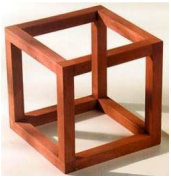


Paradox, Mystery and Contradiction

For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of Me will find it. - Matthew 16:25 HCSB



A paradox is a statement or concept that leads to a counterintuitive conclusion and the Scriptures are full of them. The very concept of a divine and eternal being contains paradoxes. How could such a being be both transcendent and immanent? How can He retain sovereignty while granting free will? How could He be holy and yet put up with us?

However, the Bible does not encourage irrationality. It does demand a “blind leap of faith.” He is not named Gelah Raz – Revealer of Mysteries – in Daniel 2:28 for naught. As we discovered in the sermon “The Silent Voice of God”, Hashem has given us plenty of evidence to demonstrate not only His existence, but also many of His divine attributes. Beyond the general revelation available to the natural theologian, Gelah Raz gave special revelation to the prophets of old, detailing not only His nature but His demands.

However, God’s revelation has historically been progressive. God’s hidden wisdom was a mystery that many of the ancient sages did not know but that has since been graciously revealed through the Holy Spirit.

- [1 Corinthians 2:4-10 HCSB](#) (4) My speech and my proclamation were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and power, (5) so that your faith might not be based on men's wisdom but on God's power. (6) However, among the mature we do speak a wisdom, but not a wisdom of this age, or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. (7) On the contrary, we speak God's hidden wisdom in a mystery, which God predestined before the ages for our glory. (8) None of the rulers of this age knew it, for if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (9) But as it is written: **What no eye has seen and no ear has heard, and what has never come into a man's heart, is what God has prepared for those who love Him.** (10) Now God has revealed them to us by the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the deep things of God.

For long ages, the sacred secret of God’s full revelation was kept secret but is now revealed and made known through the prophetic Scriptures.

- [Romans 16:25-27 HCSB](#) Now to Him who has power to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the sacred secret kept silent for long ages, (26) but now revealed and made known through the prophetic Scriptures, according to the command of the eternal God, to advance the obedience of faith among all nations-- (27) to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ--to Him be the glory forever! Amen.

Even in the individual experience, truth can only come through process. To those who respond obediently to enlightenment is given more light. Those who stubbornly suppress the truth find their minds darkened. We refer to this critical principle as the “Law of Light”.

- [Proverbs 1:25-28 HCSB](#) since you neglected all my counsel and did not accept my correction, (26) I, in turn, will laugh at your calamity. I will mock when terror strikes you, (27) when terror strikes you like a storm and your calamity comes like a whirlwind, when trouble and stress overcome you. (28) Then they will call me, but I won't answer; they will search for me, but won't find me.
- [Proverbs 6:23 HCSB](#) For a commandment is a lamp, teaching is a light, and corrective instructions are the way to life.
- [Proverbs 13:9 HCSB](#) The light of the righteous shines brightly, but the lamp of the wicked is extinguished.

- **Proverbs 18:1 HCSB** One who isolates himself pursues *selfish* desires; he rebels against all sound judgment.
- **Proverbs 29:13 HCSB** The poor and the oppressor have this in common: the LORD gives light to the eyes of both.
- **Isaiah 66:3-4 HCSB** One slaughters an ox, one kills a man; one sacrifices a lamb, one breaks a dog's neck; one offers a grain offering, one offers swine's blood; one offers incense, one praises an idol--all these have chosen their ways and delight in their abominations. (4) So I will choose their punishment, and I will bring on them what they dread, because I called and no one answered; I spoke and they didn't hear; they did what is evil in My sight and chose what I didn't delight in.
- **Matthew 13:12-15 HCSB** For whoever has, more will be given to him, and he will have more than enough. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. (13) For this reason I speak to them in parables, because looking they do not see, and hearing they do not listen or understand. (14) Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in them, which says: **You will listen and listen, yet never understand; and you will look and look, yet never perceive.** (15) For this people's heart has grown callous; their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; otherwise they might see with their eyes and hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn back--and I would cure them.
- **Matthew 25:29 HCSB** For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have more than enough. But from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.
- **Luke 12:47-48 HCSB** And that slave who knew his master's will and didn't prepare himself or do it will be severely beaten. (48) But the one who did not know and did things deserving of blows will be beaten lightly. Much will be required of everyone who has been given much. And even more will be expected of the one who has been entrusted with more.
- **Romans 1:21-22 HCSB** For though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or show gratitude. Instead, their thinking became nonsense, and their senseless minds were darkened. (22) Claiming to be wise, they became fools
- **Romans 2:5-8 HCSB** But because of your hardness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath, when God's righteous judgment is revealed. (6) He **will repay each one according to his works:** (7) eternal life to those who by patiently doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; (8) but wrath and indignation to those who are self-seeking and disobey the truth, but are obeying unrighteousness;
- **2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 HCSB** (10) and with every unrighteous deception among those who are perishing. They perish because they did not accept the love of the truth in order to be saved. (11) For this reason God sends them a strong delusion so that they will believe what is false, (12) so that all will be condemned--those who did not believe the truth but enjoyed unrighteousness.

This is why Christ spoke in parables. He deliberately kept truth from some while revealing it to others.

- **Matthew 13:10-12 HCSB** Then the disciples came up and asked Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" (11) He answered them, **"Because the secrets of the kingdom of heaven have been given for you to know, but it has not been given to them.** (12) **For whoever has, more will be given to him, and he will have more than enough. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.**

This process, along with our own fundamental ignorance can sometimes cause us to perceive certain statements as paradoxical, mysterious or even contradictory. Typically though, the statements only seem puzzling because our understanding of the premises are

flawed. For instance, the statement that whoever wants to save his life must lose it, is not paradoxical to the one who knows that this physical life is not all there is. The same principle can be used to understand Yahweh warning that on the day Adam and Eve disobeyed, they would surely die. Those who read of them continuing on with their lives and having children after being cast out of the Garden could believe that God was either wrong or deceitful if they did not keep in mind that “the wages of sin is death.”

- [Romans 6:23 HCSB](#) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

For years, critics scoffed at the idea that the entire world would gaze upon the dead bodies of the Two Witnesses

- [Revelation 11:8-10 HCSB](#) (8) Their dead bodies will lie in the public square of the great city, which is called, prophetically, Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. (9) And representatives from the peoples, tribes, languages, and nations will view their bodies for three and a half days and not permit their bodies to be put into a tomb. (10) Those who live on the earth will gloat over them and celebrate and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who live on the earth.

– that is until the advent of satellite television and the World Wide Web.

Many shook their heads at the Scriptures description of the Hittite nation

- [Genesis 10:15 HCSB](#) Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn, and the Hittites,
 - [Joshua 1:4 HCSB](#) Your territory will be from the wilderness and Lebanon to the great Euphrates River--all the land of the Hittites--and west to the Mediterranean Sea.
- until Hugo Winckler discovered their empire in 1906.

As we approach God and His Word, we must do so cautiously; humbly keeping in mind our ignorance and mortal perspective. Those statements that seem most paradoxical will usually turn out to hold the most amazing truths.