

## “Is the Bible from God?” (Psalm 119: Part 4)

**Verses to Remember:** “The wicked have laid a snare for me, Yet I have not gone astray from your precepts” (Psalm 119:110).

### How do we answer the accusation of contradictions in the Bible?

#### 1. Reconcile the timing of events

- Understand that sometimes authors group events by theme rather than chronologically.
- Know that sometimes longer events are compressed into summaries.
- Sometime we need to dig deeper into the details. Was Jesus crucified before (Matt 26:18) or after (John 18:28) Passover? It seems that he was crucified after the initial Passover meal, but before the completion of the whole Feast of Unleavened Bread, which was also referred to as Passover (Acts 12:3-4).

#### 2. Reconcile the details of events

- Sometimes different authors give different glimpses or snippets of the same complex or chaotic event, that can be pieced together.
- Sometimes the details in certain accounts may seem to differ, but can be reconciled. For instance, did both criminals taunt Jesus (Matt 27:44) or did one of them stick up for Jesus (Luke 23:40-43)? The one who sticks up for Jesus is not called a disciple, and so it seems that what is being captured in Luke is his moment of repentance and belief. It is not hard to reconcile both accounts by saying that he taunted along with everyone initially, but then came to repentance.

#### 3. Differentiate between what is described and what is prescribed

- Even the ‘good’ people in Scripture say and do wrong things at times, and those things are recorded faithfully in the Bible (Deut 27:22; Gen 20:12).

#### 4. Understand context and nuance

- Should we do good in front of others (Matt 5:16) or beware of practicing righteousness in front of others (Matt 6:1)? We should let our light shine in order to glorify God, but not do external “good deeds” to glorifying ourselves.

#### 5. Understand covenants

- Do we need to keep the Sabbath according to the Law (Ex 20:8) or not (Rom 14:5)? The Old Covenant was broken by us, but fulfilled perfectly by Jesus who then brought in the New Covenant. We can still learn from the Old Covenant, but we are no longer bound under the Old Covenant (Heb 8:13). So, we can follow the precepts at the heart of the Sabbath law, rest and worship, without having to follow the Old Covenant letter of the Sabbath law.

#### 6. Understand the movement through God’s plan

- Was the gospel supposed to go to the Gentiles (Matt 28:20), or just to Israel (Matt 10:5-6)? The Answer is to the Jew first, then to the Gentile (Rom 1:16 cf. Is 49:6).