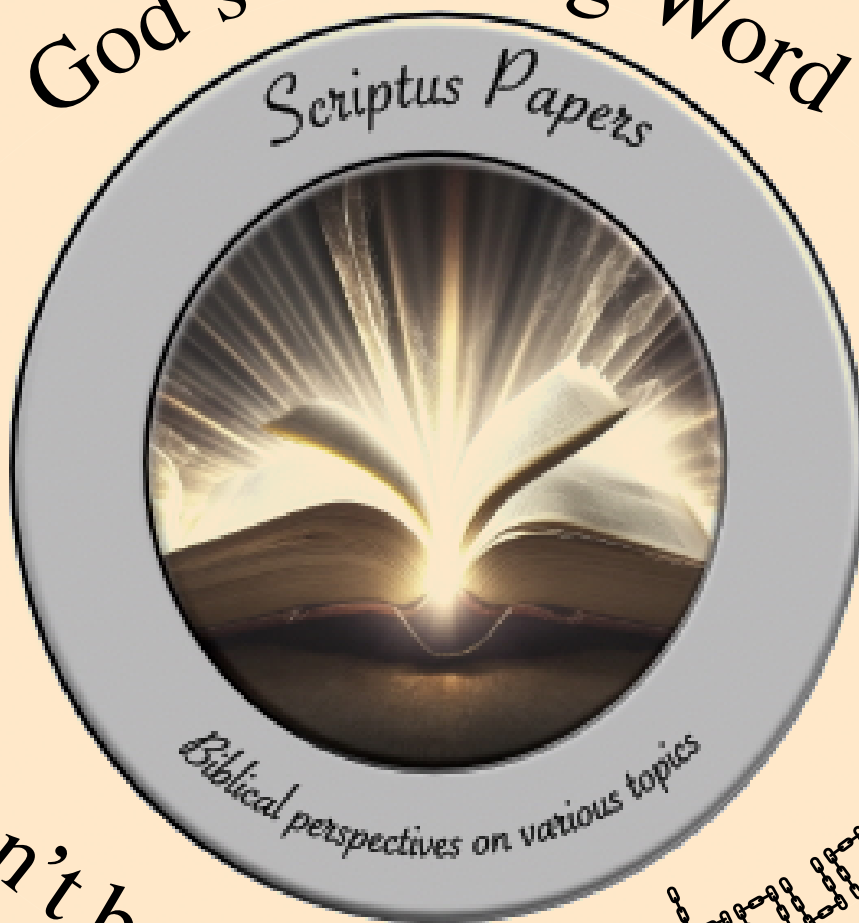




7



God's enduring Word



Can't be **BURNT**, **BROKEN**, or **BOUND**



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The Lord exists forever; your word is firmly fixed in heaven (Psalm 119:89).

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away (Mark 13:31).

All men are like grass...but the word of the Lord endures forever (1 Peter 1:24-25).

Introduction

What a contrast the texts above make! Both heaven and earth, that is, the universe, and mankind pass away, but the Lord and His word endure. This endurance is despite the attempts of men to eliminate both the Lord and His word. So, this *Scriptus Paper* is about the accounts of men who tried to eliminate the Word, and the Lord's response - it can't be burnt, broken, or bound.

Can't be burnt

Jehudi read Jeremiah's scroll to King Jehoiakim and all the officials who stood beside the king. Now the king was sitting in his winter apartment, and there was a fire burning in the fire pot before him. As Jehudi read three or four columns, the king would cut them off with a penknife and throw them into the fire until the entire scroll was consumed in the fire.

Yet neither the king, nor any of his servants who heard all these words, was alarmed, nor did they tear their garments. Even when the king was urged not to burn the scroll, he would not listen.

And the king commanded to arrest the secretary Baruch and the prophet Jeremiah. But the Lord hid them. Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to the secretary Baruch who wrote on it at Jeremiah's dictation all the words of the scroll that King Jehoiakim of Judah had burned in the fire; and many similar words were added to them (Jeremiah 36:1-32).

Then the word of the Lord came to the prophet Jeremiah: Thus says the Lord, God of Israel: This is what you shall say to the king of Judah. The Chaldeans shall return and fight against this city; they shall take it and burn it with fire (Jeremiah 37:6-8).

King Jehoiakim

The extracts of text from Jeremiah 36 above make awful reading about the king of Judah, of God's chosen people, burning His word. Moreover, the king and his servants didn't care. They had no conscience about the deed despite the urgings against it. Their ears and hearts were stone cold deaf. The Lord's response is swift and decisive. The Word was re-written but emphasised - many similar words were added and judgment was not spared. Jerusalem, the home of the king, would now be burnt. In brief, the lesson is that if you burn the Word, you will in turn be burnt. History has borne that out.

Antiochus IV

In 100 B. C., Antiochus IV (King of the Seleucid Empire, who brutally persecuted the Jews, burned all the scriptures he could find and decreed death to all owners — yet, the scriptures survived.

Diocletian

In A.D. 301-304, the Roman Emperor Diocletian burned thousands of copies of the Bible, commanded that all Bibles be destroyed and decreed that any home with a Bible in it should be burned. In fact, he even built a monument over what he thought was the last surviving Bible. He then proudly proclaimed, "The Christian name has been extinguished!"

However, God had the last laugh. The very next emperor, Constantine, made Christianity the state religion of Rome. Also, 500 years after Diocletian's death, his mausoleum grave was a Christian church.

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Julian

The Roman general and nephew of Constantine named Julian proudly claimed that his book "Refutation of the Christian Religion" would destroy the Bible forever. It didn't; it hasn't. Moreover, who has ever heard of this book?

Voltaire

Voltaire, the French Philosopher (1694-1778) prophesied, "In 100 years, the Bible would be a forgotten and unknown book." 100 years later, the Geneva Bible Society occupied his home. In 1778, Voltaire proudly boasted, "It took 12 men to start Christianity; one (referring to himself) will destroy it." He didn't. Later, that very year, he died.

It's true. The Scriptures cannot be burnt or destroyed in any other way.

Can't be broken

Jesus said, "I'm only quoting your inspired Scriptures, where God said, 'I tell you—you are gods.' If God called your ancestors 'gods'—and Scripture cannot be broken—why do you yell, 'Blasphemer! Blasphemer!'" at the unique One the Father consecrated and sent into the world, just because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?

If I don't do the things my Father does, well and good; don't believe me. But if I am doing them, put aside for a moment what you hear me say about myself and just take the evidence of the actions that are right before your eyes.

Then perhaps things will come together for you, and you'll see that not only are we doing the same thing, we are the same. He is in me; I am in him." They tried yet again to arrest him, but he slipped through their fingers (John 10:34-42).

The amazing word '**broken**' is '*luo*', which expresses the unbinding of what was previously tied up, or the disintegrating of what was previously integrated. For example, '*luo*' is used specifically to describe the unbinding of animals (Matthew 21:2), the releasing of prisoners (Acts 22:30, Revelation 20:3), the breaking of a seal (Revelation 5:2), the unbinding of a mute's tongue (Mark 7:35), dissolving a marriage (1 Corinthians 7:27), or an assembly (Acts 13:43), and the disintegration of ships (Acts 27:41), buildings (John 2:19), or even the whole world (2 Peter 3:10-12).

Particularly interesting is the use of this verb in the sense of "breaking" the law (Matthew 5:19, John 7:23). In English we use this same image of law "breaking", although in our world, laws are not considered as solid that might be snapped, but in the Judaic mind it was so. To the Jews, laws were not made up or man-made things but were created by God. Those laws (written in stone by the very finger of God; Exodus 31:18) were bound in the sense that they were slowly extracted, purified, collected, understood and integrated into increasingly righteous societies (Psalm 12:6). The Greek word for reason (*logos*), means precisely this, that what was gathered up and bound together into living and reasonable minds, which in turn was bundled into living and righteous societies, which in turn would ultimately form into a perfectly just and perfectly well informed New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:2), the City of Righteousness, the Faithful City (Isaiah 1:26), the City of God (Isaiah 60:14).

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Can't be broken continued

In other words: violating a law was not a matter of being naughty but a matter of dissolving that painstakingly gathered, life-saving knowledge of how the Creator designed the world to function (Hosea 4:6, Matthew 5:18). Since society and indeed life itself was equally a matter of elements having been integrated into a close-knit unit, "loosening" a law equaled a motion away from the solid foundation of the City of God and back to primitivity, injustice and death. It's in that same way that the enigmatic statements of Jesus are to be understood: "Whatever you solidify on earth reflects what is solid in heaven, and whatever you dissolve on earth exists disconnected in heaven" (Matthew 16:19, 18:18) ([Abarim Publications](#)).

As the Lord said, *Scripture cannot be broken.*

Can't be bound

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel, for which I suffer hardship, even to the point of being imprisoned like a criminal. But the word of God is not bound (2 Timothy 2:8-9).

God's word knows no constraint or restriction. Paul, even when constrained in a Roman prison, wrote the Word and distributed it outside to Christians and churches. Since then, would-be prisoners of the Word have fared no better.

Ingersoll

For example, the American political leader Robert G. Ingersoll (1833-1899) prophesied, "In 15 years, I will have the Bible in the morgue." Fifteen years later, Robert Ingersoll himself was in the morgue. God is not mocked!

Wallace

Later, Lew Wallace (1827-1905) who served as a writer, a Civil War general, a governor of New Mexico and U.S. ambassador to Turkey, was a known atheist. For two years, he studied at the leading libraries in Europe seeking information for his book that he believed would disprove the Bible and "forever destroy Christianity." While writing the second chapter of this book, he found himself on his knees praying to Jesus. Because of the indisputable evidence, he could no longer deny that the Bible was the word of God. Later, he wrote "Ben Hur," one of the greatest English novels ever written concerning the time of Christ.

Soviets

Moreover, during the 1950's, the Soviet government, which outlawed owning or studying the Bible, built a majestic building in Kiev, Ukraine, to house the Communist headquarters for that region. In 1994, Russ Whitten, a minister, had the privilege of teaching the Bible to the entire freshman class in this building, which then housed one of the first *Christian universities in the former Soviet Union.*

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North Korea

Finally, the North Korean government executes individuals who are found with a Bible. Further, it is illegal to distribute Bibles in Iran. Parts of the Bible are on record as hate speech in Canada. That's three different types of governments with one motive in common - to bind the Word of God, constrain its distribution, and restrict its influence.

However, as Paul wrote 2000 years ago, **the word of God is not bound**. It just can't be done.

Conclusion

Theodore Beza, the 16th century Swiss theologian, wrote, "The Bible is an anvil that has broken many hammers." These words are proven true when we consider that many people, empires and governments throughout the ages have tried to destroy, extinguish, suppress and discredit the Bible, yet it survives and continues to flourish.

It is just impossible to put God or His word in a box, or destroy it in any way, or make it null and void.

Reference

Abarim Publications: <https://www.abarim-publications.com/DictionaryG/I/I-u-om.html>