

I. How Should we Answer those who Scoff at the Bible?

A. The Grievous Plight of a Scoffer

“Prophecy must not be open to multiple interpretations, be clear, and largely free of mythical animals as stand-ins for kingdoms and empires. Use the names of the kingdoms and empires themselves so that all doubt is erased about for whom the prophecy is directed. ...Verification of prophecy must be plain and there can be no doubt that any prophecy in this document was written well in advance of the prophesied events and not after them.

Does this mean reasonable people have the right to hold high expectations for determining the character of any supposed deity and the sort of literary work he may inspire? Yes, I think they do. But that is probably because we've been told this deity has high standards for us. I think it reasonable that the same criteria used to evaluate the clarity of my own written work --clear and precise writing, correct factual claims-- are the automatic criteria to judge a god's work. And not just any god's work but the supposed God, Yahweh, of the biblical text who is described to us as the foundation for all things. If this divinity, this Yahweh, created us in his own image, then he is a reasonable creature to whom we can expect reasonable actions. If a work ascribed to a deity fails to meet the reasonable basic standards used to evaluate every other truth claim, then this book, this Bible, said to be of divine origin, is just another scrap of literature not unlike thousands of others from antiquity borne of the fallibility of mere mortals.”¹

B. A Bold, Kind Argument

1 Peter 3:14–16

¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵ but in your hearts **honor Christ the**

¹ *Redefining the Uncomfortable Doctrine of Biblical Inerrancy* by Brett Palmer
<<http://www.thebibleskeptic.com/redefine.html>>

Lord as holy, always *being prepared to make a defense* to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet *do it with gentleness and respect*,¹⁶ having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

1. There is no one like Jesus (with faith in Jesus)
 - a. Historical
 - b. Attested by God
 - c. The witness of Scripture
2. Be prepared to defend your hope (with a plan)
3. Do so with gentleness & respect (with humble, kindness)

C. What should be our plan? (Proverbs 26:4-5)

Key Idea

Knowing where we stand we should be prepared to show skeptics the folly of their own foundation.

II. What should be our plan?

A. Not thinking like a Fool

Proverbs 26:4-5

⁴ **Answer not a fool according to his folly**, lest you be like him yourself.

⁵ **Answer a fool according to his folly**, lest he be wise in his own eyes.

1. A biblically defined fool (Cf. Proverbs 1:7; 1:22; 10:8; 12:15; 14:9; 18:2; 26:12; 28:26)
2. Why we do not need to solve every objection

“We have given a case for the inerrancy of the Bible. Unless this case can be shown to be false, then it carries with it the guarantee that there are no discrepancies. We have, in other words, if our case is sound, shown that **discrepancies are only apparent** and **must be reconcilable**, even if we say not one word about how this reconciliation is to be shown. It behooves

the opponent to prove us wrong by showing his “discrepancies” to be discrepancies **incapable of harmonization.**” (bold mine) ²

3. For example... (see opening quote)

B. Helping a Fool See his Own Folly

Proverbs 26:5

⁵ **Answer** a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.

1. We do not answer objections because God’s self-witness is weak
2. We answer objections to bring the scoffer to a humble faith in God

2 Corinthians 10:5

⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ...

III. Illustration

Matthew 27:3–8

³ Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and **brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests** and the elders, ⁴ saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” They said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself.” ⁵ And **throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed**, and he went and **hanged himself.** ⁶ But the **chief priests**, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money.” ⁷ So they took counsel and **bought with them the potter’s field** as a burial place for strangers. ⁸ *Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.*

Acts 1:18–19

¹⁸ (Now **this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness**, and falling headlong he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. ¹⁹ And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

² *A Primer on Inerrancy* (pt. 8) by John Gerstner

- A. If you believe the Bible is, “just another scrap of literature ... borne of the fallibility of mere mortals” ...
- B. If you believe the Bible is the Word of the Living God...

IV. Summary

- A. We believe that God Has Clearly Revealed Himself to be Speaking in the Bible
 - 1. The unity, beauty and intricacy of the message
 - 2. God’s own witness through signs & wonders
- B. We want to help others take a closer look at **their** foundation for **their** truth claims
 - 1. Answer objects to demonstrate that they do not have a “smoking gun” against God & His Word
 - 2. When we refuse to listen to God we are all a slave to our own opinions