

may deal with particular matters with which we have no contact whatever, and therefore it is very hard to convey the idea of them to us. If a person is colorblind it would be very difficult to explain to him the difference between red and green and yellow. One might point out that one of them is darker than another but this would not necessarily mean that they would appear darker to him. As a matter of fact, on a photograph in black and white, often colors which appear darker to our eyes appear lighter in the black and white reproduction. Dark and light is only one aspect, the specific aspect of color is perfectly simple to the person who is aware of it but would be extremely difficult to convey to one who had no experience of it. Many concepts which the Lord might desire to convey to us, are difficult because of our lack of experience related to them. This is one of the great difficulties underlying the understanding of the Word of God.

A very special difficulty that enters in is the problem of the preservation of God's revelation. The Lord gave the revelation to many men over a period of some thousands of years. The very latest portion of it to be written is almost two thousand years ago, and none of the original manuscripts are in our hands today. The copies that we have show a few variations at particular points. There are thousands of variations dealing with near matters of orthography, but variations that make a difference to the thought are comparatively few and yet they are far from being non-existent. This problem of preservation seems to some to introduce a great element of complexity. It at least introduces this, that examination of manuscript evidence can be a vital factor in determining what is the Word of God in relation to particular verses.

Personally I feel that the fact that we have a certain amount of manuscript variation is actually a help rather than a hindrance in our understanding of the Word of God. In view of the nature of words and in view of the lack of the failure of so many people to understand exactly what this nature is, it is very tempting to us to take individual sentences from the Word of God and to try to press them to the point where we squeeze out of them