

An alleged contradiction

- “Alleged” – the Bible does not contradict itself
 - It is written by God (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 - God is all-knowing (cf. Psalm 147:5)
- Many have proposed contradictions
 - Lists composed by unbelievers can be found in abundance
 - Ezekiel 20:25 is one such passage
- What is the “contradiction”?
 - Verse 25 has God saying, “Moreover, I gave them statutes that were not good and rules by which they could not have life”
 - Just above, he says his rules would give life (20:11)
 - Paul says, “So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.” (Romans 7:12)
 - Did God give the people something that wasn’t good? (cf. Matthew 7:11; James 1:17)

Explaining Ezekiel 20:25-26

- The context of the chapter
 - The elders of Israel come to inquire of the Lord through Ezekiel (1)
 - God says he will not be inquired of by them (2-3)
 - Ezekiel is to tell the elders of the abominations of the generations that came before and how they rejected God’s word (4-29)
 - This generation is following in the footsteps of their fathers (30-32)
 - He is punishing them for their wickedness, but he will restore them and be king over them (33-44)
- The rules that God gave to the people *are* good
 - So said Paul in his inspired writings (Romans 7:12)
 - So said God (20:11)
 - David praised the goodness of God’s word (Psalm 19:7-11)
- How can it be said that he gave them rules that were *not* good?
 - Remember, Ezekiel is telling them about the many rejections of God’s rules by the previous generations (20:8, 13, 16, 21, 23-24)
 - They rejected God, so God allowed them to walk after their own way
 - The “not good rules” were the rules of men (20:18)
 - It is said that “God gave them” because he allowed them to walk after them (Psalm 81:12; Romans 1:28)
- How can it be said that God defiled them?
 - God’s people are meant to be holy, not defiled (Leviticus 11:44)
 - In the same way as before, “God defiled them” by allowing them to defile themselves
 - “in their offering up all their firstborns” refers to offering their children to false gods (20:31)
 - God commanded them *not* to do this (Leviticus 18:21)