainly are not perfectly obedient, innocent little "angels."

However, what about babies? All they can do is eat, sleep, cry and poop. Certainly, they are innocent. John MacArthur writes:

Scripture is clear that children and the unborn have original sin—including both the propensity to sin as well as the inherent guilt of original sin. But could it be that somehow Christ's atonement did pay for the guilt for these helpless ones throughout all time? Yes, and therefore it is a credible assumption that a child who dies at an age too young to have made a conscious, willful rejection of Jesus Christ will be taken to be with the Lord. (www.tinyurl.com/ycaumxzzr).

This is a major topic and I refer you to John MacArthur's book, *"Safely In The Arms of God."* He takes a thorough look at the question of sin and whether babies go to heaven. For our discussion, what we need to know is that: babies and little children are not innocent before God, but in His love, God applies the work of Jesus Christ on the cross to them, and they do go to heaven.

What did we just learn? The opening statement the humanists make, implying there are those who are innocent, is a false statement. There are none who are innocent. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. There are none who are righteous, not one⁷.

However, we are not done, there are more problems with the opening statement.

The Humanists State: The Bible Approves of Injustice

The humanists claim that God is cruel and unjust. Who defines what is just or unjust? In other words, who gets to define what is immoral? Who establishes the "moral precepts" the humanists claim God violates?

The humanist's claim is that God does things that are *"the essence of injustice."* On the other hand, Christians say that God is just in all He does. Assuming we are both understanding God's actions the same way, we have a major difference in how morality is defined.

⁷ Romans 3:9-18

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

To understand morality, we need to know the source of our moral values. This is a major topic that requires its own chapter(s). I cover this topic in two appendices at the end of this volume:

Appendix A: Do Humanists Have a Reasonable Source for Moral Values?

Appendix B: God, The Only Valid Source of Moral Values

To summarize these two appendices: God is the source of morality. God's character is what defines morality. The humanists have no reasonable source of morality. Their claim is that morality arises naturally from human needs. That means morality is not absolute, unchanging, nor even knowable. In other words, based on their rules, they get to define morality as whatever they want it to be, and change it whenever they want to change it. That is not a reasonable standard.

There is a simple way to see if the humanist's source of morality is realistic. They say that, if people in a certain culture agree on a moral standard, then that is a true standard of what is morally good and bad in that culture.

Question: if a majority of people in a certain location all agree that raping ten-year-old girls is morally right; does that make it morally right? No? Why not? Humanist have no answer. The only valid answer is because raping ten-year-old girls is not part of God's character. The character of God defines morality. We are created in the image of God, and we are to have the moral character of God. Nothing humanists can do or say will change that.

CONCLUSION: The humanists have based their premise on shifting sand. They have no firm foundation for claiming any form of behavior is moral or immoral. For example, based on humanity determining morality, what is immoral today, very well could have been moral 2000 years ago. In the humanist's system, no one has the right to tell anyone else they have done something wrong. Do you see where this leads? The humanists are saying God has done some immoral things. However, based on their own standards they have no basis for that accusation.

Does The Bible Approve of Cruelty?

NEXT ACCUSATIONS: In the next chapters we will examine the humanist's claims of God's supposed "cruelty." As I have been doing, at the beginning of each chapter I am directly quoting what they say on their web site.

In their first accusation, they list off a number of events. I will address each one.

Their first accusation is that God "damned" the entire human race for the actions of two people, Adam and Eve. By the way, I wonder if they have considered that, at the time of Adam and Eve, they were the entire population of the world.

Getting to the point, the humanists are claiming that this demonstrates God is cruel and immoral. Is that true? Is God cruel and immoral?

CHAPTER 22 IS CURSING THE ENTIRE CREATION EVIL?

THE CLAIMED CRUELTY: He damned the whole human race and cursed the entire creation because of the acts of two people (Genesis 3:16-23; Romans 5:18)

Is God cruel or unjust? Let's start with what scripture says. Here is Romans 5:18:

So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

Now Genesis 3:14-23. I have included a few additional verses so we see the context:

So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

To the woman He said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

To Adam He said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it.'

Is Cursing the Entire Creation Evil?

Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.” Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.”

These verses describe the specific curses on Adam and Eve, and thus all mankind, as well as the ground being cursed. However, it was more serious than that. As stated in Romans 8:22 -- *“the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.”* All of creation is cursed and is groaning because of Adam's sin.

God Unjustly Damned the Whole Human Race

This statement simply is not true. God does not "damn" anyone to hell. You do that yourself. People end up in hell as a result of their own thoughts and actions. If you live a perfect life, without violating any of God's laws (sin), you will go to heaven. However, only one person has lived a perfect life. Jesus Christ.

A few questions help demonstrate this. Have you ever told a lie? Or maybe a better question is: how many lies have you told? Have you ever desired to have something that belongs to someone else (coveting)? Have you ever used God's name as a curse word? That is blasphemy and is very serious. Have you ever been unjustly angry with someone (think driving in heavy traffic)? Jesus said that if you are unjustly angry you have murdered them in your heart.

If you answered yes to any of the above, you are guilty of breaking God's laws (sin). These are just four of the Ten Commandments (the moral law). If you have broken any of God's laws, you deserve the just punishment, the eternal lake of fire. That is what sends you

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

to hell... your breaking God's laws. You are the one who is responsible, not God. God does not “damn” anyone. You do it to yourself⁸.

Why is disobeying God so serious? Because you are created in the image of God. Not physically, but in who you are and your character.

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; ... God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. – Genesis 1:26-27.

As God’s image bearers, we represent the character of God. We have the responsibility to reflect the character of God. If we tell a lie, we are representing God as being a liar. If we take something that does not belong to us, we represent God as a thief. The Ten Commandments are not arbitrary. They describe the character of God and thus the moral character we should have.

We need to recognize who we are. God created us for His purposes. The Bible uses the analogy of a potter. A potter owns the vessels he makes. If one of his clay pots is defective, and it does not accurately reflect the skill and craftsmanship of the potter, it ends up on the scrap heap. It is the same with God. He is the potter and you are the clay pot. Except, He offers to take your imperfections (sin) on Himself. If you repent, meaning turn away for disobeying God, and trust that He has truly taken the penalty for your sin onto Himself, it is done and as a result you have eternal life.

God Cursed All of Creation Because of One Man’s Actions

What is wrong with this statement? It is a true statement. The humanists want you to assume God has done something wrong. However, they do not say why they think this is wrong. That makes it impossible to answer their accusation. There are no specifics to answer.

So, why was the entire creation cursed because of Adam’s sin? What the humanists apparently do not understand is how destructive

⁸ Ultimately people are damned for one sin, not repenting and trusting Jesus Christ.

Is Cursing the Entire Creation Evil?

sin is. They have no concept of the seriousness of sin. Adam was given just one law:

The Lord God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die." - Genesis 2:16-17

There was one law. Adam broke that law. Just as God said it would, that brought death to Adam. His body started to decay (his cells started dying), and he was instantly spiritually dead (separated from God). The decay of all things is what we call entropy. It not only affects us, but also the entire universe. A perfect and eternal universe is now running down and decaying.

For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. - Romans 8:20-22

Cursed is the ground because of you... - Genesis 3:17

Why? Scripture does not specifically tell us "why." What we do know is that once corruption (sin) entered the creation, like yeast spreading through a batch of dough, its effects (entropy) spread through all of creation. Everything is running down.

However, there is some good news. Things are not decaying as fast as they naturally would. Scripture (Colossians 1:17) says that the Son is currently holding all things together. – ***"and in Him all things hold together."*** Right now, as you read this, the Son (Jesus) is slowing the decay rate... holding things together. In His love this is giving humanity, including all humanists, more time to repent and turn to Jesus as their Savior. However, time will run out. The Son will eventually allow corruption to run its course and the universe will be destroyed in fire.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. - 2 Peter 3:7

Humanist or God, Who Stands in Judgment over Who?

The humanists say God is cruel to subject all creation to decay (entropy). However, God could let the universe just fall apart right now... today. God is perfect and perfection throughout all of His creation, which was originally created as very good, is required. What He could have done is destroy the imperfection when Adam sinned. You and I would never have existed. He could destroy everything right now. Instant death for you, me, and the entire universe. That is what we deserve. Instead, He is slowing the corruption, giving all of us, humanists included, more time to turn to Him in repentance, and to trust Jesus Christ as our Savior from the judgment to come. What incredible love!

Is God cruel? No. He is showering His love on all of us right now. He is offering mercy, grace, and total forgiveness... forgiveness we do not deserve. He is holding back the decay of the universe, giving humanists, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Mormons, and false Christians alike a little more time. The universe is no longer perfect. It must be replaced, and it will be replaced with a new, perfect home for redeemed mankind. However, in His mercy, God is waiting for more to trust Him, obey Him, and become His children. He will not wait forever.

CONCLUSION: God is not harming the innocent. Every one of us has sinned. We each face the eternal consequences for our own disobedience... not Adam's. God is being incredibly patient, showering His love on us instead of immediately sending all of us to the eternal punishment we have earned. For those who believe and trust Him, He has died in their place. Taking on Himself the punishment they deserve, and setting them free to live forever with Him.

NEXT ACCUSATION: "He drowned pregnant women and innocent children and animals at the time of the Flood (Genesis 7:20-23)"

Is Cursing the Entire Creation Evil?

You know the answer will demonstrate God's love, mercy and patience. We will also see that God does not bring judgment without giving advance warning.

CHAPTER 23 DID THE FLOOD DROWN INNOCENT PEOPLE?

THE CLAIMED CRUELTY: He [God] drowned pregnant women and innocent children and animals at the time of the Flood (Genesis 7:20-23)

What immediately jumps out is that the humanist makes a point of saying God drowned pregnant women. Scripture does not specifically state that, but since everyone drowned except for the eight people on the ark, pregnant woman did drown. Not only is the humanist using emotion-packed language to attempt to get you to deny God, the humanists imply this is cruel. Yet humanists support pulling the limbs off a baby, one by one, while it is still alive and feeling pain, in the womb (abortion). What total hypocrites they are! Humanist beliefs, and for example, what they do to woman and innocent children in the womb, that is wicked and cruel. (I talk more about this in chapter 41, in volume 2 of this book.)

Here is what the referenced scripture says:

The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered. All flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died. Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out

Did The Flood Drown Innocent People?

from the earth; and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark. - Genesis 7:20-23

However, this does not give us the complete story... just the results. The humanist claims of cruelty imply that God had impure motives. So why did God do this? A major problem existed that could not be ignored. Let's go back to Genesis chapter six:

Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. - Genesis 6:5

Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. - Genesis 6:11-12

The world was completely wicked, to the point that people's thoughts were continually wicked. It was a world filled with violence and evil. Evil was so great that the only option was to bring justice on those who were evil and start over. So what did God do? Did He immediately send a flood and wipe everyone out?

No. There was a righteous man, Noah. God told Noah to build the ark, and while he was working on the ark, he was also preaching righteousness. Even though they were thoroughly evil, God loved those people. For over 100 years, Noah warned the people of his world about what God was going to do, and told them what they needed to do to be saved.

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; ... then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority. - 2 Peter 2:4-5 & 9-10

For over 100 years, as he was building the ark, Noah was also preaching, warning the people about the judgment to come. They had

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

many chances to be saved. However, they were wicked and evil, and refused to stop doing evil. They rejected God and Noah's preaching.

Notice that Peter also says that the Lord knows how to rescue the godly. For 100 years, while the ark was under construction, people could have turned away from their wickedness. They knew what was coming. They knew why judgment was coming. Noah told them. Still they preferred their sin.

God loved all of mankind. His love was so great that He provided a way of escape for anyone who would listen. The ark had plenty of room for additional people. Only Noah and his immediate family responded. Finally, the door closed, the rain began, the fountains of the deep opened, and the floodwaters rose above the highest mountain peaks. Everyone who did not heed God's warning died.

Justice was done. The flood came and took the evil away.

What about the Animals?

God saved many more animals than He did people. There were eight people on the ark and thousands of animals. Two of every kind, and seven of some kinds. However, why were the rest of the animals killed in the flood?

Scripture does not directly answer this question. However, with the extreme level and pervasiveness of wickedness and evil, it is likely that the corruption affected the animals. As we saw previously in Romans 8:20-22, all of the world was corrupted by sin. That would include animals.

And notice that Genesis 6:12 (above) talks about "all flesh" being corrupt, and verse 13 goes on to state that *"the earth is filled with violence because of them,"* referring back to "all flesh." "All flesh" includes animals, meaning they were affected by evil. It could be that deadly and painful diseases were spreading through the animal kingdom, or that animals had become violent and destructive. Scripture does not say.

"The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth." - Genesis 6:13

Scripture focuses on people, animals are secondary, so we do not know for sure what God's thoughts were. We know the animals were

Did The Flood Drown Innocent People?

corrupted by the evil in the world. We know only two of each kind were needed for reproduction. We know animals are not created in the image of God. That is why killing an animal is not murder. There is no reason to think that God was unjust or cruel because animals died in the flood.

CONCLUSION: All of the world was corrupted by extreme evil and wickedness. This could not be allowed to continue as it harmed the world and all that was in it. The wickedness was in every person, and most importantly it harmed God. Such a wicked world reflected back on God. Just as a potter who produces poor quality clay pots is known as being an unskilled and poor potter, so does a wicked and evil world portray a perfect, pure and holy God as a wicked and evil creator. Yet God still provided over 100 years of warning. Plenty of time for anyone who believed God (through the preaching of Noah) to have been saved. God gave people 100 years of opportunity. If people believed Noah, as the people of Nineveh believed Jonah (see the book of Jonah in Old Testament), the flood could have been prevented and they and the entire world could have been saved. However, they did not believe. Finally, after a long wait, God delivered justice.

MORE INFORMATION: www.SciencePastor.com/innocent

NEXT ACCUSATION: Next, they accuse God of tormenting the Egyptians with hail and disease, and claim that He killed Egyptian babies. Would you like to know what God actually did?

CHAPTER 24
DID GOD TORMENT THE EGYPTIANS
(AND KILL BABIES)?

THE CLAIMED CRUELTY: He [God] tormented the Egyptians and their animals with hail and disease because pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt (Exodus 9:8-11,25); and he killed Egyptian babies at the time of the Passover (Exodus 12:29-30)

It would be nice if the humanists actually explained their thinking. For example, why do they think it was wrong for God to bring plagues against the Egyptians? (I am assuming they think it was wrong in some way.) Was God being unjust? Did God have the wrong motives? Do humanists approve of slavery, and cruel and harsh treatment of slaves? Are they saying the Egyptians did nothing wrong by enslaving Israel for 400 years? Was the means of freeing Israel too harsh? Given the situation and circumstances, why do humanists consider what God did to be cruel? Once again, I will have to make assumptions about what they are thinking.

My best guess is that the humanists are claiming God was unjust... that the "punishment" was not appropriate for the crime. However, it would be nice if, in future articles, humanists would provide the specific reasons for their assertions of cruelty. Using emotion packed words ("tormented") and making nebulous accusations leaves it to the minds of the reader to come up with the "crime." However, it provides no actual support for their claims of cruelty.

I am going to assume the charge is that God is cruel because the punishment was not appropriate, and move ahead on that basis. Most

Did God Torment the Egyptians (And Kill Babies)?

people are familiar with what happened. Here is a summary of the back story:

1. There was a famine in the land. Israel (aka. Jacob), along with his family, servants, and flocks are invited⁹ to settle in the land of Goshen (Egypt) where food is available.

2. The Israelites are in Goshen for 400 years. Early on they lose their freedom and become slaves of the Egyptians who are cruel and harsh in their treatment of the Hebrews (Israelites).

They [the Egyptians] appointed taskmasters over them to afflict them with hard labor. ...The Egyptians compelled the sons of Israel to labor rigorously; and they made their lives bitter with hard labor in mortar and bricks and at all kinds of labor in the field, all their labors which they rigorously imposed on them. - Exodus 1:11-14

3. Moses, a Hebrew raised as an Egyptian prince, but now living outside of Egypt, is selected by God to lead Israel out of captivity, but Pharaoh would not let the Hebrews (Pharaoh's slave labor) leave.

4. God brings ten plagues on Egypt, after which Pharaoh finally allows the Israelites leave. The final plague was the death of all the firstborn. However, after they leave Pharaoh changes his mind and chases after the Israelites.

What Problems was God Addressing?

- A. The Hebrews had been unjustly enslaved and abused for several hundred years. It was time for God to free them from their slavery.
- B. The Hebrews still believed in God. However, although they knew God, they did not believe He was powerful enough to free them from Egypt and the Egyptian gods.

⁹ They are invited by the #2 man in Egypt, second only to Pharaoh. His name was Joseph and he was one of Jacob's twelve sons.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

- C. The Egyptian gods seemed to be powerful and were attractive to the people of Israel, so many of them turned back to worshiping the Egyptian gods. Even after they escaped from Egypt, they use a golden calf (the main Egyptian god) as a way to worship the true God (Exodus 32).

God's Solution

God would save the Israelites from slavery, and at the same time show them that He was alive, was able to save them, and was worthy of their worship. In addition, He would show that the Egyptian gods were nothing, and do not deserve to be worshipped. How does He do this? Through the ten plagues. They would address all three problems.

Slave labor was an important part of the Egyptian economy. Hebrew slave labor built many of the major structures in Egypt. It normally would take either a significant and very bloody war, or a major revolt to set them free. God had a better way.

The method God chose to free the slaves also demonstrated that God is worthy of worship and the Egyptian gods were not. As is common with pagan cultures, the Egyptians worshiped a variety of gods based in nature. Natural events, such as the annual flooding of the Nile, supposedly demonstrated the power of their gods. When Moses first confronted Pharaoh and demanded that he let Israel go, Pharaoh responded:

Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and besides, I will not let Israel go. - Exodus 5:2

God gave Moses the ability to answer this question. The result will be that Pharaoh will learn who God is, and why he should obey Him. God will send ten plagues, each of which demonstrates the emptiness of one or more Egyptian "god." The Got Questions web site (www.tinyurl.com/y9f46bes) describes each of the plagues. Here is their description of the first:

The first plague, turning the Nile to blood, was a judgment against Apis, the god of the Nile, Isis, goddess of the Nile, and Khnum, guardian of the Nile. The Nile was also believed to be the bloodstream of Osiris, who was reborn each year when the river flooded.

Did God Torment the Egyptians (And Kill Babies)?

The river, which formed the basis of daily life and the national economy, was devastated, as millions of fish died in the river and the water was unusable. Pharaoh was told, *"By this you will know that I am the LORD"* (Exodus 7:17)."

The following is a list of the ten plagues and the names of the Egyptian god(s) they targeted:

- Nile turned to blood - Apis, Isis, Osiris, and Khnum, these are all gods related to the Nile
- Frogs - Heqet (a frog headed god)
- Gnats - Set, the god of the desert
- Flies - Uatchit, the fly god
- Death of livestock - Apis and Hathor, who both had the physical appearance of cattle
- Boils - Sekhmet, Suni, and Isis, gods over health and disease
- Hail and Fire - Nut, Osiris and Set, the sky goddess, crop fertility god, and storm god
- Locusts - Nut, Osiris and Set
- Darkness - Re, the sun god who was symbolized by Pharaoh himself
- Death of firstborn males - Isis

In the midst of these plagues, God was not without grace and mercy on the Egyptians. If they turned away from trusting in their gods to protect them, and believed the God of the Israelites, they would be blessed. For example, before the seventh plague (hail and fire) God said:

"About this time tomorrow, I will send a very heavy hail, such as has not been seen in Egypt from the day it was founded until now. Now therefore send, bring your livestock and whatever you have in the field to safety. Every man and beast that is found in the field and is not brought home, when the hail comes down on them, will die."

The one among the servants of Pharaoh who feared the word of the Lord made his servants and his livestock flee into the houses; but he who paid no regard to the word of the Lord left his servants and his livestock in the field. - Exodus 9:18-21

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

God warned them, and those Egyptians who brought their livestock into their houses saved their livestock. Those who left their livestock in the field lost their animals.

The Final Part of This Accusation - Killing Babies

Once again, the American Humanist web site uses deceptive emotion-packed language to influence the reader to believe God is cruel. It is deceptive because the tenth plague had nothing to do with killing babies. However, of course, to claim God was killing babies makes a strong appeal to our emotions, even if it is false.

The American Humanists Support Killing Babies

What I find particularly vulgar and sickening is that American Humanists have absolutely no problems with killing babies. They do not feel it is morally wrong to kill babies. Their web site has a page titled "*Resolution on a Woman's Right to Kill Babies.*" Oops, I used the humanist tactic of using emotion packed language, even if it distorts what they actually said. The actual title is "*Resolution on a Woman's Right to Abortion.*" Oh... so I actually did not distort what they said after all. This is about killing babies.

This is an official resolution adopted by the American Humanist's board of directors on March 29, 1985. It gives a series of reasons and then states, "*The AHA reaffirms its support of women's right of choice to terminate a pregnancy within the parameter set up by the Supreme Court in its Roe vs. Wade decision.*" (www.tinyurl.com/yaqppgop)

If, when you read the American Humanists claim that God is cruel because He kills babies, you conclude God is cruel, then please write to the American Humanists Association and complain about their cruelty. They strongly support killing babies... the smallest and most helpless babies. Those who are still in the womb.

However, when it comes to the claim that God was killing Egyptian babies, we will see it is not true. God was not targeting babies. God was not cruel. He even provided a way for anyone who trusted Him to be saved, not just Jews.

So Moses said, "This is what the Lord says, 'About midnight I will go throughout Egypt. Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son

Did God Torment the Egyptians (And Kill Babies)?

of the slave girl, who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well.” – Exodus 11:4-5

What did God do? He killed the firstborn males. That would have included me. As I write this I am 69 years old, and I am the firstborn of my parents. Do you understand what that means? It was not babies. Mostly adult males died. They were warned. If they had listened to and obeyed God (if they had joined Israel and did as God commanded), they would not have died.

They are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs. ...and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt. – Exodus 12:7 & 13

God had already sent nine plagues. Nine powerful messages that demonstrated who He is (both His power and His grace). Plagues that demonstrated He does what He says He'll do. The physical evidence was overwhelming. All they had to do was believe and act on that belief, because... God provided a way to protect the firstborn males. Join Israel. Believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Smear the blood of a lamb on the top and sides of your doorway, and then trust that God would have the angel of death pass over your house.

CONCLUSION: God is not cruel. The ten plagues were just and appropriate. In addition, God warned them about what was about to happen and He provided a way for them to avoid the just punishment of the ten plagues.

NEXT ACCUSATION: As Israel went into the promised land, God ordered them to kill everyone who already was living there. Was it cruel or immoral for God to do this?

CHAPTER 25
DID GOD COMMAND ISRAEL TO
EXTERMINATE SEVEN NATIONS?

THE CLAIMED CRUELTY: After the Exodus he ordered the Israelites to exterminate the men, women, and children of seven nations and steal their land (Deuteronomy 7:1-2);

Should evil be stopped? Should evil be punished? Or should those who do evil be allowed to continue, facing no consequences? What do you think? If there is justice, then yes, those who do evil should be stopped and punished... whether they are individuals or nations.

As we normally do, let's start by looking at the verses the humanist references, Deuteronomy 7:1-2:

When the Lord your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you, and when the Lord your God delivers them before you and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them. - Deuteronomy 7:1-2

God is telling Israel; go into the land that was generally known as Canaan. He will clear away the nations that are living in that land, using the Israelites to destroy them. Why does God do that? The answer is in Deuteronomy 9 in which God makes it clear that He is not

Did God Command Israel to Exterminate Seven Nations?

giving Israel this land because they are such good (righteous) people, but because the people living there are wicked.:

Do not say in your heart when the Lord your God has driven them out before you, "Because of my righteousness the Lord has brought me in to possess this land," but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is dispossessing them before you. It is not for your righteousness or for the uprightness of your heart that you are going to possess their land, but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord your God is driving them out before you, in order to confirm the oath which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Know, then, it is not because of your righteousness that the Lord your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stubborn people. - Deuteronomy 9:4-6

God makes His point clear by repeating it. This has nothing to do with you Israel. He tells them: You (the people of Israel) have done nothing to deserve this land. You are not righteous. He is doing this because He promised it to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the people who live there now are evil and wicked. Evil must be punished, and the time has come for this evil to be punished.

It was not unexpected. Over 500 years before this God told Abraham that the people living in this land were evil, and their wickedness would increase. God was going to wait, giving them 500 years to change their ways. What incredible grace and mercy!

God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, [Egypt] where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions. As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age. Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete. - Genesis 15:13-16

God tells Abraham what will happen, giving him a summary of what is coming. The Amorites were the major tribe living in what would be Canaan. God reveals that they are evil, and that their wickedness will not decrease, but will grow. They had 500 years to change their ways, but they continued in their wickedness.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

So was God's plan to destroy the people living in the land of Canaan cruel or harsh?

Not at all. It was incredibly merciful. They were wicked. In His incredible patience, love and mercy God had given them over 500 years to change their evil ways. That is a long time. However, they had only grown in wickedness. Moreover, while God was giving them time to change their ways, the Israelites were waiting... held in brutal captivity as slaves in Egypt.

Finally, the time comes. God's long-enduring patience has come to end. It has been a long, long time and the only change has been that evil increased. It is time to end the wickedness. The evil must be destroyed. God plans to use Israel to do this. However, notice in Deuteronomy 7:1-2, those evil nations are much stronger and more powerful than Israel. It is God who will bring victory. Israel cannot take any credit, nor be given honor for defeating them.

READ MORE:

www.GotQuestions.com/Canaanites-extermination.html

CONCLUSION: God is not cruel; He was incredibly patient, full of grace and mercy. The final judgment, utter destruction, was the just and fair consequence of wickedness.

NEXT ACCUSATION: The humanists claim that God killed King David's baby because of David's adultery with Bathsheba, and that was cruel. Go to the next chapter to learn what God was doing.

Did God Command Israel to Exterminate Seven Nations?

CHAPTER 26

WHY DID GOD KILL DAVID'S BABY?

THE CLAIMED CRUELTY: He [God] killed King David's baby because of David's adultery with Bathsheba (II Samuel 12:13-18);

As I have mentioned in previous chapters, the American Humanists are condemning themselves as evil when they claim that killing babies is immoral. They are in favor of killing babies through abortion, and clearly state this on their web site. However, the Bible teaches that our killing babies is murder, wherever they are located—inside or outside of the womb.

Let's look at this accusation in the light of scripture. Of course, we do have to make some assumptions about what the humanists think is wrong. Once again, they have not provided an explanation.

The following is the scripture the humanist author references, 2nd Samuel chapter 12:

Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has taken away your sin; you shall not die. However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die." So Nathan went to his house. Then the Lord struck the child that Uriah's widow bore to David, so that he was very sick. - 2 Samuel 12:13-15

Then it happened on the seventh day that the child died. - 2 Samuel 12:18

Why Did God Kill David's Baby?

There is no question that we are hurt when a child dies, and appalled when a baby is killed. It is tragic. So why did God do this?

There is an explanation given *"because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme,"* but there are variety of opinions as to what this means. The reality is that the focus of the narrative is on David, not his child. We do not have enough information about the child to know specifically why God took the child's life.

However, Ezekiel 18:20 makes it clear that *"The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity."* The baby was not punished for David's sin. Whom did the death of David's son punish? The Got Questions web site states:

"A second point of contention is that, when God sent the illness that killed the child, He was unjustly punishing the child. However, from God's perspective, He was not punishing the child; He was punishing David. The king's grief was so severe that his servants thought he might die himself: "David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and spent the nights lying in sackcloth on the ground. The elders of his household stood beside him to get him up from the ground, but he refused, and he would not eat any food with them. On the seventh day the child died. David's attendants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they thought, 'While the child was still living, he wouldn't listen to us when we spoke to him. How can we now tell him the child is dead? He may do something desperate'" (2 Samuel 12:16–18).

"God's intention in taking the infant in death was to punish David. After a brief illness, the child was gathered up into the arms of God—as all innocents are. This is not a bad thing."¹⁰

Still, the bottom line is, we do not know. Scripture is focused on David, not the baby. God has said the baby died *"because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme,"* but He has not explained what this means.

¹⁰ For additional details visit: <https://www.gotquestions.org/David-Bathsheba-child.html>

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

We Live in a Fallen World

We need to keep in mind that we live in a damaged, broken world in which things are not as they are supposed to be. It is a world that is far from perfect. Sin is horrible, and sometimes in our fallen world, there are no good options in response to sin. At times, we must make a choice between the lesser of two evils, because that is the best we can do. God never has to make that type of choice, but the problem is, from our fallen and limited perspective, even if we had sufficient information, we may not fully understand what God is doing.

Is Physical Death Evil?

There is an assumption built into many of the humanist's claims, including this one... that physical death is always evil. Is this true? No. For example, Paul writes:

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better. -
Philippians 1:21-23

So why doesn't Paul immediately commit suicide and go to be with Christ? Because, that is not our decision to make. God owns us, and God decides when we will leave this earth.

*The righteous man perishes, and no man takes it to heart;
And devout men are taken away, while no one understands.
For the righteous man is taken away from evil,
He enters into peace. -* Isaiah 57:1-2

Death is not evil. It brings peace for the righteous. What is evil is our taking life. When a life will end is not our decision to make. That decision belongs to God alone.

Murder is evil, whether it is taking your own life, or taking the life of another... including taking the life of a baby in the womb. God owns us, and only He has the right to determine when someone is to die. The Apologetics Press web site has a good summary:

Why Did God Kill David's Baby?

In summary, it is the case that God treated David in perfect accord with the Law of Moses, showing no partiality. Furthermore, it has been shown that since death is not inherently evil, God was not guilty of immorality by causing the child's death. God also ushered David's son into an eternity of bliss. Therefore, the skeptic's charge against God fails once again to discredit His infinitely flawless character. As Abraham asked the rhetorical question in the long ago, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25). The answer has been the same throughout the millennia—a resounding "Yes." (www.tinyurl.com/ycddpxuq)

CONCLUSION: God is not cruel nor immoral. God is the creator and source of life. That means He fully and completely owns us. He gives us life and has the right to take life. Even when God does not fully explain why He does something, as in this example, it is obvious there was nothing evil or immoral about what He did.

Physical death is not inherently evil. What is immoral is one human taking the life of another human (murder), outside of the context of government fighting evil.

NEXT ACCUSATION: God is cruel because he required the torture and murder of his own son (Romans 3:24-25)

CHAPTER 27

GOD REQUIRED HIS SON TO BE TORTURED AND MURDERED

THE CLAIMED CRUELTY: He [God] required the torture and murder of his own son (e.g., Romans 3:24-25)

...being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; - Romans 3:24-25

I am not sure why the humanist who wrote their web page selected this scripture. As usual, they do not explain themselves. They seem to just be throwing accusations out and hoping that maybe one or two might stick. However, in this case it would seem they could come up with a better scripture for this accusation. All four gospels describe the physical torture and death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

In addition, the verses they have referenced from Romans are being ripped out of their context... that of Paul answering the question: *"How can a man be in the right before God?"* That is a truly important question. The answer is... only through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. This is a wonderful verse explaining how we are saved.

However, without regard to the appropriateness of the humanist's scripture reference, let's look at the claim they have asserted, that God was cruel to require the torture and murder of his own son.

God Required His Son to be Tortured and Murdered

There are certainly a lot of emotion packed words in the humanist's statement. As with other humanists statements they are trying to influence you to come to a wrong conclusion by using misleading and emotional language. Let's learn the truth in a logical, step-by-step manner:

- Humanity had a major problem that, if not addressed, would have resulted in the destruction of all of humanity.
 - Humans are unique; we are created in the image of God.
 - As God's image bearers, we have a responsibility to correctly represent God's character.
 - The Ten Commandments describe God's character. To violate any of the Ten Commandments is to violate God's character.
 - The problem is that we all (no exceptions) violate God's character. This is called breaking God's laws – we all sin.
- Violation of God's character (breaking God's law) brings physical and spiritual death.
 - Spiritual death means separation from God.
 - Separation from God means the loss of everything that is good. EVERYTHING!
 - Separation from God is described as the eternal lake of fire, outer darkness, or hell.
- God loves you very much... more than you can imagine.
- God is not only love, He is just. That means He must punish lawbreaking. There must be justice.
- That means every human being is heading for the eternal lake of fire. The second death. What is commonly called hell.
- Since we all have our own justly earned penalty for sin to pay (the death penalty), we do not have the ability to pay anyone else's penalty. Only someone who is completely free from sin can pay the sin penalty on behalf of someone else.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

- God created you to live with Him. However, all of us are separated from God by sin and there is NOTHING we can do to fix this problem. Only God can fix it.
 - God cannot just forgive and forget about our sin. That is not justice.
 - God could just wipe away sin and make us into puppets, with no will or desires of our own. However, God does not want mindless puppets.
 - If someone else were to pay our penalty for sin, then justice would be served and we are free from sin's penalty and can join God in eternity.

- Jesus (God) came to earth as a human to die on the cross, paying our penalty for sin, giving us eternal life.
 - Jesus lived a sinless life, making it possible for Him to pay our penalty for the sin (our disobeying God). As He was hanging on the cross Jesus took the full wrath of God for all of our sin.
 - Jesus was physically dead and buried. However, that was not the end. On the third day He rose from the dead, demonstrating there is truly life after death.

- God has given us free will. He wants us to accept the gift of life He offers, but He does not force us to accept His gift.
 - In our free will we always reject God.
 - In His mercy and grace God gives us the faith (Ephesians 2:8-9) to believe. That faith is a gift from God that results in our salvation.

Who put Jesus on the cross? You did. Your sin did. God requires justice. There was no other option. The penalty for your disobedience (law breaking) had to be paid. Either you had to pay the penalty you had justly earned, or someone else had to die in your place. There was only one person who could do that.

Every other person is in the same situation as you. They had to die to pay their own penalty. Jesus Christ, God who came to earth fully human, lived a perfect life. He never sinned and was thus the only one who could pay the penalty for the sin of others. And He

God Required His Son to be Tortured and Murdered

did. That is why He went to the cross. He died (the second death) in your place. There was no one else who could do it.

What was Jesus' attitude about going to the cross? He willingly went to the cross out of love for you. God did not require that the Son be tortured and killed. That is a false statement. You, because of your sin, gave Him no choice. Because of His love for you, Jesus willingly went to the cross. He did it because He wants you to live.

[Jesus speaking] I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. - John 10:17b-18a

CONCLUSION: It was because of your sin that Jesus went to the cross. He did it willingly,

out of love for you, so that you might have life. There is nothing evil or immoral here, just love.

NEXT ACCUSATION: The next accusation states that God is cruel because he promises to send non-Christians to eternal torture. There are a surprising number of errors in the humanist's accusation.

CHAPTER 28

NON-CHRISTIANS ARE TORTURED FOREVER

THE CLAIMED CRUELTY: He promised to send non-Christians to eternal torture (e.g., Revelation 21:8).

Once again, the humanists have worded their accusation in a way designed to speak to your emotions. However, we will take a rational, logical look at what they claim and see if it is reasonable. Revelation 21:8 is one of my favorite verses because it plainly makes clear who is heading for the lake of fire:

But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” - Revelation 21:8

Who is speaking? We need to go back a couple of verses:

And He who sits on the throne said... - Revelation 21:5

This is God speaking, the one who sits on the throne. What is He saying? Let's begin by defining some of the terms used in this verse, so we can be sure we understand what God is saying:

The Cowardly – These are false believers. People who think they are Christians, but in reality they are not trusting Jesus Christ as their Savior. They are revealed when they fall away from the faith

Non-Christians Are Tortured Forever

when their faith is tested. They are called cowards because, when they are tested, they are afraid to stand up for the faith. They "shrink back to destruction." (Hebrews 10:39)

Unbelieving - Those who do not believe God (for example, humanists) and are not trusting in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Abominable - People caught up in wickedness and evil. People who are disobeying God.

Murders - Read Matthew 5:21-24 to get a deeper understanding of murder. It not only includes taking someone's life, it includes hatred and anger. Jesus said that if you are angry with your brother, or in anger call them a fool, then you have murdered them in your heart. God looks at your thoughts as well as your actions.

Immoral persons - Those who have disobeyed God. For example, those who have broken any of the Ten Commandments.

Sorcerers - We do not consider sorcery a problem today. Unfortunately, the occult is alive and strong and includes New Age practices, mysticism, and some charismatic practices. However, there is more to this word. The Greek word used here is "pharmakos." It is the word we get our word "pharmacy" from, and it refers to mind-altering drugs. Sorcery, witchcraft, New Age, and drugs (including alcohol) are all related, and those whose lives are characterized by these things are not saved.

Idolaters - Those who have something in their lives that is more important than God.

All liars - How many lies have you told?

People whose lives are characterized by any of the above are not saved and their eternal destination is the lake of fire. So, yes, all non-Christians, as well as MANY people who call themselves Christian (see Matthew 7:21-23), will experience eternal torture in the lake of fire, which is the second death.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

In reading Revelation 21:8 I hope you noticed that everyone is in at least one, and probably several of the categories. That means the question that should come to mind is, how do I not end up in *“the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death?”*

There are only two ways:

(1) Not be on the list. In other words, never do anything that puts you on the list. For example, never tell a lie... not even a white lie. Never disobey God in any way. (Obey all of the Ten Commandments perfectly, at all times.) Live your life such that God is always first in your thoughts, words and deeds. The problem is none of us can do this.

“Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone.” – Mark 10:18

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. – Romans 3:23

(2) Since you are on the list (everyone is), you have disobeyed God and have earned the just and right punishment: eternity in the lake of fire. Your only option is to get someone else to take this punishment in your place.

There is no living person who can do this. Everyone must pay the penalty they have earned. Since the punishment is infinite, they are not able to take on a second infinite punishment. The **ONLY** person who can do this is God... and He did.

Jesus is God. When He died on the cross He willingly took on Himself the sins—past, present, and future—of everyone who believes in Him. Those who truly believe (trust) in Him are called Christians.

The door is open to everyone. Jesus paid the penalty for sin for **ANYONE** who believes in Him as their Savior. Jesus’ offer is not exclusive, and there is nothing you need to do (e.g. baptism, join a church, do good deeds, etc.). However, if you do not take His offer, there is no other option. You are heading for the eternal lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Non-Christians Are Tortured Forever

What Exactly Is This Punishment?

The “torture” the humanists refer to is eternal separation from God¹¹. In other words, God gives those who reject Him exactly what they want. However, you need to understand what that means.

God is the source of everything that is good. Without God there is nothing that is good. In this life our sin separates us from God, but God gives us grace and continues to give us good things.

“He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.” - Matthew 5:45

However, when we die without trusting Jesus Christ, we become totally and permanently separated from God. That means we have nothing good. Anything you can think of that is good, you will not have. Freedom from pain. A cool drink of water. Light. The company of another person. You will not have any of these... forever. That is hell. Separation from God.

God does not torture people. He gives them the just punishment they actually asked for. Separation from Him forever. It is called the lake of fire because that is what separation from God is like. The worst part there is no hope. It never ends,

CONCLUSION: God does not send anyone to eternal torture. It is your choice. Because of your disobedience (sin), you have earned separation from God. God gives you the option of life... if you trust that Jesus Christ literally took your sins on Himself and died in your place. There is nothing cruel, evil or immoral here, just love.

NEXT: The Bible is accused of having violent teachings that oppose civilized standards of morality. The humanist author lists several examples. We will look at each one of these, one-by-one.

¹¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/separation-from-God.html>

CHAPTER 29
GOD COMMANDS ISRAEL TO KILL ALL
AMALEKITES

THE HUMANIST CLAIMED CRUELTY: At I Samuel 15:3, the prophet Samuel gives King Saul this commandment from the Lord: "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, and do not spare him, but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey. - 1 Samuel 15:3

I am wondering: what ethical standard humanists use to judge God? On what basis do they say this is wrong? Their appeal is to "civilized systems" and "civilized standards of morality." (See appendix A.) Which civilization? The opening paragraph of this section of the humanist's web page states:

Besides the unfairness and heartlessness contained in many well-known Christian teachings, the Bible has other violent tales that are opposed to civilized standards of morality. Among the most shocking Bible passages are those that portray God as ordering or approving the extermination of various people, including children and the elderly.

What hypocrisy! I have already mentioned that humanists are in favor of killing babies. They are also in favor of euthanasia. How does that affect the lives of the elderly?

God Commands Israel to Kill All Amalekites

What are the consequences of accepting euthanasia? According to a Dutch study investigating the effects in Holland, where euthanasia is tolerated while not strictly legal, it was found that in a single year there were more than 2,700 reported euthanasia deaths. Over 50% of these were involuntary, i.e. the patient was not given a choice. In one case, an elderly lady required admission to hospital for her illness, but feared that she would be euthanased if she was admitted. Her physician assured her that he would take personal responsibility to see that this would not happen. However, having returned after a day absent from the hospital the physician found that the bed was occupied by another patient. Upon inquiry to the doctor in charge he found that the patient was killed because they needed the bed! If involuntary euthanasia is occurring in a country where euthanasia is not even legal, one can easily foresee the horrible results of legalising euthanasia. - Dr Mathew Piercy, "*Euthanasia: Hospital Humanism*" www.tinyurl.com/ybrf9ou3

Let's look at this hypocrisy from another angle. Based on humanist beliefs, what are some possible sources of moral values that might be used to guide a humanist in determining whether killing a group of people is right or wrong?

Evolution: If we follow the principles of evolution, survival of the fittest, then there is no moral problem with a stronger group of people wiping out a weaker group. That is how evolution works.

Humanist Web Site: They state that, that which is moral is that which is in the interest of human society.

"Morality emerges from humanity precisely because it exists to serve humanity." – The Human Basis of Laws and Ethics, www.tinyurl.com/yd2jxt4k

Different groups of humans have different interests, so it is easy to see there will be conflict. In addition, this definition means that it is morally acceptable for my group (based on serving our human interests) to wipe out other groups of humans who oppose our interests. Eventually humanism always comes down to the principle that might makes right.

Evolved Cultural Beliefs: Some humanists claim that our current culture defines our moral values. As we supposedly continue to

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

evolve and humanity improves, our morals also evolve and improve. This means that, by definition, our current moral values are superior to what they were in the past. It also means different cultures, and different times, have different moral values that were true and right for them. Who are we to say that they (God and Israel), during the time of the prophet Samuel, were doing something wrong? Based on the humanist's moral standards, there is nothing wrong or cruel about what is described in 1st Samuel 15. They were doing what was right in their culture at that time.

What about the Biblical Perspective?

Where do morals actually come from? God's character (see appendix B). Justice is part of God's character, and that means evil will be punished. The Amalekites meet the definition of evil. They were raiders who were constantly attacking the people of Israel, as well as others, stealing, destroying, pillaging, and raping. God, after giving them time to change, God commanded Saul to destroy them. Unfortunately, Saul does not obey God and the Amalekites continue their evil ways until they are finally destroyed, hundreds of years later, as described in the Book of Esther.

Who Were the Amalekites?

The Amalekites were a nomadic people who were constantly attacking Israel, as well as other people groups. The Egyptian Amarna tablets call them the "Khabbati," meaning the "plunderers." They had a very bad reputation, and justifiably so. In Exodus 17 we find the first description of an Amalekite attack on Israel:

Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim. So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek." - Exodus 17:8-9a

The Amalekites are responsible for the repeated destruction of Israel's land, water, and food supply. In scripture they are seen attacking Israel in Numbers 14:4; then again in Judges 3:13; and again in Judges 6:3. Even 500 years later, as described in the book of Esther, an Amalekite (a descendent of King Agag) devises and puts into action a plan to exterminate every single Jew.

God Commands Israel to Kill All Amalekites

It is obvious that the Amalekites hated Israel, and were vicious enemies of God's people. They continually tried to destroy Israel and all her people. God, who fully knows what happened in the past, and what is coming in the future, had to judge them and impose the death penalty for all the evil they had done; and for their continuing to do evil, and to prevent future Amalekite evil.

God could have wiped them out back in the time of Exodus 17. However, as we see over and over, God is incredibly gracious, and patient, giving them hundreds of years to change their ways. However, they do not. Even 500 years after the time of King Saul, an Amalekite is Israel's greatest enemy. (Read my book: *The Presence of God, A Commentary on Esther*)

So was it cruel for God to command Saul to kill every Amalekite, as well as destroying everything related to the Amalekites? No. It was justice.

If God allowed an Amalekite to live, it was likely their descendants would continue to hate Israel, steal from and harass them, kill them, and continually attempt to destroy Israel. That is exactly what happened. God commanded Saul to kill every Amalekite. Saul did not do that. As a result, the existence of the entire nation of Israel was threatened five hundred years later.

READ MORE: www.GotQuestions.com/Amalekites.html

CONCLUSION: God was not cruel. It was right and just to command the destruction of the evil and wicked Amalekites.

NEXT ACCUSATION: quoting the humanists, "Ezekiel 9:4-7 has this harrowing account: 'And the Lord said unto him, ... Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark.'"

There is something different in this one. God is apparently killing His own people. Why would He do that?

CHAPTER 30 GOD ORDERS THE JEWS TO BE KILLED

THE HUMANIST CLAIMED CRUELTY: Ezekiel 9:4-7 has this harrowing account: "And the Lord said unto him, Go through . . . the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark."

We know from answering similar objections that God is not cruel or unjust. The question in this case is: What is the context? Why is God doing this? In the examples we've looked at so far God was delivering justice on people who did evil. However, here in Ezekiel the Jews are being judged. What is going on?

To begin with, it is wrong to say that in these verses God is commanding that people be killed. That is not what He is doing. Who are the "*men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations?*" They are the men who have been faithful to God. What God is doing is saving them from death. The mark identified those who were penitent... those who were weeping over sin. These men were marked in order to protect them.

God Orders the Jews to Be Killed

Why Did They Need Protection?

To answer this question, we need to know the context. What was going on in Israel at this time?

God had instructed the people of Israel sin how they needed to live. However, they continually turned away from God, ignored His laws, and turned to other gods (idolatry).

Israel had been directly warned through Jeremiah the prophet (Jeremiah 25:11-12). However, the people of Israel continued in their idolatry and rebellion against God... until finally God needed to judge Israel. This judgment included 70 years of captivity by the Babylonians.

In the scripture the humanist references, Ezekiel is seeing a vision (Ezekiel 8:1) showing him what will happen if Israel does not change their ways. Ezekiel is "*caught up in the spirit,*" so he is seeing things in the spiritual realm. This is what he sees: verse 9:2 describes six men who come from the direction of Jerusalem's upper gate. They have weapons for slaughter in their hands. These men represent Babylon.

Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar was the most powerful empire of that time. No army could stand against them. God had protected Israel, but the time had come for that protection to be withdrawn. God had even left the temple (Ezekiel 9:3), showing that the Israelites now had exactly what they wanted; God was out of their lives. This also meant they no longer had God's blessings nor His protection.

However, not every Israelite had turned against God. So God protected those who still sought righteousness and had turned from idols, by placing a mark on their foreheads.

As we saw in other examples in which God was dealing with Israel's enemies, God allowed those who were sinning time to correct their behavior. However, eventually there must be justice. God cannot overlook sin, even when His chosen people are the ones who are sinning. Evil must be punished. Therefore, judgment comes on Israel, with God protecting those individuals who did not deserve judgment.

The judgment (aka. punishment) does not involve God killing people. God gives Israel what they want. He withdraws from Israel. Without His protection, things happen as they naturally would...

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Babylon invades, kills many people, and eventually carries off nearly all of the remaining Jews into captivity.

That is what Ezekiel is seeing in his vision. The verses in question, Ezekiel 9:4-7 are describing part of that vision, which shortly would become reality. It is a vision showing how God will protect the righteous.

If we keep reading, we see how Ezekiel responds to this vision. He pleads with God over the vast size of this judgment, and God replies, giving the reason He is doing this:

Then He said to me, "The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is very, very great, and the land is filled with blood and the city is full of perversion; for they say, 'The Lord has forsaken the land, and the Lord does not see!' But as for Me, My eye will have no pity nor will I spare, but I will bring their conduct upon their heads." - Ezekiel 9:9-10

Because of the conduct of the people of Israel, God is bringing this judgment on them. It is a just and fair judgment. He will withdraw His protection, giving them what they want, and the result will be conquest by the Babylonians. God is telling them in advance, through Ezekiel, that this will happen, and still they do not turn away from their wicked ways.

CONCLUSION: God is not cruel, but just. Those who do evil will receive justice, even when they are His own chosen people.

How can people today, especially humanists, know whether a nation is under God's judgment? What about America today? The signs indicate we currently are under God's judgment. As described in Romans chapter one God is withdrawing His blessings. How can we know that? When things start happening that make no sense. When people are doing things, and approving of beliefs and actions, that defy logic. These are strong indications that God has lessened His restraint of sin.

Another indication comes from the fact that Satan is a liar, and the father of lies. As God withdraws, Satan has more opportunities. That means when a culture or country is increasingly basing what they do and believe on lies, you know that God is withdrawing and the father of lies is moving in.

God Orders the Jews to Be Killed

Why would God withdraw His blessings from America? For the same reason He did Israel. Disobedience and idolatry. When we turn away from God, God gives us what we want... less of Him. The result is lies, chaos, violence and evil rule, and people suffer.

NEXT ACCUSATION quoting the humanist web site: "Hosea 13:16 describes a punishment from the Lord: 'Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up.'"

This is a favorite of atheists and humanists, especially the part about women with children being ripped up. Those words make me sick just thinking about them. (See chapter 41.) Is God's punishment of Samaria cruel and unjust? No. Find out why in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 31 GOD MAKES SAMARIA DESOLATE

HUMANIST CLAIMED CRUELTY: Hosea 13:16 describes a punishment from the Lord: "Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up."

This is the same as the previous accusation of "cruelty." In this case it is a prophecy about what will happen to Samaria, the Northern kingdom. Hosea chapter 13, verse two describes the problem:

*And now they sin more and more,
And make for themselves molten images,
Idols skillfully made from their silver,*

As in every other situation we have looked at, God is being gracious and loving. He is warning the Northern Kingdom about what will happen. They have plenty of time to change their ways. However, they ignore the warnings¹².

God is using Hosea, a prophet to the Northern Kingdom, to inform them that He is withdrawing His protection. The most powerful empire at that time was Assyria. They were cruel, vicious and

¹² Following the reign of Solomon, Israel was divided into two parts: The Northern Kingdom, also known as Israel or Samaria. And the Southern Kingdom, also known as Judah.

God Makes Samaria Desolate

murderous. Without God's protection Assyria would invade, ravage, and destroy the Northern Kingdom.

Why was God withdrawing His protection? Another way to ask this question is: Why was God withdrawing His blessing?

Read the second line of Hosea 13:2 again. The Northern Kingdom had turned away from God. They were disobeying God, and in particular worshipping other Gods. As He always does, God, through Hosea in this case, warns them about what will happen. He will give them what they want. He will let them be protected by their "new" gods, who in reality are no gods at all. They have plenty of time to change their ways. However, they do not. They reject God. They leave God no choice, and He withdraws from them.

The result is that the Assyrians invade. The description of what would happen: *"infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up."* is a description of what the Assyrians would do, not what God did. The Assyrians were brutal. They killed everyone, often in very cruel and heartless ways.

Once again, we see that God is not cruel or unjust. He was protecting the Northern Kingdom from the brutality of the Assyrians, but the people of the Northern Kingdom did not want His protection. They turned against God. Therefore, God gave them what they wanted... He withdrew His protection. The punishment perfectly fit the offense.

CONCLUSION: God is not cruel, but just. If we as a nation turn away from God... rejecting God... God gives us what we want... leaving us on our own.

NEXT ACCUSATION: "Deuteronomy 32:23-25 says that after the Israelites incited God's jealousy by worshiping other gods, he vowed: 'I will spend mine arrows upon them... The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs.'

What is God doing to Israel? Is God going to shoot arrows at Israel? Why doesn't He just leave Israel alone? Oh... maybe that is what He is doing. Get the answer in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 32

GOD KILLS ISRAELITES, INCLUDING VIRGINS

HUMANIST CLAIMED CRUELTY: Deuteronomy 32:23-25 says that after the Israelites incited God's jealousy by worshiping other gods, he vowed: "I will spend mine arrows upon them... The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs."

My responses to the claims on the American Humanist's web site are intended to be read in sequence. However, I know there will be some who will skip around, reading just those accusations they need to know about. That is okay. However, the answer to some humanist accusations is the same answer I gave previously. It would seem that I could just say "ditto" and move on. However, since some people may only read one or two chapters, I am giving a complete answer in each chapter even though it may be repetitious. I will try to add new information in each chapter to keep it interesting for those of you reading each chapter in sequence.

In addition, the American Humanist's web page is a long one packed with many accusations. If I skip over just one accusation, they will pounce, "*Ab ha! He couldn't answer that question. The Bible must be false. There is no God!*" This is unjust. All it would mean is that I do not want you to get bored because you are reading the same answer over and over.

By the way, if I do come upon a question or accusation I cannot answer, that does not mean the Bible is not true or there is no God. All it means is that neither I, nor anyone else, knows every-

God Kills Israelites, Including Virgins

thing. On the other hand, there are questions humanists cannot answer. They typically respond by saying, "Science does not have all the answers, but give us time and we may learn the answer." However, it is interesting that Christians are not allowed to give this response.

Let's get back to answering the accusations that God is cruel. What is going on in Deuteronomy 32¹³?

As we have seen in the past couple of responses, God is warning Israel about what will happen. This is a prophecy God is giving through Moses warning Israel what will happen if they continue down the path they have been following.

Unlike the last two prophecies we discussed (Hosea 13:16 and Ezekiel 9:4-7), this is not a specific prophecy. Deuteronomy is a record of the speech Moses gave just before Israel entered the Promised Land. In this part of the speech, God, through Moses, is warning the people of Israel about turning to other gods. God is looking into the future, and warning the people of Israel. Even though they will now be in the Promised Land, if they turn away from God things will not go well for them.

The phrase "*I will spend mine arrows*" refers to other kingdoms and empires that will come against Israel should God withdraw protection.

How Does God Punish Nations?

God punishes nations by withdrawing His blessing, just as He is doing with America today. As God withdraws His blessing, that also withdraws His protection, allowing the enemies of Israel to defeat, plunder, and kill them.

CONCLUSION: God is not cruel. God is warning the people of Israel, well in advance, about what will happen if they turn to other gods. None of the "bad" things that came upon Israel came without warning. We have a loving God. A God who, far in advance and very clearly, makes the situation known: If they turn away from

¹³ Chapter 32 is part of a larger prophetic song that begins in Deuteronomy 31:30 and ends in 32:43. The theme of the song is Israel's apostasy which brings God's judgment. God makes it clear what will happen, leaving Israel with no excuse.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

God, God will give them what they want and turn away from them, leaving them open to terror and destruction by their enemies.

NEXT ACCUSATION: The accusations now turn to the book of Numbers, chapter 31, where Moses supposedly gives barbaric instructions for the treatment of women and children captured in war. These instructions from God do seem rather cruel. However, are these general instructions for war? Or, is something else going on?

God Kills Israelites, Including Virgins

**CHAPTER 33
WOMAN CAPTURED IN WAR ARE
TO BE KILLED**

HUMANIST CLAIMED CRUELTY: In Numbers chapter 31, the Lord approves of these instructions that Moses gave to the Israelite soldiers about how to treat certain women and children captured in war: “Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.

This accusation of cruelty correctly quotes (except for a minor typo) Numbers 31:17-18.

The Problem:

To understand what was going on we need to go back to the plains of Moab and the history recorded in Numbers chapters 22 through 25.

Balak, the king of the Midianites, hires the evil prophet Balaam to curse Israel. Balak wants Israel destroyed. However, God would not allow Balaam to curse Israel. Instead, no matter how hard he tried, Balaam blessed Israel. This was not good for Balaam. He was to get a huge payment for cursing Israel, but now it appeared he would leave in disgrace and with no money.

Then Balaam came up with a way to curse Israel by getting them to bring God’s curse on themselves. Balaam told king Balak

Women Captured in War Be Killed

that the Midianites needed to seduce the people of Israel with prostitutes and idolatry. This disobedience of God would result in Israel bringing a curse on themselves. Balak followed Balaam's advice, and Israel fell into sin, worshiping Baal of Peor and committing fornication with Midianite women. This resulted in the death of 24,000 people. (Numbers 25:1-12)

The humanist statement makes it seem as though Numbers 31:17-18 are general instructions for war. That is a false representation of what is happening. Here again they are misrepresenting what scripture says. These are not general instructions for war, but specific instructions for how Israel is to deal with the Midianites who seduced them into sin. This misrepresentation of scripture makes this claim invalid.

Why were young men, and women who were not virgins, targeted? They were the ones specifically and directly responsible for corrupting Israel. This was justice, and it ensured the end of the threat from the Midianites, preventing them from seducing Israel again.

READ MORE: www.tinyurl.com/yyvq2nsp

CONCLUSION: Once again, we see that God is not cruel. His response to Midianite sexual and spiritual seduction was limited, just, and appropriate.

NEXT ACCUSATION: Next we'll turn to Isaiah 13:9,15-18. This is another common accusation raised against the Bible. The humanist claim God is commanding that children be dashed to pieces. That is cruel, but is it true?

CHAPTER 34
DAY OF THE LORD:
WHEN CHILDREN ARE DASHED TO PIECES

THE NEXT HUMANIST CLAIMED CRUELTY: Isaiah 13:9, 15-18 contains this message from God: *"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger... Every one that is found shall be thrust through... Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes . . . and their wives ravished. Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them... [T]hey shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eyes will not spare children."*

Humanists, in general, do not understand scripture. That makes sense. They are the blind leading the blind (Matthew 15:14). Their key error here is that they have taken prophecies about two separate events, separated by thousands of years, and combined them. The prophecy in Isaiah 13:9 is talking about something different from the prophecy in Isaiah 13:15-18. A key phrase that tells us this is "the day of the LORD."

The Day of the Lord

"The day of the LORD" is a phrase from Amos that refers to the second coming of the Messiah. This is the day when Jesus Christ returns in judgment. The first time the Son of God came, just over 2000 years ago, He came to bring salvation through His death on the cross. When He returns He will bring judgment.

Let's read Isaiah 13 verses 9-11 to get the context:

Day of the Lord: When Children Are Dashed to Pieces?

*⁹Behold, the day of the Lord is coming,
Cruel, with fury and burning anger,
To make the land a desolation;
And He will exterminate its sinners from it.
¹⁰ For the stars of heaven and their constellations
Will not flash forth their light;
The sun will be dark when it rises
And the moon will not shed its light.
¹¹ Thus I will punish the world for its evil
And the wicked for their iniquity;
I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud
And abase the haughtiness of the ruthless.*

Prophecy often has dual fulfillment. It will describe things that will happen in the near future, and at the same time events that will happen in the far future. The near and far events are related, often with the near future events giving a picture (foreshadowing) of the far in the future events. The near future events are thus a tangible warning that the far future events will happen, and people need to change their ways—turn to the Lord and away from sin.

Please Open Your Bible to Isaiah 13

“The day of the LORD” does not refer to the Lord coming in the near-term. It refers to a future time when the Lord will return to judge (punish) the entire world. Those days are called end times, as described in Revelation. The verses in Isaiah 13 are about Babylon's destruction during the end times. This is a far-future prophecy about the time when Jesus Christ returns.

Isaiah chapter 13 begins by talking about the Babylonian Empire, which at the time of the prophecy is still in the future. Verses 1 through 5 are a near future prophecy about Babylon, with verse 5 referring to the destruction of Babylon by the Medes.

In verse 6, with the phrase "for the day of the Lord is near" the prophecy switches to the far future and the Babylon of the end times. This continues through verse 14. Then in verse 15 the prophet Isaiah returns to talking about the near term Babylon, describing the coming time when the Medes will commit atrocities in the captured land of Babylon. Verses 15-19 are on the next page. Notice that these are descriptive, not prescriptive. In other words, they are describing what the Medo-Persians will do, not what God says they should do. This

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

is a description of the brutality of war as practiced by the Medo-Persians.

¹⁵ Anyone who is found will be thrust through,
And anyone who is captured will fall by the sword.

¹⁶ Their little ones also will be dashed to pieces
Before their eyes; their houses will be plundered
And their wives ravished.

Babylon Will Fall to the Medes

¹⁷ Behold, I am going to stir up the Medes against them,
Who will not value silver or take pleasure in gold.

¹⁸ And their bows will mow down the young men,
They will not even have compassion on the fruit of the womb,
Nor will their eye pity children.

¹⁹ And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

Verse 9, referenced by the humanists, is an end times prophecy, and verses 15-18 are a near term prophecy about the Medes conquest of Babylon. Verse 16, describing babies being killed, is not a command from God. It is describing the brutality of the invading Medo-Persians.

CONCLUSION: The humanists are mixing two widely separate times to make it seem God is to blame for the cruelty of the Medo-Persians. In reality, the humanistic cruelty of the Medo-Persians is being described.

NEXT ACCUSATION: the humanist now claim God is sadistic and that he tortures people. They give several examples from scripture, but do not explain how these examples show God is sadistic.

I would like to note that in these accusations of cruelty and immorality, the humanist is hijacking Christian morals in his attempt to paint God as cruel and sadistic. Humanists have no basis for labeling anyone as cruel or immoral. Their only option is to take Christian values and morals and use them as the basis for unjustly judging God. Does this mean that, although not consciously, deep in their hearts, they accept God as the source of morality?

Dear Humanists:

If you've been reading all of the chapters, you may be beginning to understand something about the character of God. With God there are consequences you cannot escape.

Although not mentioned in the next chapter, one of the major reasons God did the things described on your web page (the earth opening, consuming fire, bears, lions, etc.) is to demonstrate that, if you reject God, there are serious consequences.

If you consider the amount of time the historical record of the Bible covers (about 1,500 years), and the number of times scripture describes God's judging individuals and delivering the just consequences of their rejecting Him, those instances are very rare. However, they are sufficient to make it clear that rejection of God brings death.

Dear humanist, right now you are experiencing God's grace. He is withholding His judgment, giving you second chance after second chance to turn to Him. Yes, He is a loving God and He is showing His love to you right now by not judging you and the world.

Please, repent and turn to God now. Trust Him as your Savior from the consequences of your sin. Trust Him to save you from the consequence of your having disobeyed God. Please do it today.

CHAPTER 35

MULTIPLE EXAMPLES OF BIBLICAL SADISM REFUTED

GOD IS SADISTIC, ACCUSATION #1: The God of the Bible displayed his sadistic tendencies by employing a variety of other means to torment and kill people.

He caused the earth to open and swallow entire families (Numbers 16:37-32); he used fire to devour people (e.g., Leviticus 10:1-2; Numbers 11:1-2); and he punished the Israelites with wars, famines, and pestilences (e.g., Ezekiel 5:11-17).

He sent wild animals such as bears (II Kings 2:23-24), lions (II Kings 17:24-25), and serpents (Numbers 21:6) to attack people; he sanctioned slavery (e.g., Leviticus 25:44-46); he ordered religious persecution (e.g., Deuteronomy 13:12-16); and he caused cannibalism (Jeremiah 19:9).

The humanist author is now trying to pile it on, without providing any explanations for the examples he brings up. Maybe he is thinking that if he brings up enough accusations one of them may be interpreted in a way that might make God look bad.

What we have are ten accusations that God has "tormented and killed people." There is no context nor explanation accompanying any of these. We are to blindly accept the assumption these are sadistic, and use our imaginations to fill in the reasons why.

Answering all of these will result in a long chapter. If you do not want to read it all, here is a summary. Each of these punishments was just and appropriate for the crime. We have repeatedly seen this same

Multiple Examples of Biblical Sadism Refuted

thing in the humanist accusations. God is not sadistic, He is fair and His punishments fit the situation and circumstances. Now let's get into the details of each accusation.

Numbers 16:37-32, Leviticus 10:1-2 & Numbers 11:1-2

I think there is a typo in the verse numbers on the humanist's web page. I think they are referring to Numbers 16:31-35. Here is what it says:

As he finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them split open; and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah with their possessions. So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. All Israel who were around them fled at their outcry, for they said, "The earth may swallow us up!" Fire also came forth from the Lord and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering the incense. – Num 16:31-35

Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective fire-pans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. And fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. - Lev 10:1-2

Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the hearing of the Lord; and when the Lord heard it, His anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. The people therefore cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to the Lord and the fire died out. - Num 11:1-2

Once we have the rest of the story we will see that these punishments come on people who have directly disobeyed God.

God set the tribe of Levi (Levites) aside for service to Him. The Kohathites were Levites who, when the camp moved, had the job of carrying the furniture and other items used in the Tabernacle. They did not like their work and began to covert the duties of the priests. Korah stirred up a group of 250 men who challenged Moses and Aaron's right to the priesthood. It was an open rebellion against Moses and more importantly against God. Here is what Moses said:

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

“By this you shall know that the Lord has sent me to do all these deeds; for this is not my doing. If these men die the death of all men or if they suffer the fate of all men, then the Lord has not sent me. But if the Lord brings about an entirely new thing and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they descend alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have spurned the Lord.”- Numbers 16:28-30

That these people were "swallowed" by the earth was a one-time, supernatural event that demonstrated that Moses was speaking the truth of God and they were in rebellion against God. Such a dramatic death was necessary so the people, a people who had just come out of 400 years of only knowing idolatrous Egyptian gods, would know the true God and His power. Remember one of the major problems Israel had, after being in Egypt for 400 years, is that they did not know God. They were familiar with the Egyptian gods and they still believed in those gods. They needed to learn about the truth, power and authority of the true God.

As is true today, the penalty for treason was death. God chose this dramatic method of imposing the death penalty to demonstrate who He was, and that He was not one of the powerless "gods" of Egypt.

Consuming People with Fire

The humanists do not say why this is a problem. That makes it difficult to address their (unknown) concern.

The Hebrew word translated as “consuming fire” in our English Bibles literally means to utterly destroy or consume. It is referring to complete destruction. God Himself is called a “consuming fire” (in English) in Deuteronomy 4:24 and again in 9:3. In every case the Bible is saying there was complete destruction.

Fire is also associated with God's wrath and frequently associated with purification (refining fire), and that is what we are seeing in Leviticus 10:1-2 and Numbers 11:1-2. It is a refining fire that completely consumes them.

Notice that this incident takes place during the Exodus. God's people have been freed from slavery in Egypt, but not from their spiritual slavery to idols. They long to return to Egypt (Exodus 16:3) and they even made a golden calf (Exodus 32). A calf was a major

Multiple Examples of Biblical Sadism Refuted

Egyptian deity. God had to make it clear that He is the ONE and ONLY God, and He did that through a dramatic display of fire consuming those who had rebelled against Him.

God had laid out the law and the consequences of disobeying the law. The death penalty was the appropriate punishment for treason. God used consuming fire to dramatically demonstrate (making it memorable) the need to cleanse the people of their sin.

Ezekiel 5:11-17 - Wars, Famines, and Pestilence

The next example given by the humanist is Ezekiel 5:11-17. This prophecy is a repetition of the prophecy in 5:2-3, and similar to the one we discussed in chapter 30. The Jews had turned away from God. They had disobeyed God in spite of His kindness; and they had even defiled the sanctuary, demonstrating how totally wicked they were. God is warning them a just punishment was coming. God would withdraw his blessing from Judah, and even withdraw His glory from the temple (Ezekiel 10). Without God's protection, the Babylonians would conquer Judah, lay siege to Jerusalem and conquer it. Sieges often lead to famine and disease in the city that was under siege, and this was exactly what God was saying would happen. God is warning Israel through Ezekiel, but the Israelites refuse to turn away from evil and the prophecy becomes reality.

2nd Kings 2:23-24 - God Sends Bears

This story about Elisha is a favorite one frequently used to claim God is unjustly cruel. Here are the verses:

Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up by the way, young lads came out from the city and mocked him and said to him, "Go up, you baldhead; go up, you baldhead!" When he looked behind him and saw them, he cursed them in the name of the Lord. Then two female bears came out of the woods and tore up forty-two lads of their number.

If you quickly read these verses, it seems as though God uses two bears to maul 42 kids who simply called Elisha a "baldy." However, there is a lot more to the story. Let's go through this step-by-step:

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

First notice that the "lads" were not killed. The bears tore them up. Other translations say they were "mauled." While some of the 42 probably were seriously injured, none of them died. If someone says the bears killed 42 people, as is frequently stated, that is a misrepresentation.

Also, how old were these "lads?" Some Bibles even translate this as "children." However, that is not an accurate translation. The Hebrew word used here can be translated as "children," but a more accurate translation would be "young adult." These "lads" were most likely in their late teens or early 20's — old enough to know right from wrong and to be accountable for their actions.

What was the reason this happened? Because they called the prophet "baldhead?" That was a serious insult in those days. However, that was not the issue. The reason God sent the bears was because they taunted him to "go up." To understand why this was serious, we need more context,

This is Elisha the prophet. Just prior to this, God, using a whirlwind, took Elijah the prophet directly up into heaven. Elijah was a prophet who delivered God's words to the people. He spoke with the authority of God. When Elijah spoke on behalf of God, it was as though God Himself was speaking. Elisha was his replacement, and that means he also spoke with the authority of God.

Where did this take place? On the road to Jerusalem near Bethel. Bethel was a center of pagan Jewish worship. Idols had been set up there to get the Jewish people of the Northern Kingdom to stop going to the temple in Jerusalem. They supposedly could worship right there in Bethel... and they did. However, it was pagan idol worship.

Why was the taunt of "go up" such a big problem? They were demanding that he prove he was a prophet like Elijah, by demanding that he "go up" into heaven the same way Elijah had done. These were pagan followers of false idols who were mocking Elisha in a way that made it seem he was not a prophet. Making it seem he was not truly Elijah's replacement.

To mock God's ambassador is to mock God. In addition, to mock Elisha this way took away his authority and called into question his ability to speak for God. He was about to enter the main center of pagan worship for the Northern Kingdom. It needed to be clear—with no doubt in anyone's mind—that Elisha spoke for God. That is

Multiple Examples of Biblical Sadism Refuted

why God sent two she bears. That made it clear that Elisha truly was God's representative. The result was that it was obvious... undeniable... that Elisha spoke for God.

...and lions II Kings 24-25

The king of Assyria brought men from Babylon and from Cuthah and from Avva and from Hamath and Sepharvaim, and settled them in the cities of Samaria in place of the sons of Israel. So they possessed Samaria and lived in its cities. At the beginning of their living there, they did not fear the Lord; therefore the Lord sent lions among them which killed some of them.

Let's quickly summarize our relationship with God. He created us; He owns us; He can do whatever He wishes with us. However, God is good. What He wants is for us to live with Him forever. That's why He died so we can live.

In the section of scripture referenced by the humanists, Assyria has conquered the Northern Kingdom¹⁴, also known as Samaria. Most of the Jews living there have been relocated to other cities in the Assyrian Empire, and outsiders (Gentiles) have been moved in. However, the new people did not know God. They worshipped other gods, and had no interest in the true God. The just penalty for this is death. The Bible does not explain why God uses lions, but He certainly has the right and the ability to do that. Moreover, by using lions God brought the penalty for their sin in a way that got attention.

Humanists might say these people had their own religion, why not leave them alone? They were happy with their beliefs. However, that was not a good situation. Their believing in something does not make it true. Sorry, but that is reality. Believing in any god other than the one true God, the creator God of the Bible, leads to death. In this instance, God used lions to punish those who brought false gods into the land that belonged to God's people. The news would spread and as a result, many would understand who God is and turn to Him, and have life.

¹⁴ The Jewish nation was divided into a Northern Kingdom (Israel) and a Southern Kingdom (Judah).

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

...and serpents: Numbers 21:6

The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died.

This happened while the Israelites were wandering in the desert after the exodus from Egypt. The people were complaining, and they were tired of eating manna. God had been taking care of them, providing for them, and protecting them from their enemies. However, they had become impatient, and were complaining against God... no longer trusting God. Therefore, God sent fiery serpents. What was the result? Here is verse 7:

So the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, because we have spoken against the Lord and you; intercede with the Lord, that He may remove the serpents from us." And Moses interceded for the people.

Because of the poisonous serpents, the people realized they were doing wrong. They confessed, repented and turned back to trusting the Lord. Mission accomplished.

In addition, God provided a way for people to be cured should a serpent bite them. He had Moses make a bronze serpent and put it on a staff. Anyone who was bitten could look at the staff and be saved. Looking at the staff was an act of will—an intentional act a person had to do. This action demonstrated they believed the Lord, and it was belief that saved them. The staff had no power in itself. The power was in trusting God.

Next up... God Sanctioned Slavery: Leviticus 25:44-46

Here is a question for humanists... what is wrong with slavery? It is survival of the fittest. So if I am fitter... I am stronger... what is wrong with my making you my slave? After all, we are just chemicals. What is wrong with one bunch of chemicals using another bunch of chemicals to benefit themselves? Please answer without using principles of morality from the Bible.

Slavery, defined as American early 19th century style slavery, is only a problem if human beings have worth. We are created in God's image (Genesis 1:27) and that gives us infinite worth. No human has

Multiple Examples of Biblical Sadism Refuted

the right to enslave another bearer of God's image. We belong to God and God only. With that foundation, let's now talk about slavery. The humanist reference Leviticus 25:44-46:

As for your male and female slaves whom you may have—you may acquire male and female slaves from the pagan nations that are around you. Then, too, it is out of the sons of the sojourners who live as aliens among you that you may gain acquisition, and out of their families who are with you, whom they will have produced in your land; they also may become your possession. You may even bequeath them to your sons after you, to receive as a possession; you can use them as permanent slaves. But in respect to your countrymen, the sons of Israel, you shall not rule with severity over one another.

Here is the problem. For us the word slavery brings up an image of race-based slavery in America in the 18th and 19th centuries. However, that is not what the Bible calls slavery. "Slavery" had a different meaning for the people in the Bible. A meaning mostly based on economics, not race. That is why some Bible translations use the term "bond servant" instead of "slave." The "slavery" of the Bible in no way resembled what we now think of as slavery.

Please note, the Bible strongly condemns slavery based on kidnapping. Kidnapping was the basis of American slavery. The Biblical penalty for kidnapping people to make them slaves was death. American slavery was an abomination condemned by scripture.

He who kidnaps a man, whether he sells him or he is found in his possession, shall surely be put to death. - Exodus 21:16

The New Testament also condemns buying/selling slaves (1st Timothy 1:8-10). Here again we see that American slavery is not what the Bible talks about. When you see the word "slavery" in the Bible, it is not talking about what we in America typically think of as slavery.

Let's get some context. Start reading Leviticus chapter 25 beginning at verse 39, and you will see that Hebrew "slaves" were to be treated as family, and only serve as slaves until a Jubilee year¹⁵. At that time, they were released from all their obligations.

¹⁵ Deuteronomy 15 requires that Hebrew slaves be set free after six years. When they were released they were to be given a share of the wealth their labor had created.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

It is also important to note that becoming a "slave" was voluntary. The slave, not the owners, initiated it. In those days, there were no social welfare programs. If you could not support yourself, the best option was to find someone who would provide for your needs in return for your work. Many physicians and lawyers were "slaves" and in some cases, "slaves" could become very wealthy.

Leviticus 25:44-46 is referring to people outside of Israel who, unable to support themselves or possibly for other reasons, decided to become a "slave" of an Israelite. The Bible condemns forced slavery (Exodus 21:16), but provides a means for people to have shelter, food, and their other needs met by becoming a "slave."

What happened if a slave ran away? Here is the answer in Deuteronomy 23:15, they must be protected and not returned to their "master."

You shall not hand over to his master a slave who has escaped from his master to you.

This is not our understanding of "slavery" at all. For the people in Israel slavery was a way for the destitute to work for their food and shelter. In many instances, it was similar to the employee/employer relationship we have today.

On the other hand, pagan (Roman) slavery was brutal. Slaves were considered as the same as an ox that pulled a cart. The only difference was that a slave could talk. The problem was that the Romans followed their own pantheon of gods and rejected the God of the Bible... and how they treated slaves reflected that.

Next Topic: God Ordered Religious Persecution (Deuteronomy 13:12-16)

Why do humanists think this is a problem? They are regularly involved in religious persecution. They freely attack Christianity and the Bible. It is interesting that the humanist's web site is heavy skewed toward targeting Christianity. For example, the information about Islam is basically friendly—and there are no attacks on the Koran. The

Multiple Examples of Biblical Sadism Refuted

same for Buddhism and Hinduism. Why is that? Might it be that Satan's target is Christianity and God's word? As Satan asked Eve in the garden, "Did God really say...?" Could it be that Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism are not attacked at the same level as Christianity is because they are part of Satan's army?¹⁶

The scripture humanists reference is Deuteronomy 13:12-16.

If you hear in one of your cities, which the Lord your God is giving you to live in, anyone saying that some worthless men have gone out from among you and have seduced the inhabitants of their city, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods' (whom you have not known), then you shall investigate and search out and inquire thoroughly. If it is true and the matter established that this abomination has been done among you, you shall surely strike the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying it and all that is in it and its cattle with the edge of the sword.

This is talking about Israelite cities given to them by God, whose residents were turning away from God and worshipping pagan gods.

We have seen this before... turning away from God and to other gods is a serious issue. As described here, the death penalty is appropriate for those who turn from God and worship idols.

The reason why the death penalty is appropriate is that those who turn away from God tend to lead others away from God. They lead others into spiritual death and an eternity separated from God. To stop it from spreading, and prevent the eternal destruction of large numbers of people, God commanded that those cities who have turned away from Him to be wiped out. It was the only way to save everyone else.

To a humanist this may not seem reasonable. That is because they do not understand how serious this is. Notice, the death penalty only applies to those who once knew God and turned away from God. These are people who once belonged to God, and have now become children of Satan. People who once had life and now are

¹⁶ This provides interesting evidence that the God of the Bible is real, and is the one and only true God

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

walking dead. They are people looking to seduce others into becoming walking dead. The death penalty is the only reasonable way to save others from being snatched away from life.

BTW, this no longer applies today. We are under a new covenant in which we have the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, holding us secure in our salvation. In Old Testament times (Deuteronomy) they were under the law, including the prescribed ceremonies, and they could bring condemnation on themselves by turning away from God. That is not possible today.

Next Topic: God Caused Cannibalism - Jeremiah 19:9

I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they will eat one another's flesh in the siege and in the distress with which their enemies and those who seek their life will distress them. - Jeremiah 19:9

We have talked about this several times. First, this is a prophecy about what will happen if the people of Israel do not change. As we have seen over and over, God warns people and nations about their coming judgment. If the people of Israel paid attention to what God was saying, and turned away from their sin, they would not experience this prophecy. However, they did not listen to God.

In this prophecy, God is describing what will happen if Jerusalem comes under a siege. Food will run out and people will starve, some of them turning to cannibalism. Why does this happen? Because God has withdrawn His blessings. He has withdrawn His protection... and that has allowed Babylon (in this case) to put Jerusalem under siege. So yes, in one sense God has allowed the cannibalism because He is no longer protecting the Jews from the armies of Babylon. However, He is not the cause nor the source of this evil.

Do these people deserve His protection? Read Jeremiah 19:1-8. They have forsaken God. Rejected Him. Turned to other gods, worshipping and sacrificing to other gods. So what does God do? He gives them what they want. They have rejected Him, so He leaves them on their own, withdrawing His blessing and protection. They turned their backs on God, so God turns His back on them. That is fair and just. The consequences are a Babylonian siege that leads to starvation. That is also fair and just. Why? Because it is the consequence of the people rejecting God and going their own way.

Multiple Examples of Biblical Sadism Refuted

CONCLUSION: God is not sadistic. His actions and punishments are just and appropriate.

IN THE NEXT ACCUSATION the humanist claims God is violating the U.S. Constitution's eighth Amendment.

It is interesting that they bring up the Constitution. The founders of our country, and the authors of the Declaration of Independence, saw things the right way. God is the source of our rights and laws. We will see if we can sort it all out in the next chapter.

Romans 1:18-32

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

CHAPTER 36
GOD'S PUNISHMENTS ARE GROSSLY
DISPROPORTIONATE

GOD IS SADISTIC ACCUSATION #2: The biblical God is also guilty of inflicting punishments that are grossly disproportionate to the acts committed. In the American legal system, such disproportion violates the U.S. Constitution's Eighth Amendment, which prohibits cruel and unusual punishments.

Obviously, to punish people who are completely innocent, as seen in the preceding Bible verses, constitutes punishment that is horribly disproportionate to the moral culpability of the recipients.

The humanists' attack on God and the Bible continues with more accusations of cruelty. My response to this accusation could be very short. I do not need to go through every humanist accusation and justify what God has commanded. He is God, and what He says and does is always right and good. He may not always explain what He is doing, but we can know for sure that it is always right and good, even if we do not understand.

Humanists do not need a book like this to help them see their error. God makes it clear in Romans chapter one that EVERYONE knows there is a God; and they know they are sinners under the wrath of God. The problem is that they willingly and intentionally suppress that truth. This means humanists are without excuse.

So why bother answering all of the humanist's accusations and false claims? Because everyone needs to know there are answers, and for Christians this is a good way to study scripture and learn about

God's Punishments Are Grossly Disproportionate

the consistent, unchanging character of God. It provides a framework for investigating and learning about aspects of God's character we might otherwise never study.

This is also a good way to see the emptiness of the humanists' accusations. They have nothing. Most of their attacks involve misrepresenting what scripture says; taking scripture out of context; and not understanding the character and nature of God.

The Next Accusations – God is Sadistic

We need to define our terms. The most important one is the word "evil." The humanists state that God is contradictory and cruel. Now they are claiming He is sadistic and mandates disproportionate punishment. What they are doing is calling God evil.

How do humanists determine whether someone is good or evil? How do they know whether a punishment is "grossly disproportionate" or is completely just? What is the source of their standards?

In this accusation, they appeal to the eighth amendment to United States Constitution, which prohibits "cruel and unusual punishment." However, they do not define "cruel and unusual." What is their basis for defining something as "cruel and unusual?" We are left to assume that whatever the humanists put on their list must be cruel and unusual punishment. Of course, without knowing their definitions or reasoning, it is impossible to refute what they say.

They also talk about "completely innocent" people. What does that mean? The humanists leave it to the reader to assume the meaning of these terms. The reader is to accept the premise that God is evil and people are innocent. Without their defining these terms there is no logical way to refute what they say. That is the way the humanists want it, because if they give details their position it will be revealed as self-centered, irrational, illogical, inconsistent, cruel, and the source of death.

However, we will try anyway. Based on the Bible we do have known standards. God has clearly defined what is just and what is evil, and His standards are neither cruel nor unusual.

Here is the humanist accusation:

Obviously, to punish people who are completely innocent, as seen in

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

the preceding Bible verses, constitutes punishment that is horribly disproportionate to the moral culpability of the recipients. And there are other instances where the biblical God's punishments are shockingly harsh compared to the acts committed.

We have examined all of the "preceding verses" and found that in each case none of those receiving punishment were innocent. So the humanist's first sentence is based on a false premise, and thus any conclusions based on this premise have no foundation on which to stand.

The second claim, that some of God's punishments are "shockingly harsh compared to the acts committed" is also false based on the examples we have examined. In many of their examples, the "punishment" was to give people exactly what they wanted, separation from God.

The humanist author now gives more examples that supposedly support his assertions. We will look at each of these accusations. As with the previous ones they are listed with no indication of why the humanist feel these represent "shockingly harsh" punishments. That means we will need to make some assumptions. Here is the list:

For example, the Old Testament says the Lord prescribed execution for the "crimes" of working on the Sabbath (Exodus 31:15); cursing one's parents (Leviticus 20:9); worshiping other gods (Deuteronomy 17:2-5); enticing a friend or family member to worship other gods (Deuteronomy 13:6-10); being a witch, medium, or wizard (Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 20:27); engaging in homosexual acts (Leviticus 20:13); and not being a virgin on one's wedding night (Deuteronomy 22:20-21).

Let's note that the death penalty for these offenses no longer applies today. (See the section on homosexuality below.) It only applied when Israel was under the Old Testament law. Therefore, we will look at these offenses in the context of the time during which they applied.

Working on the Sabbath

For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to the Lord; whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall surely be put to death. - Exodus 31:15

God's Punishments Are Grossly Disproportionate

To understand the penalty, you must understand the purpose of the Sabbath, and that starts with the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments can be divided into two parts. The first three are about loving God perfectly. The last six are about loving man perfectly. In between is the fourth... the commandment about the Sabbath.

If the humanist had started reading Exodus 31 just three verses sooner, he would have his answer. Keeping the Sabbath was a sign to remind the people of Israel of their creator and their obligation to keep God's law. Keeping the Sabbath is not a moral command, but a sign you are agreeing to be under the law.

But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, "You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you". – Exodus 31:13

The Abrahamic Covenant had a sign, circumcision. The Noahic Covenant had a sign, the rainbow. Every Sabbath day was a sign to remind the people of Israel that they were to keep (obey) what God commands.

This is serious. God did not want people to be distracted from the purpose of the Sabbath by their normal daily activities. He did not want the Sabbath to be a day like any other day. It was a day to remember that God created them and He was the lawgiver. It was a day on which they remembered their status before the holy law of God, and their obligation to love God and love other people. It was a day on which to remember their inability to keep God's law.

Having a day dedicated to focusing on their creator God and His laws, and meditating on their inability to keep those laws, was important for their eternal sake. The Sabbath was a sign of the Mosaic covenant. Breaking the Sabbath symbolized a total rejection of God and the Covenant of God's law. By not keeping the Sabbath, they were rejecting God. In addition, those who disregarded the Sabbath, by their example, would lead others to follow them in turning away from God. That spread eternal death to others (just as the humanists are trying to do). The physical death penalty for violators of the Sabbath was appropriate.

There was another aspect to breaking the Sabbath. Since breaking the Sabbath meant the person was no longer a part of God's

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

covenant with Israel, they were now dead in the sense of being separated from God. Therefore, although they may not have received the physical penalty for breaking the Sabbath, they did receive the ultimate death penalty... separation from God.

Cursing One's Parents

If there is anyone who curses his father or his mother, he shall surely be put to death; he has cursed his father or his mother, his bloodguiltiness is upon him. - Leviticus 20:9

The overall context is that of horrendous and atrocious types of sins, such as burning your children as an offering to Molech (a pagan god). The sins in this chapter of Leviticus are ones that will destroy a family or a nation. This is serious. Deuteronomy 21 gives us more detail about this specific commandment:

If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him, he will not even listen to them, then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his hometown. They shall say to the elders of his city, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard." Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel will hear of it and fear. - Deuteronomy 21:18-21

This commandment is not talking about a one-time moment of anger, as the humanists are implying. This law is not about a minor infraction, but a serious rebellion. A deep hatred that was a danger to both the parents and society in general. The Hebrew words used here indicate this is a continuous rebellion and a long-term, ongoing refusal to respond to his parent's discipline ("he will not obey us"). The son's character is that of a self-centered, troublemaker characterized as a "glutton and drunkard."

The humanist imply that, if a child simply curses their parents, the parents can stone them. That is not the case. Notice in Deuteronomy that the rebellious son is brought before the elders of the city. In other words, there is trial... evidence is presented... and a judgment is made as to what punishment is appropriate. Only if the son is proven guilty, and is a danger to himself, to his family and to society, AND

God's Punishments Are Grossly Disproportionate

if the elders judge it appropriate, is the death penalty applied.

The Severity of the Punishment Depends On Whom the Offense is Against

Why is disobeying God so serious? Because we are His image bearers. Being made in His image means we represent who He is. We represent His character. When we tell a lie, for example, we represent the perfect and holy God as a liar. That is serious. The Got Questions web site has a good analogy: www.tinyurl.co/y73b3456

What factors are taken into consideration to determine an appropriate punishment? There generally are two. The severity of the crime and whom the offense is against. For example:

If I lie to my three-year-old son, what are the consequences? Probably none.

If I lie to my wife, what are the consequences? I may spend a night on the couch.

If I lie to my boss, what are the consequences? I may be fired and be unemployed for a while.

If I lie to a grand jury, what are the consequences? I may spend some time behind bars.

In each example, the offense was the same... a lie. However, the consequences are very different. Why? Because the severity of the punishment is related to both the severity of the offense, and who the offense is against.

Remember, God is holy, righteous, perfect, infinite, and eternal. To sin means to break God's laws. You are created in God's image and to sin means you have misrepresented His character. That means the offense is against God.

While there may be human consequences, God may also impose both earthly consequences (which are designed to turn as many people as possible away from sin), and eternal consequences. An offense against a perfect, holy, infinite, and eternal God, results in a penalty that is infinite and eternal.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Worshiping Other Gods

Here is the next scripture the humanist references:

If there is found in your midst, in any of your towns, which the Lord your God is giving you, a man or a woman who does what is evil in the sight of the Lord your God, by transgressing His covenant, and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the heavenly host, which I have not commanded, and if it is told you and you have heard of it, then you shall inquire thoroughly. Behold, if it is true and the thing certain that this detestable thing has been done in Israel, then you shall bring out that man or that woman who has done this evil deed to your gates, that is, the man or the woman, and you shall stone them to death. - Deuteronomy 17:2-5

Idolatry is serious and is dealt with severely in the Bible. Notice, however, that the judges are commanded to do a thorough investigation: *"you shall inquire thoroughly"* and it must be both true and certain that the accused is serving and worshipping other Gods. Only then can the punishment be imposed.

Also, notice that in every humanist example God has clearly established the law in advance; there must be proof of the offense; and the penalty is stated and known to all. In addition, in cases of group or national sin, God warns them in advance that what they are doing is wrong and justice is coming. What is wrong with that?

What the humanists are saying is that they do not like God's laws... they do not want to be accountable. They want to make the rules and determine the consequences. John 3:19 says:

This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

In other words, humanists love their sin (darkness), and that is why they reject God (the Light). Their problem is not that God is cruel, the real issue is that they worship (honor, respect, praise, etc.) themselves and do not want to obey God... and they evangelize and attempt to convert others to their rejection of God (as demonstrated by their web site), just as God said they would.

Worshiping other gods is a serious offense against God. Not just because individual humanists reject God, but also because they lead

God's Punishments Are Grossly Disproportionate

others away from life and into rejection of God. Notice Deuteronomy 17 includes the requirement *"it is told you and you have heard of it."* That means that they have made their rejection of God public knowledge. They are talking about it to others, and this has become public knowledge.

If someone rejects God, and keeps that to himself or herself, there was no penalty. Their penalty will come after they physically die. However, if they start telling others, that becomes a danger to the community. Innocent people will be deceived and led away from God (exactly what the humanists are trying to do). That must be stopped, and so the death penalty was applied. It is just and fair.

This becomes very clear when we look at the humanist's next accusation:

Enticing a Friend or Family Member to Worship Other Gods

⁶If your brother, your mother's son, or your son or daughter, or the wife you cherish, or your friend who is as your own soul, entice you secretly, saying, "Let us go and serve other gods" (whom neither you nor your fathers have known, ⁷of the gods of the peoples who are around you, near you or far from you, from one end of the earth to the other end), ⁸you shall not yield to him or listen to him; and your eye shall not pity him, nor shall you spare or conceal him. ⁹But you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. ¹⁰So you shall stone him to death because he has sought to seduce you from the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. - Deuteronomy 13:6-10

This is the same situation as we discussed above. What is interesting is that the humanist did not include verse 11, which explains why the death penalty applies. Here it is:

Then all Israel will hear and be afraid, and will never again do such a wicked thing among you. - Deuteronomy 13:11

The reason the penalty was so serious is that allowing the person to continue was a grave danger to all of Israel. Many innocent people will be deceived and led to their death. This is something that had to be stopped and the punishment was designed to prevent others from repeating this error.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Notice that Deuteronomy 13:10 provides an additional detail: the offender sought to seduce others away from God, who saved them from slavery in Egypt. God bringing Israel out of Egypt foreshadows Jesus bringing us out of sin. He will save you from slavery to sin, if you accept His gift of life.

Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin." - John 8:34

Today, humanists and all non-believers, are being given grace. They are given a second chance after second chance to repent and trust Jesus as their Savior. This incredible grace continues until the moment they die.

It is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment - Hebrews 9:27

Being a Witch, Medium, or Wizard

You shall not allow a sorceress to live. - Exodus 22:18

Now a man or a woman who is a medium or a spiritist shall surely be put to death. They shall be stoned with stones, their bloodguiltiness is upon them. - Leviticus 20:27

Let's define our terms so we know what we are talking about:

Sorceress - A woman who engages in occult practices.

Occult - Pertaining to demonic powered supernatural, mystical or magical beliefs, practices, or phenomena. The occult also includes New Age beliefs and practices such as yoga, mindfulness, entering the silence, and listening to god's "inner" voice within you.

Medium or spiritualist - people who act as go-betweens in contacting the spirits of the dead (who are in reality impersonated by demons).

The occult is real. In some instances, there is fakery, but do not think it is all fakery. The occult is real and powerful, and very

God's Punishments Are Grossly Disproportionate

dangerous. Scripture has many warnings against the occult:

When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For whoever does these things is detestable to the Lord; and because of these detestable things the Lord your God will drive them out before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. - Deuteronomy 18:9-13

Why are these things detestable to the Lord? Because they involve demons, and demonic powers and forces. If you are involved in the occult (including contemporary New Age, yoga, or mindfulness), you are worshipping demons. Some people think that through the use of spells and incantations they are controlling demons. That is not true. The demons are using them.

This places the occult into the same category as worshipping other gods. Sorceresses, mediums and witches are the priests and priestesses who are interceding with demons and leading people away from God. Scripture even warns us that as we approach the end times, doctrines of demons—referring to the occult and including New Age and some charismatic practices—will become popular:

But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. - 1 Timothy 4:1

This is dangerous stuff and those who lead others into the occult needed to be stopped. Thus, at that time, the death penalty was just and appropriate.

Engaging in Homosexual Acts

Leviticus 20:13 is given as the scriptural example:

If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act; they shall surely be put to death. Their bloodguiltiness is upon them.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Other Old Testament scriptures also declare that homosexuality is a sin: Genesis 19:1-13; and Leviticus 18:22. The New Testament also states that homosexuality is a sin in Romans 1:26-27 and 1 Corinthians 6:9.

In other responses to humanist's accusations, I have mentioned that when people turn away from God, God gives them what they want. He withdraws, which includes withdrawing His protection and blessings. Romans 1:26-27 (quoted in chapter 35) tells us that when God withdraws, homosexuality and acceptance of homosexuality greatly increases. In other words, the growing homosexuality we see today is a result of denying and disobeying God. When people continue in sin and unbelief, God withdraws and ***"God gives them over to degrading passions."*** What this means is that God reduces His restraint of sin and people start doing the evil they naturally want to do. By God doing this He is letting people experience what life is like without Him. It makes sin real and demonstrates the futility and hopelessness of life apart from God.

What about today? Is the death penalty appropriate for the sin of homosexuality today? No, it is not. I am going to quote from the GotQuestions.com web site where they address this question. They point out that:

It is crucial to understand that Jesus fulfilled the Law (Matthew 5:17–18). Romans 10:4 says that Christ is the end of the Law. Ephesians 2:15 says that Jesus set aside the Law with its commands and regulations. Galatians 3:25 says, now that faith has come, we are no longer under the guardianship of the Law. The civil and ceremonial aspects of the Old Testament Law were for an earlier time. The Law's purpose was completed with the perfect and complete sacrifice of Jesus Christ. So, no, the Bible does not command that homosexuals should be put to death in this day and age¹⁷.

This means that for the various sins we have been discussing in this chapter, the death penalty is no longer required, and that includes homosexuality. However, what about back in the time when Leviticus was written? Again, I quote GotQuestions.com:

The Bible describes homosexuality as an abomination, an immoral

¹⁷ www.tinyurl.com/ya25qsp7

God's Punishments Are Grossly Disproportionate

perversion of God's created order. The purity of God's people in the Promised Land was vitally important, as was the continuance of bloodlines (one of which would lead to the Messiah). That is why God demanded the death penalty for those who engaged in homosexual intercourse.

This is a bigger topic than I can adequately and fairly cover in this book. Yes, homosexual desires and behavior are sins that are condemned by God. The GotQuestions.com web site has more information. Visit: www.tinyurl.com/ya25qsp7 The Answers in Genesis web site also has a good section on homosexuality. Go to: www.tinyurl.com/yawhhaq7

Not Being a Virgin on One's Wedding Night

But if this charge is true, that the girl was not found a virgin, then they shall bring out the girl to the doorway of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death because she has committed an act of folly in Israel by playing the harlot in her father's house; thus you shall purge the evil from among you. - Deuteronomy 22:20-21

Notice this scripture quote starts with the word "but." That means it is referring back to what was said previously. The humanists did not include those verses. The result is you are not seeing the context. If we go back to verse 13, we see this is a law relating to misrepresentation, deception, and adultery.

If any man takes a wife and goes into her and then turns against her, and charges her with shameful deeds and publicly defames her, and says, "I took this woman, but when I came near her, I did not find her a virgin..." – Deuteronomy 22:13-14

To start, sex outside of marriage is forbidden. That means when a woman (or man) married, they both had to be virgins.

Starting in verse 13 the scripture says that if a man marries a woman, and decides he does not like her, and he wants to get out of the marriage, and to do that he accuses her of not being a virgin... there is then a process that protects the woman. If his accusation is true, that ends the marriage. However, if his claim is false, and the man is just trying to get out of the marriage, there are serious penalties for the man.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

However, if his charge is true, and it is proven the woman was not a virgin, it is a very serious situation. First, it means she lied and misrepresented herself in order to get married. Second, it means she is committing adultery, as she has already become one flesh with another man. Adultery is punishable by death. Third, she has brought her new "husband" into an adulterous relationship, essentially making him guilty of adultery. All of this makes the death penalty just and appropriate.

I would like to point out that although the law prescribed the death penalty, there is no record that it ever was imposed for this reason. An interesting example is Joseph and Mary (the mother of Jesus). They were betrothed, which meant that they were legally married. Then Mary, through the Holy Spirit, becomes pregnant with Jesus. When Joseph finds out, what is he going to think? Mary is pregnant, that means she is was not a virgin... and that means she should be stoned.

What Does Joseph Do?

At first, he wants to send Mary away to a place where she is not known. She can have the baby, and because people do not know what happened, she will escape the shame of adultery. That is not a Biblical response to the situation.

An angel then explains to Joseph what is happening. Mary is pregnant, but the baby is from the Holy Spirit and she is still a virgin. There is no deception nor adultery, and thus no reason to stone her. Therefore, Joseph stays with her, adopting the baby as his own. They remain married and Jesus is born.

CONCLUSION: We have looked at all of the examples the humanists brought up, placing them in their scriptural, cultural and historical context. The conclusion? The death penalty was appropriate for these offenses at the time the referenced scriptures were written. God is not sadistic. His actions and punishments are just and appropriate.

THE NEXT ACCUSATION: The accusations continue. The humanist claim that in the New Testament God is far worse than they have shown Him to be up to this point. What are the terrible New

God's Punishments Are Grossly Disproportionate

Testament things God has done? They explain in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 37
PEOPLE ARE PUNISHED FOR MERE DISBELIEF

CLAIMED CRUELTY: In the New Testament, God became far worse in regard to imposing excessively severe punishments. It would be hard to imagine anything more cruel and disproportionate than punishing people with eternal torture for mere disbelief that Jesus was the son of God.

The inability to believe that proposition harms no one, and it has been disbelieved by some of the greatest benefactors of humanity. Nonetheless, God promises to punish them and all other nonbelievers with the most horrible pain conceivable.

Let's get right to the root of this one, why are people punished in hell (the eternal lake of fire). The answer: because they are law breakers. They have broken God's laws, and reject Jesus Christ.

Yes, as much as humanists do not like it, the only way to be saved from the eternal lake of fire (hell), is to repent and believe (trust) that Jesus Christ paid your penalty for sin in full. If you are not trusting Jesus Christ as your Savior, God gives you what you want and have earned... total separation from Him... and that means you spend eternity in hell.

However, there is more to the story... a lot more. To get the rest of the story let's answer a few questions:

- Is punishment with "eternal torture" excessive or disproportionate?
- Is eternal punishment the consequence for mere disbelief?

People Are Punished for Mere Disbelief

- If you do not believe in Jesus, is that harmful?
- Is the fact that some of the greatest benefactors of humanity did not believe in Jesus of any significance?

Is "Eternal Torture" Excessive Punishment?

No, it is not.

A common analogy is that of a child disobeying their parents. The parents tell them to clean up their room, and they do not do it. As punishment the parents hold the child's hand over a hot stove until his hand is burned. Is this a fair punishment, or is it excessive and disproportionate?

It is excessive and disproportionate... not at all appropriate.

Why then, is it okay for God to burn someone in eternal hell forever, just because they disobeyed Him?

The problem is that it is an apples to oranges comparison. The severity of the punishment is related to both the severity of the "crime," AND the person against whom the "crime" was committed. Do you remember the analogy from chapter 36?

Let's say I tell a lie to my three-year-old son. What are the consequences? There are none.

If I tell a lie to my wife, there may be consequences. I may spend the night on the couch.

If I tell a lie to my boss, I could very quickly be replaced... in other words become unemployed.

If I lie to a grand jury, I could find myself in jail. In each case the offense was the same, a lie. However, the consequences increased because of whom the offense was against. To lie to a grand jury is a much more serious offense than to lie to a three-year old child.

Sin is an offense against the perfect, holy, eternal, creator God who created us and has given us everything good that we have. This makes the offense infinitely serious, and the punishment is appropriate in being infinite.

So eternal torture is not excessive or disproportionate. It is the just and appropriate punishment.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

The Consequence for “Mere Disbelief?”

The use of the word “mere” is a significant problem. It creates a loaded question in which the answer is presupposed. By adding the pronoun "mere" the act of disbelief is made to seem insignificant or inconsequential. The truth is, disbelief in this case is the most significant and consequential act of every human being's life.

In addition, the question is worded in a way such as to make "disbelief" seem to be something minor. As though it were of no significant consequence. That may be true in some cases, but not when it concerns you and your relationship with Jesus Christ (God).

I just checked out a web site that list the top 20 foods that are bad for you. At the top of the list are sugary drinks (soda) and pizza. If I do not believe what the web site says, what are the consequences? I will have a number of very enjoyable meals and I may die slightly sooner, if I am not killed in a car crash, or by disease, or a natural disaster, or something else. As far as I am concerned, my disbelief does not have significant, eternal consequences.

However, if I choose to not believe in Jesus Christ the consequences are significant and eternal. This is the **ONLY** decision that has eternal consequences. This is not "merely" disbelieving. It is the most significant decision you will make during your entire lifetime. You need to consider the facts carefully and make the right decision.

Why?

Not believing is the ultimate sin. Why? Because it is belief in Jesus that saves you from the just consequences for having disobeyed God. If you believe in Jesus Christ, trusting Him to pay your penalty for sin in full, then He does that... He gives it to you as a free gift.

Here is an analogy:

Let's say that I've committed a serious crime. I was caught, it is obvious I am guilty, and I am in a courtroom standing before a judge. The judge says the fine is one million dollars or life in prison. I cannot pay that huge fine, so I am off to prison. Why am I going to prison?

People Are Punished for Mere Disbelief

Is the judge responsible for my going to prison? No. I committed the crime, I have to do the time.

Then someone comes into the courtroom, pops open a briefcase full of cash, and offers to pay my fine. If I accept their offer, I go free.

However, if I do not believe the money is real or that the offer is real, and I decline their offer, I go to prison. Why? Because I did not believe. I declined the offer that would have saved me from prison.

It is the same with God. You are guilty. There is no doubt you have broken God's laws. Jesus has stepped into the courtroom and offered to pay your "fine." If you believe Him and accept His offer, you go free. If you decline Jesus' offer, you must pay the penalty you have earned, eternity in the lake of fire, hell. Is it appropriate to call your not believing the offer to pay your fine "mere" disbelief? No.

Yes, eternal punishment is the consequence for disbelief, because it results in your having to pay the just penalty you have earned for everything you have done wrong. You are a law-breaker. You rejected Jesus' offer to pay the penalty you have earned. You must now pay that penalty. That is justice.

If You Do Not Believe in Jesus, is that Harmful?

Yes. That would seem to be obvious from the previous question. Since not believing in Jesus has significant eternal consequences, it is very "harmful."

However, I think the humanists are again trying to flip the question to be about something other than what it is truly about. I am guessing they are referring to only this physical life. So let's answer their take on this question: Can people not believe in Jesus, and still have a good life here on earth? Yes, of course they can—based on a human definition of having a "good life." In fact, becoming a Christian in many cases brings more problems and troubles into your life.

You will be hated by all because of My name [Jesus speaking] -
Matthew 10:22

Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. - 2 Timothy 3:12

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Yes, you can have what is commonly called a good life... be very wealthy... have a wonderful family... have "everything" you desire... and give a lot to charity to help other people... and still spend eternity in hell. In the end, no matter how "good" your life on earth was, the result of rejecting Jesus is always the eternal lake of fire. Why? Because you are not good. You have broken God's laws. (Take the Good Person Test – www.911Christ.com.)

There is none righteous [good], not even one. - Romans 3:10

For all have sinned - Romans 3:23

Is the Fact that some of the "Greatest Benefactors of Humanity" did Not Believe in Jesus of any Significance?

I am curious to know whom they are talking about, and what these "benefactors" did to help humanity. Do they include some of the most well-known humanists such as Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot? And where does Jesus come on their list of benefactors?

I did a Google search to learn who might be on a list of humanity's greatest "benefactors." Google responded with a list based on the amount of money given. Names such as Bill Gates, Warren Buffett, and George Soros came up. However, I do not think money makes a person a benefactor of humanity. Jesus gave little, if any money, to help others. In addition, if monetary donations were the criteria, don't we need to know why the money was given and how it was used? Google is not going to be of any help.

HOWEVER, the facts are, other than Jesus Christ, it does not matter who the person was or what they did. Other than Jesus Christ, being a benefactor of humanity is of no significance. It is not relevant. Atheists can do good things, based on human standards. So what? Good works and generosity do not open the gates of heaven. You still have the problem of sin. No matter how much "good" you have done, that does not negate the fact that you have disobeyed God.

Let's once again put me in a courtroom. I have committed a very serious crime and the judge is about to sentence me. "But," I say, "look at all the good I've done. I've provided homes for the homeless. I've provided computers for disadvantaged children. I've built dozens

People Are Punished for Mere Disbelief

of free clinics. I've funded disease prevention around the world, and I'm a major donor to political causes supporting justice. Judge, just look at all the good I've done. You should let me go free."

Will the judge set me free? Not if he is a good judge. Our good works do not excuse our breaking the law. Our good works do not remove the penalty we have justly earned for disobeying God. We are created in the image of God, and to misrepresent God in any way (by lying, stealing, lusting, etc.) earns us the just penalty of eternity in hell.

We all have sinned and are facing the just consequences we have earned... eternity in the lake of fire. Whether you are a poor person just barely getting by, or a wealthy "benefactor" of humanity, the situation is the same. Without Jesus Christ, you will spend eternity in hell.

CONCLUSION: People are punished as a consequence of disobeying God (sin) and rejecting Jesus. That punishment is just and fair. Everyone has sinned and falls short of the glory of God. The only way out is to repent and trust Jesus as having paid your penalty for sin in full.

THE NEXT ACCUSATION: God's violence incites human violence. Really? Is this true? Does the teaching and historical record of the Bible open the door for people to commit violence and be cruel? Does the Bible incite violence?

CHAPTER 38
GOD INCITES HUMAN VIOLENCE

THE CLAIMED PROBLEM: God's Violence Incites Human Violence

A serious problem with the violence and injustice in the Bible is that, all too often, the teachings and example of the biblical God have incited cruel acts by his followers.

Many of them reasoned that since God, who is considered just and loving, committed or approved of the most brutal acts, good Christians need not have qualms about behaving likewise. Such logic led the American patriot Thomas Paine to say, "The belief in a cruel god makes a cruel man."

I hope by now you can quickly identify the problem with this statement. As we have seen, all of God's actions are just and appropriate, not cruel. He defines law breaking, establishes the penalties for breaking the law, and He warns people, in advance of judging them, when they are breaking the law. In many instances, He gives nations hundreds of years to change their ways. And, although I've not mentioned this before, God, in His mercy, often does not impose the specified earthly penalty on the guilty. God's love, patience, and mercy shines throughout the Bible.

What Did Thomas Paine Believe?

The humanists call on Thomas Paine as an expert who certifies the humanist's claims to be true. What did Thomas Paine believe

God Incites Human Violence

about God and religion? He believed there is a god that he could know through his own mind, and he rejected all religions. In his book *"The Age of Reason"* he wrote:

"I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turk church, or by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church."

"All institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit."

He sounds like a humanist dream. A man who puts his trust in himself (his own mind). Thomas Paine denied Jesus is God. He denied the virgin birth, saying it was impossible (that is true, it was impossible, that's why it is called a miracle of God). He also believed the Christian church was based in "heathen mythology," and the Bible was written by men and was full of problems. He was in alignment with humanistic beliefs. However, an expert on the Bible and its impact on humanity? Nope. Paine was no authority in this area.

We have the humanist accusation that the Bible incites violence. Do they have any evidence to back up that claim? Let's continue reading their web page:

Joseph McCabe's treatise *The History of Torture* illustrates the reasoning process. McCabe reports that during the Middle Ages, there was more torture used in Christian Europe than in any society in history."

"The main cause of this cruelty was the Christian doctrine of eternal punishment." McCabe explains: "If, it was natural to reason, God punishes men with eternal torment, it is surely lawful for men to use doses of it in a good cause."

Here's another name. Who was Joseph McCabe? Before I start evaluating a statement, I want to know about the person who wrote it. Are they really an authority on the subject? In this case we are looking for authorities on the Bible and world history. So who was Joseph McCabe?

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

I am going to quote the SecularWeb¹⁸ website for a description of Joseph McCabe:

One of the giants of not only English atheism, but world atheism, Joseph McCabe left a legacy of aggressive atheist and antireligious literature that remains fresh and insightful today. His many works—he wrote nearly 250 books—could constitute a library of atheism by themselves.

Born in 1867, Joseph McCabe became a Franciscan monk at the age of nineteen. But disgusted with his fellow monks and the Christian doctrine, he left the priesthood for good on February 19, 1896.

Joseph McCabe was a failed monk and a giant of an atheist. He is known for being an evangelist for atheism. He is their authority on the Bible and world history? Not even close. McCabe is a propagandist, not a Biblical authority.

Torture in the Middle Ages

The statement that *"there was more torture used in Christian Europe than in any society in history"* is certainly a compelling statement, if it were true (it is not). First, however, we need to know what we are talking about so we are all on the same page. We need to define torture.

Does torture include medieval machines such as the rack and thumb screws? Certainly. Does it include starving people to death? Or intentionally working people to death? Yes, to both. What about killing people in furnaces or gas chambers? Yes. So when we think of people who do things like this, who comes to mind?

Hitler, of course. He is always at the top of the list. He murdered 12 million people (including 6 million Jews), many as the result of painful "scientific" experiments (torture). Hitler is often described as a Christian, but he was not. He was a scientific pantheist follower of Darwin. To the world, he proclaimed whatever beliefs would get him what he wanted. In private, he worshipped Arianism and the gods who were in everything.

¹⁸ https://infidels.org/library/historical/joseph_mccabe/

God Incites Human Violence

However, Hitler does not come close to the top of the list as far as the number of people tortured and killed.

There is Stalin, who not only murdered millions of Russians, he intentionally starved an entire nation (millions of Ukrainians). Starvation is not a pleasant way to die. It is slow and painful. It is estimated that 6 to 7 million Ukrainians were starved to death by Stalin. In addition, Stalin killed 11 million people in other ways. That is 18,000,000 dead. Stalin was a humanist. However, even Stalin is not close to the man at the top of the list.

The biggest mass murderer in all of history took more lives than Hitler and Stalin combined. We can even add in Pol Pot and a few others. The winner is another humanist, Mao Zedong. From 1958 to 1962, his policies resulted in the death of an estimated 45,000,000 people—from starvation, overwork, and lack of medical care (all methods of torture). In addition, physical torture in Mao's prisons was commonplace. He had no regard for human life¹⁹.

Now let's look at the Middle Ages. The Middle Ages lasted from AD 500 to 1500, and the estimated European population varied from 23 million to 73 million. Based just on raw numbers, at the time of the greatest population during the Middle Ages, the number of people Stalin killed was the equivalent of 25% of the entire European population. In just a couple of decades Mao killed off the equivalent of 61% of the maximum estimated European Middle Age population. In a couple of decades, these two humanists tortured and murdered far more people than were tortured and killed in all of the 1000 years of the Middle Ages. The humanist claim that *“there was more torture used in Christian Europe than in any society in history”* is a bogus claim. What was really going on?

In a History Today article²⁰ about violence and law in the Middle Ages, Sean McGlynn, a lecturer at the University of Bristol, writes:

The awareness of danger and violence was in itself a major driving force behind society's seemingly cruel and bloodthirsty acts that

¹⁹ Torture in China today continues on a huge scale, far outpacing everything done in the Middle Ages. <https://tinyurl.com/yycpca6e>

²⁰ www.tinyurl.com/y8vwwq6w

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

have often come to characterize the medieval world. This was most clearly manifested in the area of crime and punishment

Throughout the whole medieval period there was popular demand for malefactors to receive punishment that was both harsh and purposefully terrifying. This reflected people's investment in the social order and their anxiety at any perceived threat to it.

Unlike what the humanists state, the brutality of the Middle Ages was the result of a desire for order and safety, and had nothing to do with the Bible inciting people to violence.

So far, all of the claims on this part of the humanist web page are fiction. But, wait! There is more. A whole list of "atrocities" that were the result of human wisdom, not Biblical teaching. Here are the next examples the humanists give:

Other historical examples of violent and unjust acts supported by biblical teachings include: the Inquisition; the Crusades; the burning of witches; religious wars; pogroms against Jews; persecution of homosexuals; forceful conversions of heathens; slavery; beatings of children; brutal treatment of the mentally ill; suppression of scientists; and whippings, mutilations, and violent executions of persons convicted of crimes. Those acts were a regular part of the Christian world for centuries.

Are these accusations true? Are these "violent and unjust acts" supported by Biblical teachings? The answer is, no they are not.

For example, the Inquisition was persecution by a heretical church against, in many cases, Biblical Christians. The Inquisition was not supported by scripture.

And forceful conversions of heathens?" How does that work? The Bible clearly teaches we cannot make someone become a Christian. Only God can give people the faith needed to believe. Based on the Bible, there is no such thing as a forced conversion in Christianity.

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. - Ephesians 2:8-9

So, based on the Bible it is IMPOSSIBLE to force someone to convert to Christianity. It cannot happen. All it accomplishes, if

God Incites Human Violence

anything, is to make false converts.

What about persecution of homosexuals? If by that they mean calling homosexuality a sin, that is not persecution, it is reality. Homosexuality is a sin that leads to death. Christians are expressing love when they warn someone that they are engaged in activities that lead to death, especially since in today's world that loving action brings persecution and physical harm to the Christian.

What about slavery? As we have already seen in chapter 35 the Bible condemns slavery as we think of it today. Slavery in the Bible was nothing like the American 18th and 19th century slavery we are familiar with and the humanists hope you will be picturing in your mind.

I assume the humanist intended to represent things done by anyone claiming to be a “Christians” as an evil approved by the Bible. However, I see nothing here that is evil and is supported by the teachings of the Bible. None. There are actions that are evil, such as brutal treatment of the mentally ill, and pogroms against Jews. They happened and were falsely justified using scripture. However, scripture does not support them. They were the actions of evil men.

In addition, there are accusations on this list that are pure fiction, such as the suppression of scientists. Overall this list is another fantasy (aka. fake news)... a list of fictions being used to promote humanist beliefs.

An important principle to keep in mind is: The actions of people calling themselves “Christians” do not define what the Bible teaches. The words of scripture alone define what the Bible teaches.

CONCLUSION: There is nothing but false accusations and fiction in the claims in this section of the humanist web page.

NEXT ACCUSATION: Quote, “The Bible Has Teachings Inconsistent with the Laws of Nature.” This is an interesting claim. God created the laws of nature. God upholds and maintains the laws of nature. I love science, and with my background in engineering and science, I am really looking forward to this next section of the humanist’s web page. However, you will need to get volume 2 of this book for the answers to the scientific accusations.

APPENDIX A
THE HUMANIST VIEW:
MORALITY COMES FROM... PEOPLE?

HUMANIST OPENING STATEMENT: There is a tendency on the part of many theists to assume that the burden of proof is on the nontheist when it comes to the issue of morality. Thus, the individual who operates without a theological base is asked to justify his so doing — the assumption of the theist being that no morality is possible in the absence of some form of “higher” law...

I will try to show the actual source from which values are originally derived, provide a solid foundation for a human-based (humanistic) moral system, and then place the burden on the theist to justify any proposed departure. (www.tinyurl.com/yd2jxt4k)

Looking at the other side, here are a couple of quotes from Christians commenting on the source of morality according to humanists. They give a good summary of humanist morality:

This is one of the greatest fallacies of secular humanism. Its advocates want the benefits of divinely endowed human rights but eliminate the One who endows them. I have never heard an atheist or secular humanist offer a satisfactory answer to the question of where rights originate. - Tal Davis (www.tinyurl.com/ycq8fly4)

In their [humanist] worldview, what makes anything immoral or wrong? Really it boils down to nothing more than their opinion. They believe that something is wrong, and therefore it must be. But who is to say that their opinion is the right one? After all, there

Appendix A - The Humanist View

are many different opinions on what is right and wrong. Who decides which one is right and which one is wrong?" - Avery Foley and Ken Ham

The following was written in response to an atheist who had explained that objective morals develop through "nature and nurture" resulting in "prescribed behavior by a trusted community." This is a common humanist approach to explaining the origin of morals. It is basically the approach the article on the American Humanist web site takes. They assume that morals naturally arise from within a group of people, who somehow agree on "moral" values that benefit their group. Dr. Don Batten summarizes their logic:

If an individual thinks something is moral/immoral, that is not objective (that is, it is subjective). However, if a group of people think something is moral/immoral, then it is now an objective moral standard.

So, let's test this materialistic basis for moral absolutes with a real world scenario: If one person thinks it is OK to eat other people (e.g. Jeffrey Dahmer), then that is just his subjective opinion. However, if a tribe of people in Papua decide that it is moral to kill and eat other people (as they have done in the past), then the same behaviour is now 'moral'?

Hmmm ... an objective moral standard? – Dr. Don Batten,
www.tinyurl.com/ybn9fx5o

The two paragraphs at the beginning of this appendix are an abridged version of the opening statement in the humanist's web article supposedly giving the basis of laws and ethics. I say "supposedly" because the article does not describe the source of humanist morality. It is mostly an attack on God and Christianity... except what is being attacked is a "god" and "Christianity" of the author's imagination. He has created a god and religion he calls "Christianity" that are so far from truth that they are sickening. Simply stated, what the humanist is attacking is a strawmen, which he then proceeds to knock down. That makes this article a waste of time.

If you would like to see for yourself, you can read the article at: <https://americanhumanist.org/what-is-humanism/human-basis-laws-ethics/>

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Here is the argument the humanist use to show God's morals are arbitrary:

"But still the question can be asked: "From where does God get his (or her) moral values?" If God gets them from a still higher source, the buck hasn't stopped, and we are back to our endless series. If they originate with God, then God's morals are made up and hence arbitrary. If analogy is to be used to establish God as a source of morals because all morals need an intelligent moral source, then, unfortunately for the theist, the same analogy must be used to show that, if God makes morals up "out of the blue," God is being just as arbitrary as are human beings who do the same thing. As a result, we gain no advantage and hence are no more compelled philosophically to obey God's arbitrary morals than we are to obey the morals established by our best friend or even our worst enemy. Arbitrary is arbitrary, and the arbitrariness is in no way removed by making the arbitrary moralizer supernatural, all-powerful, incomprehensible, mysterious, or anything else usually attributed to God. So, in this case, if God exists, God's values are just God's opinions and need not necessarily concern us."

That is not a description of the God creator God of the Bible. God's laws (morals) describe His character. God created us in His image. Not His physical image (He is spirit), but having His character. As His image bearers, we are ambassadors who represent God to the universe. When we think and act in ways that are a violation of God's character, we misrepresent whom God is. When we tell a lie, for example, we represent the perfect and holy God as a liar. That is a serious offense. There is nothing arbitrary about God's moral laws.

The humanist article also attempts to prove human societies can create moral laws by using an analogy. For example, the author uses the red light laws as an analogy supporting a natural source of morality. However, it is nothing more than a red herring. Here is their analogy:

Suppose I am driving my car and I come to a red light. If I wish to turn right, and it is safe to do so in this situation, then in most states I can stop, and then proceed without fear of punishment. The humanist then draws the incorrect conclusion that, since humans are able to make traffic laws without referring to a higher authority, humans can also be the source of moral laws. Huh?

Appendix A - The Humanist View

What is wrong with This Conclusion?

Traffic control is not a moral law. It is simply a civil law that helps maintain order. Although whether or not we obey traffic laws is a moral decision, traffic laws themselves are not moral laws... they do not define good and evil.

The Old Testament has similar civil laws given by God. These laws were for Israel in a situation in which Israel was a theocracy. God was their government. Israel was eventually given a king (human government), and scripture recognizes human governments as the responsible for civil laws such as traffic lights.

Can governments make moral laws? Yes, they can. However, government imposed moral laws must be fully in accordance with God's character. A government law cannot make that which is immoral, to be moral. Government can make it legal, but what is legal is not always moral.

To take a simple example, in some countries²¹ such as Lebanon, it is legal to kidnap a woman and rape her, including statutory rape, if the man later marries the woman... even if the marriage is against her will. Does that make kidnapping morally right? No! Does this make rape, including statutory rape, morally right? No! Why not? It is legal and the people in that culture agree that there is nothing wrong with doing this. In addition, a husband may beat his wife if she defies him or refuses to dress the way he wants her to dress; or if she leaves the house without his permission. The people in Lebanon agree this is morally right. Does that make physically beating your wife morally right? I guess it does... according to humanists.

What is the Humanist's Source of Morality?

It is difficult to understand the humanist's source of morality based on their web page. What are their reasons for defining something as either good or evil? The conclusion of the article seems to be; people naturally pursue human interests and thus create laws and institutions related to human concerns, including moral standards.

²¹ On the date this was written, January 2018.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Here are a few other statements from the article that seemed to relate to defining the source of morality:

Human beings are the actual source of values.²²

Human beings do develop moral and legal systems on their own and later make improvements on them.²³

Rules are established to maximize mutual satisfaction and to minimize the effects of evil. With rules, we now have right and wrong. And from this basic recognition of the need for cooperation ultimately come laws and ethics.

I find the last one particularly interesting. Notice he says "rules are established [by humans] to minimize the effects of evil. Is there anything that bothers you about this statement? What he is saying is that moral rules defining what is evil are established based on minimizing evil. That makes no sense! You cannot use what you are defining to define what you are defining. That is circular nonsense.

What happens when your group encounters another group that has different standards of right and wrong... and their standard is that your group must submit? This happens all the time. What do you do? In the past the answer has always been war... kill people and blow up things.

Under the humanist system, are there any absolute moral rules that apply to people everywhere? No. There cannot be. Under the humanists' idea of morality, different groups may "naturally" develop different moral values. This means a humanist can never claim my actions are morally wrong, as long as I am part of a group that defines my actions as morally right.

This leads us back to Dr. Batten's point. What about different people groups? For example, the moral rules are different in Mus-

²² In some places today the "values" say it is acceptable to kidnap, rape and beat women. Have you noticed that women always seem come out on the losing end when moral values are defined by humans?

²³ We are not talking about civil legal systems. The humanist article continually conflates civil laws with morality. Morality is the foundation of civil laws, but it is in not the same as civil laws. Morality defines good and evil. Yes, humans do create moral systems. But the systems they create favor one group over all other groups, with morality usually based on might makes right.

Appendix A - The Humanist View

lim ruled countries, than in the rest of the world. Who is right? Sharia law or the U.S. Constitution? Is slavery wrong? Is torturing and killing those who disagree with you wrong? Is selling very young girls to be the wives of older men wrong? Is forced slavery (kidnapping) wrong? Not in some places in the world.

Let's say I'm the mayor of a community that believes in marrying pre-teen girls to older men as one of their multiple wives (as is true in some communities). You say that is wrong. I say polygamy is a moral principle firmly grounded in my humanity and my community. What right do you have to tell me I must change and adopt different moral values?

American humanists, in making your claims that God is cruel and unjust, you have violated your own principles of morality. You state that morality comes from "common ground." Yet you look at the nations in the past, and proclaim them immoral based on your American contemporary morality (that you have taken from the Bible). You claim killing babies is immoral, yet for pagans that was the accepted and "moral" practice in warfare in ancient times. Based on your system, how can you say they were wrong? You claim killing babies is immoral, yet you endorse killing babies if they are not convenient (abortion). Your arguments are hypocritical, disingenuous and self-serving. Please, turn to rationality. Turn to our creator God.

American humanists... you are made in the image of God, and God truly does love you. Yet you reject that truth. The source of morality that you struggle to find is the character of God. You are a moral being because you are created in God's image. God's character... who He is... sets the moral standards for His image bearers. Please turn to the creator God who made you in His image.

CONCLUSION: Humanists cannot explain the source of morality in a non-contradictory manner. Their stated source of morals makes moral values arbitrary, and variable depending on who you are, where you are, and what time it is. They are ultimately based on the whims of those who have the most power.

APPENDIX B
MORALITY COMES FROM GOD

Quotes commenting in general about Biblical morality:

He [the atheist] has misrepresented God—suggesting God is like man in that His moral standards are merely personal, subjective preferences—and then refuted that false idea of God.

God's moral standard flows from His unchanging nature, so His standard is absolute. God Himself testified, "For I am the Lord, I do not change" (Malachi 3:6). He didn't ever think up a moral standard to decide right from wrong. Rather, His moral standard flows from His perfectly pure and holy nature. Since His nature is unchanging, His standard is absolute. - Darius Viet and Karin Viet, *The Source of Moral Absolutes* (<https://tinyurl.com/ycxxmmhe>)

The only foundation for a useful education in a republic is to be aid in religion. Without this there can be no virtue, and without virtue there can be no liberty, and liberty is the object and life of all republican governments. Without religion, I believe that learning does real mischief to the morals and principles of mankind. - Benjamin Rush (www.tinyurl.com/y8yx05rm)

Without a clear standard of morality, virtue is impossible, and without virtue, freedom will inevitably fade away, because rather than respect the rights of our neighbors, people will use the institutions of society—chief among them, the media—to destroy those with whom they don't agree on one or more issues. - Justin Haskins (11-20-2017) (www.tinyurl.com/ybq5cv7r)

Appendix B – Morality Comes from God

I had not planned to address the topic of morality. However, a few days ago Google began listing an American Humanists web page titled "*The Human Basis Of Laws And Ethics*" (see previous appendix). It is a well-written page, as far as grammar, syntax and word use is concerned. And it is long. When something is well written and long, we tend to assume the author knows what they are talking about. In this case the majority of the article is pure fiction.

Why?

Most of the article is directed toward showing why our moral values cannot come from a moral lawgiver. In other words, that the Christian view of God as a lawgiver is invalid.

However, there is a huge problem with the author's position. It is such a huge problem that it invalidates the entire article and makes reading his article a complete waste of time for both Christians and humanists.

What is the problem?

The god he describes does not exist. The article presents a strawman god... an imaginary god... who is nothing like the true God. Therefore, the author is presenting an argument that refutes a god that does not exist and that says nothing about the true God of the Bible. Here is an example:

Some theologians have given God the attribute of "cosmic spy" and the power to punish the unethical behavior which the law misses — a power that extends even beyond the grave. So even if God's arbitrariness is granted, there would be no denying God's power to enforce his (or her) will. Thus, to the extent that this God and this power were real, there would exist a potent stimulus — though not a philosophical justification — for people to behave according to the divine wishes.

Does scripture say that God enforces His moral laws, by threatening a penalty for breaking them, in order to get people to behave better? It does not matter if some theologians have given God this characteristic; it is not what scripture says. We are corrupt and no amount of "stimulus" can make us moral. What is required is a total heart transplant. We need to be made new in Jesus Christ. The

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

lake of fire (hell, the second death) is what we have earned. Even if the fact of hell motivates us to behave better, it has accomplished nothing. Without Jesus, we are lost.

Humanist, if you are going to make an argument against something, you should at least study what you are trying to refute, in this case God, sufficiently such that you know and understand whom or what you are trying to refute. However, humanists are right about one thing, your god does not exist. Please... please, take the time to learn about the true God of the Bible.

Who is God and Why Does Morality Originate with God?

We have to start at the beginning:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. - Genesis 1:1

These ten words make an important statement. God created everything. He made it, and that means He owns it. Everything that exists is His. Take a moment to think about that. Everything that exists was made by God and belongs to God. Does that include you?

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female. - Genesis 1:26-27

Yes, God created you and me. Also note there is something different about us. Something unique in all of creation. We are created in the image of God. That is incredibly important. It makes us who we are and gives us the responsibility to be who we are... the image of God.

Responsibility? For What Are We Responsible?

God gave mankind a number of things to do. Right at the beginning He states:

Appendix B – Morality Comes from God

“Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth. - Genesis 1:28

Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. - Genesis 2:15

However, we are much more than gardeners and wildlife managers. Our #1 responsibility is to glorify God..

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. - 1 Corinthians 10:31

For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him [God] be the glory forever. - Romans 11:36

How do we glorify God? The chief way is by being like Christ. We are created in the image of God and we are to faithfully reflect who God is... meaning we are to faithfully reflect Jesus Christ's character.

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ - 1 Corinthians 5:20 (We are to be accurate representatives for Christ.)

Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ. - 1 Corinthians 11:1

Walk in the same manner as He [Christ] walked - 1 John 2:6 (Be like Jesus Christ.)

This is a foundational principle. We are made in the image of God. We are to think, speak, and act in the same way God does. We are not gods... but we carry the image of God and are to have the character of God.

The Ten Commandments Summarize God's Character

The Ten Commandments are a summary of God's moral law. Are they arbitrary rules that God made up? No, not at all. The Ten Commandments describe God's character. They describe who God is, and thus who we should be.

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

We are to obey the Ten Commandments because, as God's image bearers, we are to have the character of God. (For more information about the Ten Commandments and keeping the Sabbath, go to www.tinyurl.com/yaa7lz2.)

There is one other important aspect of who we are... God created us. What does that imply?

That means He owns us. We do not like that. We want to rule ourselves. We want to make the rules. We want to be like god and make a god in our own image. However, the fact is we do not own ourselves. The Bible often uses the example of a potter. Someone who makes clay pots owns the pots they make, and they can do what they wish with them... including destroying them.

On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use? What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy.
- Romans 9:20-23

Another way to look at it might be if an outstanding clay artisan makes a clay vase, and after firing, he finds there is a defect in the vase. What does he do? Throw it out. It goes on the pile of shards behind their studio. Why? Because it does not accurately represent the skill and artisanship of the potter, so the vase is destroyed.

Does the potter have the right to do that? Yes. He made the vase, he can destroy the vase. If the vase does not accurately represent the skill of the potter, he is not going to sell it. He destroys it.

God is the potter... you are the vase. Do you accurately represent who God is?

For more information, there is a good video on YouTube: www.tinyurl.com/ycdrdl4t

CONCLUSION: Morality (the ethical rules we are to follow) comes from God. Why? Because we are created by God in His image and we are to have the moral character of God. Morality is not arbitrary or changing, but is a description of the unchanging character of God.

Appendix B - Morality Comes from God

Scripture Index

Genesis 1:1	11	Genesis 6:19-22	27
Genesis 1:2-3	19	Genesis 6:5	92
Genesis 1:8	291	Genesis 7:11-12	259, 261
Genesis 1:11-13	21	Genesis 7:2-3	27
Genesis 1:14	19, 302	Genesis 7:20-23	92
Genesis 1:17	290, 295	Genesis 8:13-14	33
Genesis 1:20	23	Genesis 8:4	31
Genesis 1:28	393	Genesis 11:1-9	313,316
Genesis 2:15	393	Genesis 15:18	339
Genesis 2:16-17	88	Genesis 35:10	325,326
Genesis 2:17	225,321, 322	Genesis 46:2	325,326
Genesis 2:18-19	14	Exodus 1:11-14	96
Genesis 2:19	23, 25	Exodus 3:4	225
Genesis 2:4	15	Exodus 7:10-12	225
Genesis 2:4-2:7	12	Exodus 7:17	97
Genesis 2:7-9	22	Exodus 7:19-22	225
Genesis 3:1	1,198	Exodus 9:18-21	98
Genesis 3:4-5	225, 230	Exodus 9:8-11,25	95
Genesis 3:5	254	Exodus 12:29-30	95
Genesis 3:8-9	322	Exodus 14:21-22	229
Genesis 3:14-23	85	Exodus 15:19	363
Genesis 3:17	88	Exodus 15:26	247
Genesis 3:22	225	Exodus 17:8-9a	119
Genesis 3:4-5	225	Exodus 21:16	145
Genesis 3:5	254	Exodus 22:18	151,157
Genesis 3:5-7	191	Exodus 29:38-42	41
Genesis 3:8-9	322	Exodus 31:15	151
Genesis 6:5	92	Exodus 32:35	245,249
Genesis 6:11-12	92	Leviticus 10:1-2	139,140
Genesis 6:13	93	Leviticus 11:5-6	313,314

Scripture Index

Leviticus 11:13-19	313	2 Chronicles 1:15	330
Leviticus 13:4	261	2 Chronicles 6:16	340
Leviticus 20:9	151,153	2 Chronicles 26:19-20	247
Leviticus 20:13	151,158	Job 9:6	281,286,287
Leviticus 20:27	151	Job 26:7	286,287
Leviticus 25:44-46	137,143	Job 37:18	289,291
Numbers 11:1-2	137,138	Psalms 9:8	272
Numbers 14:4	119	Psalms 75:1-5	249
Numbers 16:28-30	139	Psalms 75:3	245
Numbers 16:31-35	137,138	Psalms 104:5	235
Numbers 16:44-49	249,250	Psalms 91:13	307
Numbers 20:11	225	Psalms 92:10	308
Numbers 21:6	137,143	Psalms 93:1-2	271
Numbers 21:7	143	Psalms 104:5	273
Numbers 22:28	225	Psalms 145:20	406
Numbers 31:17-18	131	Isaiah 11:8	305,311
Deuteronomy 7:1-2	103	Isaiah 11:12	281,282
Deuteronomy 9:4-6	102	Isaiah 13:9, 15-18	135
Deuteronomy 13:12-16	137,145	Isaiah 17:1-2	333
Deuteronomy 13:6-10	151,156	Isaiah 19:5-7	339,342
Deuteronomy 17:2-5	151,155	Isaiah 34:7	305
Deuteronomy 18:9-13	158	Isaiah 40:22	285,289,292
Deuteronomy 21:18-21	153	Isaiah 52:1	339,341
Deuteronomy 22:13-14	160	Isaiah 57:1-2	109
Deuteronomy 22:20-21	151,160	Isaiah 59:5	311
Deuteronomy 23:12-13	260	Jeremiah 7:21-26	42
Deuteronomy 23:15	145	Jeremiah 7:22	41
Deuteronomy 32:23-25	127	Jeremiah 8:17	311
Deuteronomy 33:17	308	Jeremiah 14:6	307
Joshua 10:11-13	233,269	Jeremiah 16:19	281,283
Joshua 10:13	229	Jeremiah 17:9	5, 200
1 Samuel 2:8	286	Jeremiah 19:9	139,146
1 Samuel 15:3	117	Jeremiah 21:6	250
2 Samuel 7:8-10	304	Jeremiah 25:11-12	335
2 Samuel 7:10	303	Jeremiah 33:25	203
2 Samuel 7:12-16	305	Jeremiah 51:34	305
2 Samuel 7:16	303	Ezekiel 5:11-17	137,140
1 Kings 10:14-15	294	Ezekiel 9:4-7	123
2 Samuel 12:13-18	105	Ezekiel 9:9-10	125
2 Samuel 24:1	37	Ezekiel 23:2b-10	6
2 Samuel 24:11	38	Daniel 4:28-37	211
2 Samuel 24:15	38	Daniel 5:2	371
2 Kings 24:1	336	Daniel 5:5	229,231
1 Chronicles 16:30	272	Daniel 5:10-11	372
1 Chronicles 17:11-14	340	Daniel 12:2	394
1 Chronicles 21:1	37	Hosea 13:2	125
2 Chronicles 1:12	341	Hosea 13:16	125

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Jonah 1:17	229,231	John 5:2-4	229,231
Malachi 3:6	181	John 8:34	157
Matthew 1:1-17	46	John 8:43-47	319
Matthew 1:20	229	John 10:17-18	66, 109
Matthew 2:13-15	51	John 11:43-46	178
Matthew 6:9-13	354	John 14:6	370
Matthew 7:13	406	John 14:13-14	353,354
Matthew 9:32-33	245,251	John 19:17-18	59
Matthew 10:22	166	John 19:29b-30	66
Matthew 10:28	405	John 19:30	65
Matthew 12:22	245,251	John 20:1	70
Matthew 12:40	349	John 20:11-12	71
Matthew 14:26-29	229	John 20:30-31	406
Matthew 16:28	345,346	Acts 1:15-19	55
Matthew 17:14-18	245,251	Acts 9:7	77
Matthew 27:3-7	55	Acts 9:37-40	225
Matthew 27:44	61	Acts 13:47	281,283
Matthew 27:45-46	387	Acts 17:10-11	252
Matthew 27:46	65	Acts 22:9	77
Matthew 27:46-50	65	Romans 1:18-31	404
Matthew 27:52-53	394	Romans 1:18-32	148
Matthew 28:1	70,349	Romans 1:19	7
Matthew 28:1-4	70	Romans 1:22	8
Matthew 28:2	71	Romans 11:36	183
Mark 5:1-13	245,251	Romans 3:10	165
Mark 9:1	346	Romans 3:23	115
Mark 10:18	115	Romans 3:23	167
Mark 13:24-30	345	Romans 3:24-25	109
Mark 13:4	347	Romans 5:18	85
Mark 13:24-30	347	Romans 6:23	406
Mark 15:21-23	59	Romans 8:20-22	87
Mark 15:34	65	Romans 9:20-23	185
Mark 15:42-45	349	1 Corinthians 5:20	184
Mark 16:2	69	1 Corinthians 10:31	184
Mark 16:5	71	1 Corinthians 11:1	184
Mark 16:9	349	Ephesians 2:1	322
Luke 2:22-40	51	Ephesians 2:8-9	173
Luke 3:23-38	47	Ephesians 4:18	322
Luke 11:24-26	229	Philippians 1:21-23	107
Luke 13:11, 16	245,251	Colossians 1:16	12
Luke 23:39-43	61, 62	Colossians 1:17	175
Luke 23:46	65, 67	2 Thessalonians 1:8b-9	406
Luke 24:1-2	70	1 Timothy 4:1	158
Luke 24:4	71	2 Timothy 3:12	166
John 3:16	406	2 Timothy 3:16	43
John 3:18	406	Hebrews 9:27	9, 157
John 3:19	8	2 Peter 2:4-5 & 9-10	92

Scripture Index

2 Peter 3:7	90
1 John 2:6	184
Revelation 1:7	277,278
Revelation 6:14	289,292
Revelation 6:15-17	293
Revelation 7:1	281,282
Revelation 21:5	113
Revelation 21:8	113,323,405
Revelation 21:23-24	20

Subject Index

Abortion	191,209 225,235	Bible – Sky Has Windows	295-297
Abortion – Baby is Human	105,385	Bible – Solid Sky	289-293
Adam & Eve	11	Bible – Stationary Earth	267
Adam Didn't Die	321	Bible – Unicorns	308-310
Age of the Earth	379	Bible – Violates Nature	203-209
Amalekites	117	Bible – Who Wrote It	402-403
Animal Sacrifices	41	Bible Approves Cruelty	81-84
Babel, Tower of	316	Birds Created	23-26
Babies Killed by Herod	383	Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy	3982
Babylonian Captivity	251,355	Children – Dashed/Pieces	133
Bats	313	Cockatrice	133-136
Bears	141	Comets	299-302
Belshazzar	371***	Cosmas the Monk	277-279
Benefactors of Humanity	167	Creation Order	11
Bethlehem	377,383	Criminals – Taunting Jesus	61
Bethlehem Star	393	Cross – Who Carried	59
Bible – Bats & Birds	313	Crucifixion – Darkness	62,387
Bible – Causes Harm	212,241	Crucifixion – Graves Opening	394
Bible – Cockatrice	310,311	Cursing Parents	151-154
Bible – Dragons	305-307	Cyrus the Persian	373
Bible – Earth on Pillars	277,281,285	Damascus	333
Bible – Flat Earth	277,281	Darius the Mede	373
Bible – Geocentricity	267-276	David's Census	37
Bible – Hinders Science	263,418	Day (meaning)	15-17
Bible – Morality	175-185	Days – Counting	349-350
Bible – No Errors	398	Days – Jonah	351
Bible – Opposes Science	211	Death – Is Death Evil?	107
Bible – Sadism	137-148	Death – Sin	321
Bible – Science Errors	289,305-312		

Subject Index

Death, Second	322,405	God – Kills David's Baby	105
Demons – Disease	245-248	God – Kills Jews	121
Demons – Occult	157-158	God – Kills Virgins	127
Dinosaurs	308	God – Natural Disasters	267
Dragons	305-307	God – Persecution	145
Draper, John	248,285	God – Promises	369
Earth – Age of	379	God – Punishes Disbelief	163
Earth – Circle	292	God – Required Jesus Tortured	109
Earth – Four Corners	282	God – Sends Bears	140
Earth – Rests on Pillars	277,281,285	God – Sends Lions	142
Earth, Flat,	277,281	God – Tormented Egyptians	95
Earth, Stationary	267	God – Tortures	
Elisha's Bones	226	Non-Christians	113
Esther	119,365	God – War, Famine and	
Esther – 127 Provinces	367-368	Pestilence	140
Esther – True?	369	Graves Opening	394
Esther – Jews Attack	369	Herod	383-
Esther – Vashti	366	3868	
Exodus, Parting Red Sea	363	Homosexuality	158
Exodus, the	361	Human Violence	169
Fall – Creation Cursed	87	Humanist – Hypocrisy	118,217
Fall – Human Race Cursed	87	Humanist – Morality	175-180
Flat Earth	277,281	Humanists – Approve Killing	
Flood – Innocent Animals Died	93	Babies	218
Flood – Innocent People Died	91	Humanists – Approve Torture	221
Four Corners of the Earth	281	Humanists – Paganism	242
Galileo	268,274	Ingersoll, Robert	331,393
Geocentricity	267-276	Irving, Washington	283
Geocentricity – Joshua	269	Jacob's Name	325
Global Flood	303,357	Jesus – Crucifixion Darkness	38751
God – Amalekites Killed	117-120	Jesus – Flee to Egypt	51
God – Approves Slavery	143-145	Jesus – Genealogy	45
God – Caused Cannibalism	147	Jesus – Genealogy (Father)	45
God – Causes Disease	247	Jesus – Genealogy (Luke)	47, 49
God – Causes Plagues	24817	Jesus – Genealogy (Mat.)	46, 48
God – Commands Women to be		Jesus – Last Words	65
Killed	131	Jesus – On Cross	61
God – Consuming People with		Jesus – Saved the Thief	61
Fire	139	Jesus – Time in Tomb	349
God – Destroys Samaria	125	Jesus – Tomb – Women	73
God – Exterminate Seven		Jesus – Tomb – Women Arrive	69
Nations	101	Jesus – Was He Real?	391
God – Punishments	149	Jesus – Who Carried Cross	59
God – Incites Human		Jonah	351
Violence	169-174		
God – Is Sadistic	137-148		
God – Kills Babies	99-1005		

Answering 180 Humanist Accusations Against the Bible

Judas – His Pay	55	Serpents	1432
Laws of Nature	203-209	Seven of Some Kind	27
Lions Kill People	142	Signs in Heavens	299
Miracles Are Real	63,207	Silence, Argument From	365
Morality, Bible	181-185	Sin	321
Morality, Humanist	175-180	Sky, Has Windows	2959
Mustard Seed	313,315	Sky, Solid	289
Natural Disasters	303	Slavery	143-145
Noah's Flood	357-359	Solomon's Wealth	329
Noah's Flood – Egyptian Civilizations	358	Stationary Earth	267
Noah's Flood – Ground Dry	33-36	Sun, Moon & Stars Created	19
Noah's Flood – Mountains Appear	31	Supernatural	62,205,211
Occult	157	Supernatural –	
Paul – God Speaks to Him?	77	Causes Plagues	248
Plants Created	21	Supernatural – Evidence	235
Prayer	354-355	Supernatural – Examples	221,226
Prayer –		Supernatural –	
Ask in Jesus' Name	353-355	Happening Today?	229
Prophecy –		Supernatural –	
This Generation	345	Satan & Demons	230
Prophecy	325,333	Supernatural –	
Prophecy – Failed	349	Science is Better	257
Punishment, Severity	163	Supernatural –	
Quarantine	255,259	Spreads Disease	245
Rabbits, Chew Cud	314	Supernatural is Harmful	212,241
Religious Persecution	145	Supernatural is	
Roman Census	375	Unbelievable	235
Sabbath, Working On	151	Two of Every Kind	27
Samaria	125	Unicorns	307
Sanitation	242,255	White, Andrew	248,267,283, 296,415
Science	284,306,409	Windows of Heaven	28960
Science – Errors In Bible	305	Witches	158,173
Science – Powered		Women – Virgins	131,160
by Christianity	213,215	Worshiping Other Gods	155,249
Science and Islam	213-214	Zwingli, Ulrich	301
Second Death	286,322		

Subject Index

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