

Series: Addressing Alleged Contradictions

Sermon: Alleged Numerical and Geographical Contradictions

Sermon Introduction:

1. Do people make the accusation that there are contradictions in the Bible? Yes No
2. When these come up we should dig into the _____, study the context, and seek _____ to find the answer.
3. Principle when addressing alleged contradictions: If there is _____ or _____ legitimate non-contradictory interpretations, then there is no contradiction.

Alleged Numerical Contradictions

The Question: How many languages before the Tower of Babel; one or many?

Examining the question:

1. Genesis 10:1-7, 20, States the people spoke _____ languages.
2. Genesis 11:1, States the whole earth spoke the _____ language.

Examining the Context:

1. Genesis 10 & 11 are not presented _____.
2. Genesis 10 gives a big-picture _____ of the spread of humanity after the flood.
3. Genesis 11:1-9 gives a _____ account of an important event: how God made them disperse.

The answer: There was _____ language before the Tower of Babel.

The Question: How many daughters did Lot have?

Examining the question:

1. Genesis 19:8, Says Lot had two daughters who had not _____ a man.
2. Genesis 19:14, Says that Lot had _____.

Examining the Context - option 1:

1. Genesis 19:15, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Up, take your wife and your two daughters who are _____, or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city.”
2. It is conceivable that Lot had _____ daughters who were not in the _____ with them.

Examining the Context - option 2:

1. The sons-in-law
 - a. Genesis 19:14 (NKJV) “...who _____ married his daughters,...”
 - b. Genesis 19:14 (NASB) “...who _____ to marry his daughters,...”
2. Understanding ancient near-east marriage customs:
 - a. People who were betrothed were seen as being _____ married, even though they did not _____ together and had not had intimate relations.
 - b. Thus, the sons-in-law spoken of could be _____ to Lot’s daughters.

The answer:

- c. Option 1) Lot could have had two more daughters who were _____.
- d. Option 2) Lot's two daughters could have been _____ but not yet married.

The Question: The Twelve?

Examining the question:

1. 1 Corinthians 15:5, Paul says that Jesus appeared to "the _____"
2. Matthew 27:5, Acts 1:15-26, During the time Paul references, Judas had _____ and Matthias had not yet been _____. So, there were only _____.

Examining the Context:

1. Figurative use of Numbers: It is possible, even likely, that the term "the twelve" became _____ with "the Apostles."
2. Use of prolepsis: By the time Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, Matthias had been an apostle for a while. So, Paul may have been _____ him in "the twelve."

The answer: Paul's use of "the twelve" _____ represent a contradiction to the number of apostles to whom Jesus appeared.

Alleged Geographical Contradictions

The Question: Jesus' birth in Bethlehem: Fact or Fiction?

Examining the question:

1. Matthew 2:1, Luke 2:39-40, Matthew and Luke record that Jesus was born in _____.
2. Matt. 2:22-23, Mark 1:24, John 1:45-46, However, Jesus is known for being from _____ in Galilee.
3. John 7:41-42, _____ expressed because the Messiah was to be from Bethlehem not Galilee.

Examining the Context:

1. Place of birth is not the same as the place in which a person grew up. Jesus was _____ in Bethlehem, but he _____ in Galilee.
2. John 7:41-42, The bystanders are not _____. They apparently do not know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. They just know where He was currently from.

The answer: Jesus was _____ in Bethlehem but _____ in Galilee.

The Question: Was Jesus' sermon on a mount or on a plain?

Examining the question:

1. Matthew 5:1, States that Jesus "went up on a _____" to preach His sermon.
2. Luke 6:17, States that Jesus "stood on a _____ place" to preach His sermon.

Examining the Context:

1. Option 1) A sermon can be preached in _____ locations. It is possible, even likely, that Jesus preached the same precepts at _____ locations.
2. Option 2) There are flat places _____ mountains. Jesus could have been preaching from a flat place _____ a mountain.

The answer: There is no contradiction here as Jesus could either have preached this sermon _____ times, or preached from a _____ spot on a mountain.

The Question: Where Did Peter deny Christ?

Examining the question:

3. Matthew 26:57-75, States that Peter denied Jesus in the courtyard of the high priest _____.
4. John 18:13-27, Indicates that Peter denied Jesus in the courtyard of the high priest _____.

Examining the Context:

3. Timeline of John 18,
 - a. vs. 13-14, Jesus taken to _____
 - b. vs. 15-18, Peter denies Jesus the first time in the courtyard of the _____
 - c. vs. 24, Annas sent Jesus to _____
 - d. Vs. 25-27, Peter denied Jesus _____ more times.
4. Non-chronological writing:
 - a. John does not specifically say Peter was at the courtyard of _____.
 - b. Often Hebrew writers will not record events chronologically. So, Peter might have been at the courtyard of _____ the whole time.
5. Family relationship:
 - a. Caiaphas was the son-in-law of Annas. Annas may have been _____ his son-in-law.
 - b. Also, it was not uncommon for extended families to _____ a residence. Thus, it is also possible that Annas and Caiaphas _____ the same palace.

The answer: Peter denied Jesus in the courtyard of the _____. There are many perfectly acceptable _____ for the timeline given.

Conclusion: Let's devote the time to _____ out supposed contradictions so that they do not _____ our faith.