

A CLEAR PLAN

The Bible on Trial, Pt. 4

A CLEAR PLAN

- War or Peace?
 - The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is his name (Exodus 15:3).
 - May the God of peace be with you all. Amen (Romans 15:33).

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- Unchanging or Changing?
 - For I the LORD do not change... (Malachi 3:6).
 - ...God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do them, and he did not do it (Jonah 3:10).

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- Jesus AND Elijah?
 - No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man (John 3:13).
 - And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven (2 Kings 2:11).

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- *Marry or Don't?*
 - He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD (Pr 18:22).
 - Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife (1 Cor 7:27).

A CLEAR PLAN

- **Objecting to a Clear Plan**

I. The Bible contradicts itself: God isn't clear.

“The Bible looks like it started out
as a game of Mad Libs.”

-Bill Mahr

“It is full of interest. It has noble poetry in it; and some clever fables; and some blood-drenched history; and some good morals; and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies.”

-Mark Twain, *Letters from the Earth*

“The Scriptures...are not of themselves clear and intelligible even in matters of highest importance.”

-James Gibbons, *Faith of Our Fathers*

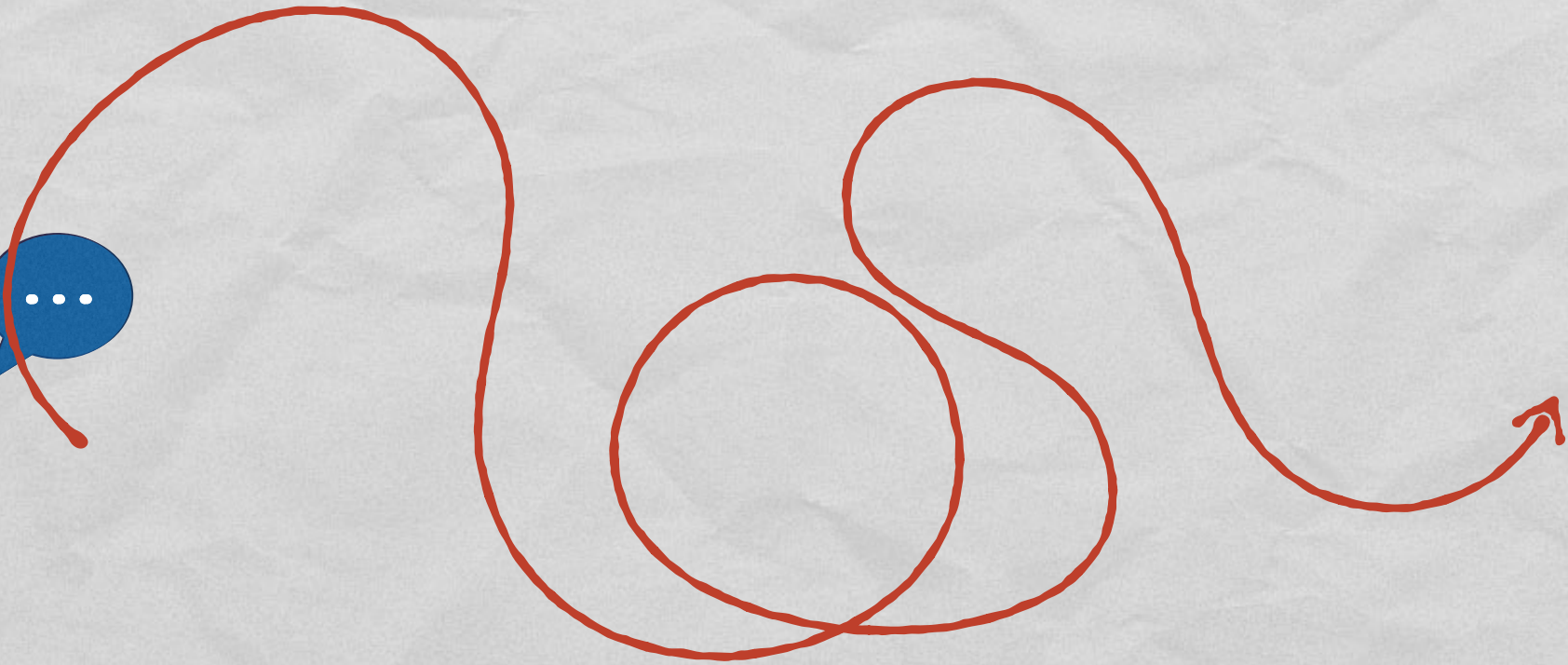
“Different authors have different points of view.
You can’t just say, ‘I believe in the Bible.’”

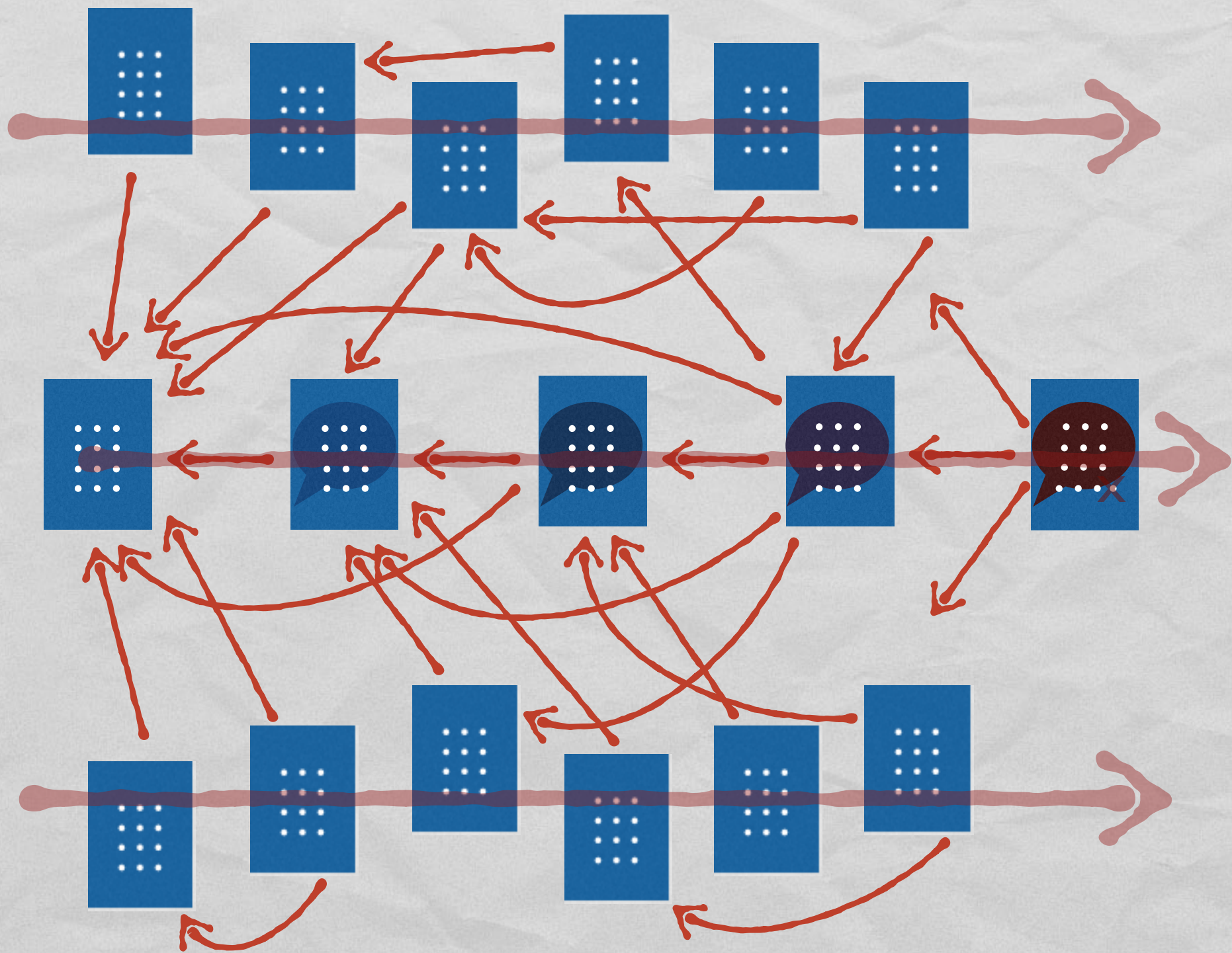
-Bart Ehrman

A CLEAR PLAN

- God allowed the clear original to be lost.
- Early Christians did a bad editing job.
- **Objecting to a Clear Plan**
 1. **The Bible contradicts itself: God isn't clear.**
 2. **Contradictions get ignored: Christians aren't honest.**
 - the early ones who altered the text
 - the ones today who read it with bias

Solution? “Stop reading the Bible OR read it selectively.”





“94 percent of our surviving manuscripts were produced 700 years or more after the originals.”

-Bart Ehrman, *The Reliability of the New Testament*

“We have today as many as a dozen manuscripts from the second century, sixty-four from the third, and forty-eight from the fourth. That’s a total of 124 manuscripts within 300 years of the composition of the New Testament. Most of these are fragmentary, but collectively, the whole New Testament text is found in them multiple times.”

-Daniel Wallace, *The Reliability of the New Testament*

“In spite of these remarkable [textual] differences, scholars are convinced that we can reconstruct the original words of the New Testament with reasonable (although probably not 100 percent) accuracy.”

-Bart Ehrman, address to text-critical scholars
at the Society of Biblical Literature

A CLEAR PLAN

- ~~God allowed the clear original to be lost.~~

- ~~Early Christians did a bad editing job.~~

- **Objecting to a Clear Plan**

- 1. The Bible contradicts itself: God isn't clear.**

- 2. Contradictions get ignored: Christians aren't honest.**

- ~~the early ones who altered the text~~

- the ones today who read it with bias

“The sources for the resurrection of Jesus, with their relatively big contradictions over details, present for the historian for this very reason a criterion of extraordinary credibility.”

-H. E. Stier, *The Trustworthiness of the Gospels*

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- Agreement in the Gospels
 - Jesus is the Messiah.
 - Jesus worked miracles.
 - Jesus forgave sins.
 - Jesus prophesied his own death and resurrection.
 - Jesus died on a Roman cross.
 - Jesus was raised bodily from the dead.

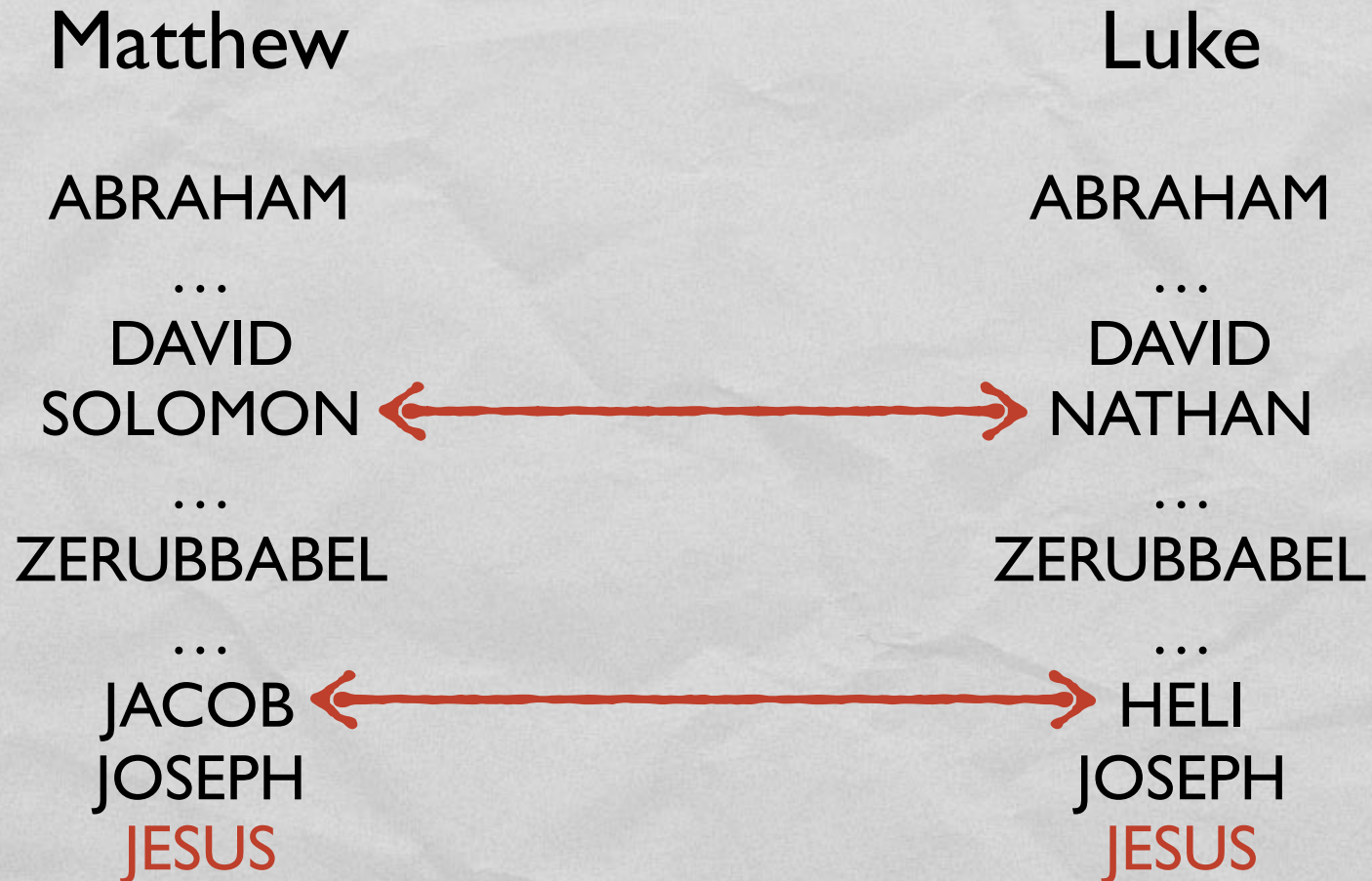
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The Objection: The Bible is full of contradictions.

1. Genealogies of Jesus
2. Time of Crucifixion
3. Scenes of Resurrection and Ascension
4. Death of Judas

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I. Genealogies of Jesus



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2. Time of Crucifixion

Mark

- Jesus eats Passover with disciples.
- He is crucified at 3rd hour.
- He dies at 9th hour on Friday.

John

- Jesus eats with disciples before Feast of Passover.
- He is crucified about 6th hour.
- He dies on Friday.

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2. Time of Crucifixion

- the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover (Luke 22:1).
 - see Exodus 12; 2 Chronicles 35; Ezekiel 45:21; Mark 14:12
- The “day of Preparation of the Passover” meant, therefore, the Friday occurring during the Passover week.
 - This places Jesus dying on Passover Friday in all the gospels.

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2. Time of Crucifixion

Modern Time

Galilee Time

Judea Time

Thursday

12 - midnight

6 AM

12 - noon

6 PM

12 - midnight

6 AM

12 - noon

6 PM

12 - midnight

14 NISAN

Sacrifice of
Passover Lamb

14 NISAN

Sacrifice of
Passover Lamb

15 NISAN

15 NISAN

Friday

3. Scenes of Resurrection and Ascension

Matthew

- Mary Magdalene and other Mary go to tomb.
- With an earthquake, an angel rolls back the stone and instructs the women.
- Jesus appears to them on their way to tell disciples.
- Jesus appears to disciples in Galilee.

Luke

- Mary M., Joanna, other Mary, and other women go to tomb, finding it empty.
- Two men meet them in the tomb, reminding them of Jesus' words.
- The women tell the disciples, Peter running to see.
- Jesus appears to disciples going to Emmaus.
- Jesus appears to Peter then 12 in Jerusalem.
- Jesus ascends into Heaven at Bethany.

Mark

- Mary M., other Mary, and Salome go to tomb.
- The stone has been rolled away, and a man sitting in the tomb instructs them.
- The women flee, afraid.

John

- Mary M. goes to tomb and sees that the stone has been rolled away.
- She runs to tell Peter and John, who run to see tomb.
- Jesus appears to Mary who tells disciples.
- Jesus then appears to 12 in Jerusalem.
- Jesus appears to Thomas.

3. Scenes of Resurrection and Ascension

A Synopsis

- Women, including Mary M., go to the tomb.
- An angel, having rolled away the stone, tells the women to tell the disciples to meet Jesus in Jerusalem.
- The women look in the tomb, speaking with angels within.
- The women run from the tomb, at first afraid, and then with joy to tell the disciples, not telling anyone else.
- Peter and John run to examine the tomb, seeing the burial wrappings of Jesus within, then go home.
- Mary and the women have come back to the tomb, where Jesus greets first Mary then the other women, telling them again to tell the disciples to meet him in Galilee. They do, but the disciples do not go to Galilee.
- Jesus appears to Peter, as well as the disciples going to Emmaus.
- Jesus appears to the twelve, not Thomas, in Jerusalem that same Sunday.
- Jesus appears to the twelve with Thomas in Jerusalem the following Sunday.
- The disciples travel to Galilee to see Jesus as instructed.
- Jesus appears on several more occasions.
- Jesus ascends into heaven from Mt. Olives in Bethany.

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4. Death of Judas

- And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. ...So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers...called the Field of Blood to this day (Matthew 27:5-8).
- 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...so that the field was called...Field of Blood (Acts 1:18-19).

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Closing Suggestions

1. The Bible submits itself to rigorous examination
2. Before throwing out any “testimony”:
 1. Read with care.
 2. Read with humility.
 3. Read with sensitivity.