

Defending and Building Your Faith Christian Apologetics – Worksheet 06

Week 6 – The Bible

This week we will begin our formal Christian apologetics study. As the title indicates, we will first discuss apologetics topics related to the Bible which include the following.

- The Bible Defined
- The Reliability of the Bible
- The Documentary Hypothesis
- The Gospel of “Q”
- Bible Difficulties

The Bible Defined

Before beginning this section, please remember that in the first lesson, “The Scriptures Inspired,” we learned some additional facts about the Bible. It is suggested that you take time to review that lesson if time permits this coming week.

The Bible is the basis of the Christian faith. Within its pages we find a _____ of literary styles, stories, wisdom sayings, songs of worship, historical accounts, prophecies and their fulfillment, and the person of Christ. We see the Bible pointing to Jesus (John 5:39), who claimed to be God in flesh (John 8:58 and Exodus 3:14), who said that He alone was “the way, the truth, and the life,” (John 14:6). The Bible teaches us that forgiveness of sins is found in Jesus alone, “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved,” (Acts 4:12). Such fantastic claims mean that the Bible will be critiqued in a manner unlike other books. People have different _____. They have opinions about the nature of the world, people, spirituality, that differ from _____ revelation and they will view the Bible through that worldview. When the Bible _____ with their opinions, then the Bible is often attacked. ^{SMJ1}

If you want to be an apologist, or if you desire to be able to give an answer for the reason of your faith that lies within you (1 Pet. 3:15), then both a knowledge of and a defense of the Bible are absolutely necessary. If you haven’t already, you will most assuredly encounter various attacks upon its truth and realize how important it is to have answers. ^{SMJ1}

The Canon

The word “canon” means “_____” or “_____.” It is the list of authoritative and inspired Scriptures. Different religions have different canons. In Judaism the canon consists of the books of the Old Testament only. In Protestant Christianity, the canon is the body of scripture comprised in the Bible consisting of the ___ books in the Old Testament and ___ in the New Testament. In Roman Catholicism, additional books were added in 1546. These books are

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known as the _____ books: Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, The Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus (Sirach), and Baruch. *It must be added* here that Roman Catholicism maintains that the _____ was always inspired along with the Eastern Orthodox, Coptic and Armenian churches. The Protestant movement has not accepted the apocrypha due to its historical inaccuracies and because **neither Jesus nor the apostles ever quoted it**. This last comment is crucial: **neither Jesus nor the apostles ever quoted from the apocrypha**. Therefore, the Protestants have _____ considered it scripture since, apparently, neither did Jesus or the apostles. ^{SMJ1}

A book considered _____ is a book that has met certain _____, or standards. By the time of Jesus and the apostles the thirty-nine Old Testament books were solidly accepted by Judaism as inspired by God. Jesus repeatedly referred to the Old Testament, recognizing that God himself was speaking (e.g. Matt. 19:3; 22:29). ^{HSM1}

In A.D. 367, the most orthodox theologian of the time, the great champion of biblical truth, Athanasius, sifted through all the books being circulated in the Mediterranean world purporting to be _____ documents. His examination disclosed twenty-seven books, the ones we have today, to be God's Word. Thirty years later, quite independently of Athanasius, a church council met in Carthage to discuss the problem of what books were genuinely Scripture. They applied _____ tests to the documents considered: ^{HSM1}

1. _____: Was the book the product of an apostle or a close associate of an apostle? ^{HSM1}
2. _____: Was the book widely accepted and used in the churches? ^{HSM1}
3. _____: Did the subject matter of the book appear to be on a plane with known Scripture? ^{HSM1}
4. _____: Did the book bear the special quality that speaks of divine inspiration? ^{HSM1}

Note that three of the four tests to which the books were subjected were objective, a matter of factual evidence. Only the fourth, the matter of inspiration, could be considered subjective, a matter of personal judgment. The Council of Carthage, after considering the facts, concluded that the _____ books we now have in our New Testament were the only books in circulation at that time that measured up to the _____ established. For all practical purposes, the question of canon was closed until the advent of modern rationalism. ^{HSM1}

The Reliability of the Bible

It is very important that you understand how to defend the reliability of the Bible. There are many critics who will challenge the Bible. Atheists will try and find _____. Cults often claim it has been _____ thereby justifying their "new" revelations. Muslims deny its _____ in order to justify the Quran. So, knowing the issues surrounding its reliability and how to discuss

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it with people is very _____. **After all, if the Bible can't be trusted then we haven't a leg to stand on.** ^{SMJ1}

The fact is that the Bible copies do have _____. You need to know why they exist and what they are. This way, you can better handle objections such as, "The Bible was copied so many times that it can't be trusted," or "The Bible was translated from one language to another and then another so that through the centuries it became unreliable." ^{SMJ1}

Inspiration

When we say that the Bible is inspired, we are saying it is inspired in the original documents. "Inspiredness is not a quality attaching to corruptions which intrude in the course of the transmission of the text, but only to the text as originally produced by the inspired writers. The acknowledgment of biblical inspiration thus makes more urgent the task of meticulous textual criticism, in order to eliminate such corruptions and ascertain what that original text was." Therefore, when critics of the Bible point out _____ contradictions, what they are doing is either failing to understand the _____ of the passages they are examining, or they have encountered a scribal copying error. The fact is that there are indeed copyist errors on the biblical documents and they account for many alleged contradictions. Remember, it is the autographs (original writings) that are inspired and inerrant, not the copies. The copies we have now are copies of inspired documents. The copies are not themselves "inspired"; that is, they have no guarantee of being 100% textually pure. Does this then mean that we can't trust the Bible? Not at all. The copies are so accurate that all of the biblical documents are _____ textually pure. The 1.5% that is in question is mainly nothing more than _____ errors and occasional _____ omissions like the words "the", "but", etc. This reduces any serious textual issues to a fraction of the 1.5% and **none of these copying errors affects doctrinal truths.**

Following are some types of copyist errors: ^{SMJ1}

- Dittography - Writing twice what should have been written once. ^{SMJ1}
 - A good example would be writing "latter" instead of "later." "Latter" means nearest the end. "Later" means after something else. ^{SMJ1}
- Fission - Improperly dividing one word into two words. ^{SMJ1}
 - Example: "nowhere" into "now here." ^{SMJ1}
- Fusion - Combining the last letter of one word with the first letter of the next word. ^{SMJ1}
 - "Look it is there in the cabinet... or Look it is therein the cabinet." ^{SMJ1}
- Haplography - Writing once what should have been written twice. ^{SMJ1}
 - A good example would be "later" instead of "latter." "Later" means after something else. "Latter" means nearest the end. ^{SMJ1}
- Homophony - Writing a word with a different meaning for another word when both words have the exact same pronunciation. ^{SMJ1}
 - Meat and meet have the exact same sound but different meanings. Also, there and their and they're are another example. ^{SMJ1}
- Metathesis - An improper exchange in the order of letters. ^{SMJ1}
 - Instead of writing "mast," someone writes "mats," or "cast" and cats." ^{SMJ1}

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Until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the 1940's, the oldest extant copy of any Old Testament writings were the Masoretic Text dated around 916 AD. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, a complete copy of _____ was found. Its date was _____ BC. The difference in dates between the oldest copy and the newly discovered Isaiah document was 1000 years. This provided a pristine opportunity to judge the copying accuracy of the Old Testament documents since it would be easily discernable which errors crept in over 1000 years. The documents proved to be _____ textually _____. The 5 percent that was different were mainly misspellings of words and did not constitute any threat to the content or reliability of the text. This shows how accurately it was transmitted. ^{SMJ1}

Copying Checks

In English we have letters, "a, b, c, d, etc." and numbers "1, 2, 3, etc.") We have alpha and numeric characters. In _____ and _____ there are only one set of writing characters for both numbers and letters. In Greek, for example, the first letter is "alpha." It is also used as the number one. The second letter "beta" is used as the number 2, and so on. When the Greeks wanted to write a number they just used the corresponding character. It is similar in English. What is this, "o"? Is it a letter or a number? We can only know when it is used in context. Similarly, the Greek writers of the New Testament would copy the biblical manuscripts. By default, every letter also has a numeric value. When the copies were done, the copyists would _____ the numeric values of the words copied and compare them to the original copy. If there was an error, the copy was destroyed and a new one was begun. This was done with both the Hebrew and Greek writings of the Bible. Therefore, the Bible was copied with extreme care. ^{SMJ1}

Example: The word BIBLE uses the letters B, E, I and L. If B=2, E=5, I=9 and L=12, then adding it up we get $2 + 9 + 2 + 12 + 5 = 30$. This would be done for an entire block of text and the sum of the numbers represented by the letters would be a known and expected number, just like in our example we'd expect the sum for the word BIBLE to be 30.

Other ancient writings

If the critics of the Bible want to throw it out because some of the copies of the documents are not perfectly identical, then they must also throw out other ancient writings which are nowhere near as well _____ as the biblical documents. Please consider the chart below that compares the New Testament to other ancient writings. ^{SMJ1}

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AUTHOR	BOOK	DATE WRITTEN	EARLIEST COPIES	TIME GAP	# OF COPIES
Homer	Iliad	800 B.C.	c. 400 B.C.	c. 400 yrs.	643
Herodotus	History	480-425 B.C.	c. A.D. 900	c. 1350 yrs.	8
Thucydides	History	460-400 B.C.	c. A.D. 900	c. 1300 yrs.	8
Plato		400 B.C.	c. A.D. 900	c. 1300 yrs.	7
Demosthenes		300 B.C.	c. A.D. 1100	c. 1400 yrs.	200
Caesar	Gallic Wars	100-44 B.C.	c. A.D. 900	c. 1000 yrs.	10
Livy	History of Rome	59 B.C. - A.D. 17	4th cent. (partial)	c. 400 yrs.	1 partial
			mostly 10th cent.	c. 1000 yrs.	19 copies
Tacitus	Annals	A.D. 100	c. A.D. 1100	c. 1000 yrs.	20
Pliny Secundus	Natural History	A.D. 61-113	c. A.D. 850	c. 750 yrs.	7
New Testament		A.D. 50-100	c. 114 (fragment)	+ 50 yrs.	5366
			c. 200 (books)	100 yrs.	
			c. 250 (most of N.T.)	150 yrs.	
			c. 325 (complete N.T.)	225 yrs.	

From page 38 of reference material MJ1

It is obvious that the New Testament is far better preserved than any other ancient text. ^{SMJ1} Yet, people deny the validity and accuracy of the Bible while they have no problem believing in Caesar, Plato, and Aristotle.

The Documentary Hypothesis

In short, this theory states that the first ____ books of the Bible, called the _____ consisting of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, were not written completely by Moses, but by different post-mosaic authors. It is alleged that these authors are detectable through the variations of usage of different words within those books. These authors are known as the Jehovist, the Elohist, the Priestly, and the Deuteronomist. According to Oswald T. Allis there were four main areas considered by these critics when supporting the Documentary Hypothesis: ^{SMJ1}

1. The Variations in the Divine Names in Genesis; ^{SMJ1}
2. The Secondary Variations in Diction and Style; ^{SMJ1}
3. The parallel or Duplicate Accounts (Doublets); ^{SMJ1}
4. The Continuity of the Various Sources. ^{SMJ1}

This method of analysis really took root in 1753 when a French physician named Austruc analyzed the book of Genesis and asserted that it had two main sources: a Jehovist and an Elohist. However, he did not deny Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch at this time. ^{SMJ1}

A few years later, a gentleman named, De Wette (1805), assigned Deuteronomy to the time of Josiah (post Moses period). This prompted other writers to tackle the issue. In 1823 Eichhorn had given up on his claim of Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch. ^{SMJ1}

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Answering the Documentary Hypothesis

There are several issues worth examining when answering those who promote the Documentary Hypothesis. ^{SMJ1}

- _____ - The majority of those holding to the JEDP theory presuppose that the miraculous cannot happen. Therefore, they must conclude beforehand that the Pentateuch is not inspired and Moses could not have written it. ^{SMJ1}
- **The Critics are claiming a great deal** - The Pentateuch was written centuries ago in a different language, in a different culture, and a different land. The critics are claiming that "they are able to _____ exactly what a writer could or could not say, and on this basis to determine what part of the document belongs or does not belong to him." ^{SMJ1}
- **Writing Styles _____ within Writers** - The subject matter affects the content and writing styles. A technical work is different from a narrative or historical piece. The Pentateuch has components of all of these. Therefore, different styles are expected. ^{SMJ1}
- **One writer can produce _____ analysis results** - WordPerfect has a Grammar Analyzer for readability. The author of this text ran both the paper explaining the Documentary Hypothesis and this paper refuting it through the analyzer. The results are interesting. ^{SMJ1}

Analysis	Explaining JEDP	Answering JEDP
Flesch-Kincaid grade level	13.64	10.35
Passive voice (% of finite verb phrases)	9%	9%
Sentence Complexity (100 = very complex)	60	43
Vocabulary Complexity (100 = very complex)	38	22

We could conclude that though there are similarities, because there are definite differences, there must be two authors. After all, the first paper has both more complex sentences and more verb complexity than the second as well as being 13th grade level. The author wrote this in two sittings: One before church and the other after church on the same day. ^{SMJ1}

- **Jesus attributed the 5 books to Moses** - Whether or not a biblical critic wants to take Jesus' word for anything is up to the individual. But no less than Jesus authenticated the _____ authorship of the Pentateuch. Jesus divided the Old Testament into three sections in Luke 24:44: Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms. Also, he attributed all the individual JEDP defined sections of the Pentateuch to Moses. In Mark 10:4-8, Jesus quoted Gen. 2:24, which would be J, as coming from Moses. Mark

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7:10, Jesus quoted the Ten Commandments, which fall into the E category, as coming from Moses. In Mark 10:3, Jesus refers to Deut. 24:1f, which would be D, as being from Moses. In Matt. 8:4, Jesus quoted Lev. 14, which would be equivalent to P, as coming from Moses. ^{SMJ1}

This is a brief look at the Documentary Hypothesis. It seems obvious that this is a fabrication based upon _____ presuppositions and inaccurate analysis. It _____ what Jesus said and it is an unreliable way to analyze a document. ^{SMJT}

The Gospel of “Q”

Source: <http://www.carm.org/christianity/bible/what-gospel-q-and-does-it-prove-gospels-are-false>

All of the following content comes from the above cited source.

Q comes from the German "quelle" meaning "_____." Some biblical scholars have proposed that there was a document prior to the writing of the gospels which was used by the writers of _____ and _____ as a source of information. They have called this hypothetical document "Q." It is hypothetical because there is no proof that the document existed. Nevertheless, this proposal has gained some acceptance in scholarly circles due to the very close similarities and identical written accounts found in both Matthew and Luke. It is reasoned that the very similar accounts must be taken from a common source.

Since Matthew was probably originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic according to the historian Papias, and all we have is the Greek texts, some conclude that a translation of the Hebrew gospel of Matthew into Greek would have resulted in translations slightly different from the Luke accounts. But since some of the accounts are identical, it is proposed that Matthew and Luke shared a common reference source. This is perfectly reasonable and we do see differences in translations as well as identical wording. Is this the result of an unknown document known as Q? Perhaps, but there is no way to be sure since it is possible that one copied from another or copied from Mark.

Matthew	Luke
3:7-10	3:7-9
23:37	13:34
11:2-6	7:18-23
8:18-22	9:57-62
17:19-20	17:5-6
25:14-30	19:11-27

To the left is a small sample chart of some of the sayings in Matthew and Luke that have identical portions.

As stated above, another theory is that Matthew and Luke copied from Mark. Please consider the following quote which deals with both the Q theory and the Markan Source theory.

"It is plain as a pikestaff that both our Matthew and Luke used practically all of Mark and followed his general order of events. For this reason Mark has been placed first on the pages where this Gospel appears at all. But another thing is equally clear and that is that both Matthew and Luke had another source in common because they each give practically identical matter for much that is not in Mark at all. This second common source for Matthew and Luke has been called Logia because it is chiefly discourses. It is sometimes referred to as "Q."

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The above quote from A.T. Robertson, one of the foremost Greek scholars of the 20th century, is a good reflection of the position of many scholars. It may be that there was a common source for Matthew and Luke, either Q or Mark, or a combination of both.

If Q is true, are the gospels inspired?

Some people say that the Q theory invalidates the inspiration of the gospels since it would mean that the writers copied their material from one another and were then not inspired of God. But this does not invalidate inspiration at all. If Q is an actual source it does not invalidate the _____ of the gospels. Why would copying from an earlier source invalidate the Gospels or say they were not inspired? Can God not inspire a writer as he copies from another document? Of course.

If anything, the existence of Q would mean that the time between the actual events and their written record is lessened. In other words, Q would have to precede Matthew and Luke. This would mean that there is a source even _____ than those gospels which only adds to the validity of the accuracy of the gospels since it shortens the time between the event and the record.

If Mark was a source of Matthew and Luke, then...

Furthermore, if Mark was used as a source for Matthew and Luke, how would he have known what to write about if he wasn't an eyewitness? This isn't a problem because Mark was a disciple of Peter and Peter was in the inner circle with Jesus. Therefore, Mark received his information from Peter who was an _____. Also, Matthew, who was a disciple, agrees with the account of Mark's gospel concerning Jesus and the events surrounding Him as is evidenced in his account. There is no disagreement between them, only _____ and _____. So, we have confirmation of Mark's accuracy.

Bible Difficulties

Bible difficulties, or _____ Bible contradictions, exist in the Bible and we need to be aware of them and how to respond to them. The opponents of Christianity often use Bible difficulties in their attempts to _____ Christianity. It is rather easy to answer their objections if you simply look at the context and apply a little logic. What remains are those issues dealing with _____ variations -- and there are a few. ^{SMJ1}

It is recommended that you become familiar with the Bible difficulties section of CARM (at <http://www.carm.org/bible-difficulties>) as well as purchase the New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties (available on Amazon.com). In this section we will review some things you will need to know to be able to respond to alleged Bible difficulties. ^{SMJ1}

- **What is a Contradiction?** A contradiction occurs when one statement makes another statement _____ when both statements deal with the same topic at the same time. For example, in my right pocket is a set of car keys. In my right pocket there is no set of car keys. Both

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statements cannot be true at the same time. Therefore, to state that both were true is to state a contradiction. ^{SMJ1}

If one gospel account says two people went to Jesus' tomb and another says that one went, it is not a contradiction because the accounts do not say that _____ one went or only two went. If one account said that only one went, then two could not have gone and that would be a contradiction. ^{SMJ1}

One of the most common accounts used as a contradiction is how did Judas die, by hanging or falling down? ^{SMJ1}

- By hanging (Matthew 27:3-8) - "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 sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. And 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 counseled together and with the money bought the Potter's Field as a burial place for strangers. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day." ^{SMJ1}
- By falling (Acts 1:16-19) - "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 portion 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 bowels 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.)" ^{SMJ1}

There is no contradiction because both are true. Remember, a contradiction occurs when one statement _____ the possibility of another. What happened is that Judas went and hung himself and then his body later fell down and split open. In other words, the rope or branch of the tree probably broke due to the weight and his body fell down and his bowels spilled out. Also, notice that Matt. 27:3-8 tells us specifically how Judas died, by hanging. Acts 1:16-19 merely tells us that he fell headlong and his bowels gushed out. Acts does not tell us that this is the means of his death where Matthew does. ^{SMJ1}

- **Context:** When dealing with opponents who site biblical difficulties, you must always challenge them to look at the verses in _____. Very often, the problems disappear when doing this. In Matt. 5:48 Jesus says, "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Sometimes people will quote a verse like this and say that it is an

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impossibility to accomplish and that the Bible asks you to do impossible things. Therefore, it cannot be from God.¹ The answer, of course, is found in the context, Matt. 5:43-48.^{SMJ1}

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.’ 44 “But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you 45 in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 “For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same? 47 “And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Notice that the context is dealing with loving all people equally. This is what it means to be perfect. It means to be perfect in loving others and it is a noble thing to strive for. Therefore, this is not speaking about perfection as God is perfect, but it is urging people to love as God loves -- equally.^{SMJ1}

- **Assumptions:** Sometimes people are looking for contradictions in the Bible and so they will find anything that looks like a contradiction. When this happens, point it out. When a person has misconceptions removed, many things fall into place. So, listen to what they say and see if there are any false assumptions.^{SMJ1}
- **Copyist Errors:** The fact is that the copies of the biblical manuscripts are not perfect. These copy errors account for several alleged contradictions. For example, how many charioteers were killed by David, 700 or 7000? In 2 Samuel 10:18 it says, 700 but in 1 Chronicles 19:18 it says 7,000. This is an example of a copyist error. Notice how the number is off by a single zero; that is, by a single notation of a digit. According to *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible*, by Gleason Archer, page 382, regarding the characters used to designate numbers, "Nun final, was mistaken for dotted Zayin, would account for the copyist error in the text. Most probably, the correct number is 7,000 charioteers." Therefore, we can admit that there are copyist errors, though minor and infrequent. We must also point out that inspiration deals with the autographs (the original writings), not the copies. We have copies of inspired documents.^{SMJ1}

When dealing with someone who raises an alleged contradiction, ask the person to document what it is so you can take a look at it. If you can't figure it out right there by looking at the context, admit it and ask if it is okay to get back in touch with the person later. **There is nothing wrong with admitting you don't know something and then checking into it.** Just make sure you follow up after you get the answer.^{SMJ1}

Defending the Christian faith means being aware of different arguments against the Christian faith. It also means admitting the reality of copyist errors in the biblical manuscripts. Of course, from the lesson on the Bible's reliability, we

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know that these copy errors don't affect the truths of the Bible. Therefore, we can trust it. ^{SMJ1}

As you defend the faith, you do so by teaching. In order to do that, you need to know the facts so that you are not caught off guard. ^{SMJ1}

Week 6 Conclusion

Today we learned some Bible apologetics. Next week we will continue our apologetic studies with an examination and explanation of what apologetics entails.

Week 6 Review Questions

What does the word "canon" mean in reference to the Bible?

Do the copies of the biblical manuscripts have textual variations?

What is the percentage accuracy of the copies of the biblical documents?

Do any of the textual variations affect Christian doctrine?

What is the Documentary Hypothesis?

What are two things you should do when dealing with contradictions?

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