

# Answering Questions About Bible Difficulties

- 1. APPROACH DIFFICULTIES WITH THE RIGHT ASSUMPTIONS*
- 2. BE SURE YOU KNOW WHAT THE TEXT SAYS*
- 3. BE SURE YOU KNOW WHAT THE TEXT MEANS*
- 4. DON'T CONFUSE IMPRECISION WITH ERROR*
- 5. REMEMBER THAT WE DO NOT HAVE THE ORIGINAL WRITINGS*
- 6. DON'T CONFUSE PERSPECTIVE WITH FALSE TESTIMONY*
- 7. REMEMBER THAT SOME STATEMENTS IN SCRIPTURE ARE GENERAL STATEMENTS*
- 8. REMEMBER THAT LANGUAGE ABOUT THE WORLD IS EVERYDAY LANGUAGE*
- 9. REMEMBER THAT THE BIBLE RECORDS THINGS THAT IT DOES NOT APPROVE*

# Answering Questions About Bible Difficulties

## *Number Difficulties*

**Was Ahaziah 22 years old when he began to reign in Judah, or was he 42 years old?**

2 Kings 8:26 (NKJV) 26 Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri, king of Israel.

2 Chronicles 22:2 (NKJV) 2 Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri.

# Answering Questions About Bible Difficulties

## *Number Difficulties*

**How can 1 Kings 4:26 say Solomon had 40,000 stalls when 2 Chronicles 9:25 says he had only 4,000 stalls?**

1 Kings 4:26 (NKJV) 26 Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

2 Chronicles 9:25 (NKJV) 25 Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem.

# Answering Questions About Bible Difficulties

## *Number Difficulties*

**Did David capture 1,700 horsemen as 2 Samuel 8:4 says or 7,000 as 1 Chronicles 18:4 says?**

2 Samuel 8:4 (NKJV) 4 David took from him one thousand *chariots*, seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand foot soldiers. Also David hamstrung all the chariot horses, except that he spared *enough* of them for one hundred chariots.

1 Chronicles 18:4 (NKJV) 4 David took from him one thousand chariots, seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand foot soldiers. Also David hamstrung all the chariot *horses*, except that he spared enough of them for one hundred chariots.

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## *Number Difficulties*

**How old was Jehoiachin when he became king? Was he eighteen or eight?**

2 Kings 24:8 (NKJV) 8 Jehoiachin *was* eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name *was* Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 36:9 (NKJV) 9 Jehoiachin *was* eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months and ten days. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord.

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## *Number Difficulties*

**Did Jesse have eight sons as 1 Samuel 16:10 indicates, or only seven as indicated in 1 Chronicles 2:13–15?**

- 1 Samuel 16:10 (NKJV) 10 Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen these.” (*implies eight sons*)
- 1 Chronicles 2:13-15 (NKJV) 13 Jesse begot Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third, 14 Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, 15 Ozem the sixth, *and David the seventh.*

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## *Number Difficulties*

### Did Michal have no children or five children?

2 Samuel 6:23 (NKJV) 23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

2 Samuel 21:8 (NKJV) 8 So the king took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite;

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### Why are the numbers of the years of the famine different from those in 1 Chronicles 21 and 2 Samuel 24:13?

2 Samuel 24:13 (NKJV) 13 So Gad came to David and told him; and he said to him, “Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? Or shall you flee three months before your enemies, while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days’ plague in your land? Now consider and see what answer I should take back to Him who sent me.”

1 Chronicles 21:11-12 (NKJV) 11 So Gad came to David and said to him, “Thus says the Lord: ‘Choose for yourself, 12 either three years of famine, or three months to be defeated by your foes with the sword of your enemies overtaking *you*, or else for three days the sword of the Lord—the plague in the land, with the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.’ Now consider what answer I should take back to Him who sent me.”



# Answering Questions About Bible Difficulties

## *Chronological Difficulties*

**MATTHEW 4:5–10 (cf. Luke 4:5–12)—Is there a mistake in recording the wilderness temptation of Christ by Matthew or Luke?**

### Matthew

1. Stones into bread
2. Pinnacle of the temple
3. All the kingdoms of the world

### Luke

1. Stones into bread
  2. Pinnacle of the temple
  3. All the kingdoms of the world
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# Answering Questions About Bible Difficulties

## *Chronological Difficulties*

**MARK 15:25 (cf. John 19:14)—Was Jesus crucified in the third hour or the sixth hour?**

Mark 15:25 (NKJV) 25 Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him.

John 19:14-16 (NKJV) 14 Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” 15 But they cried out, “Away with *Him*, away with *Him*! Crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar!” 16 Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led *Him* away.

## MARK 16:2—Was Mary at the tomb before sunrise or after? Also, who came to the tomb?

John 20:1 (NKJV) 1 Now the first *day* of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw *that* the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

Matthew 28:1 (NKJV) 1 Now after the Sabbath, as the first *day* of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

Mark 16:1-2 (NKJV) 1 Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary *the mother* of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. 2 Very early in the morning, on the first *day* of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen.

Luke 24:10 (NKJV) 10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary *the mother* of James, and the other *women* with them, who told these things to the apostles.

# Answering Questions About Bible Difficulties

## *Chronological Difficulties*

### Mark 16:8 & Matthew 28:8-10—Did the women tell of their experience at the tomb or not?

Mark 16:8 (NKJV) 8 So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Matthew 28:8-10 (NKJV) 8 So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. 9 And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, “Rejoice!” So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go *and* tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.”

# Answering Questions About Bible Difficulties

## *Account Difficulties*

### Mark 16:34-4—Was the tomb open when the women came?

Matthew 28:2 (NKJV) 2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.

Mark 16:3-4 (NKJV) 3 And they said among themselves, “Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?” 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large.

# Answering Questions About Bible Difficulties

## *Account Difficulties*

**Why does Matthew say there was only one angel at the tomb when John says there were two?**

Matthew 28:5 (NKJV) 5 But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.

John 20:12 (NKJV) 12 And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

# Answering Questions About Bible Difficulties

## *Account Difficulties*

**MATTHEW 27:54 (cf. Mark 15:39; Luke 23:47)—What did the centurion really say about Christ on the cross?**

Matthew 27:54 (NKJV) 54 So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, “Truly this was the Son of God!”

Mark 15:39 (NKJV) 39 So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, “Truly this Man was the Son of God!”

Luke 23:47 (NKJV) 47 So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, “Certainly this was a righteous Man!”

# Answering Questions About Bible Difficulties

## *Account Difficulties*

MATTHEW 27:37 (cf. Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19)—  
Why are all the Gospel accounts of the inscription on the cross different?

*Matthew: “This is Jesus the king of the Jews” (27:37).*

*Mark: “The king of the Jews” (15:26).*

*Luke: “This is the king of the Jews” (23:38).*

*John: “Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews” (19:19).*




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## *Account Difficulties*

**MATTHEW 27:5 (cf. Acts 1:18)—Did Judas die by hanging or by falling on rocks?**

Matthew 27:5 (NKJV) 5 Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.

Acts 1:18 (NKJV) 18 (Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out.



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