

a charge of negative electricity. In other words because it does not have the ~~negative~~ electrons in it. They are in the minus sign. We've changed the meaning and kept the sign. Anybody who did not know that fact reading --- would be completely confused. Language by its very nature is not precise. You have to say more than one sentence. You have to compare. There is always a limit to the degree of precision. you can reach.

The idea that there were certain original MSS which we don't have today which had the magic words in them and those are the exact precise words, and if we had those we would have the precise Word of God, is an awful lot better than the idea that says, Well, you can practically make it mean anything you want-- a sort of dynamic inspiration. It is far better but I don't think it is very satisfactory.

We believe that the Bible is inerrant. By that we don't mean that these words were absolutely precise so that you can take any three words and get precise meaning out of them. We mean that this writing taken as a whole and studied and compared and examining the meaning of the words and of the sentence, that the conclusion that is reasonably arrived at with such an investigation is a conclusion which will be without error. Therefore it is not so tremendously important exactly what each letter was in the original. There may be cases where it means a great deal and cases where it doesn't.

Of course when you say that immediately an objection is raised that Jesus said "not one jot or tittle shall disappear from the law until all is fulfilled." By the law he meant the whole Pentateuch. You might take it very properly as meaning the whole OT, but certainly at least the Pentateuch. Not one jot nor one tittle shall disappear from it. What did He mean by that statement? If by the jot you mean the yodh, the Hebrews very early began inserting vowel letters-- waw and yodh--to indicate long vowels. Then after many centuries they introduced the habit of putting dots above or below to indicate vowels. Once they did that they don't need the marks for the long vowels. They really don't because the other mark is quite sufficient for the purpose.

But they keep on writing them and the scribes were rather free in inserting or omitting these vowel marks. So I wouldn't be surprised if you could find thousands of cases in the OT where the use of yodhs and waws would differ among MSS very very greatly. The scribes would not put in more than a certain number in a word. One scribe might put them in a different place than the other.

So certainly Jesus did not mean to say every little jot (the yodh), every little mark in the original will continue forever and we will never have any question of where they are. They have greatly changed in the course of the ages. But in most cases they do not much affect the thought. So that is clearly not what he meant that these MSS would be preserved absolutely. I think there is no doubt that what Jesus meant was that the meaning that is expressed by the OT, the meaning is true and will always be true. If it's a prediction, the prediction is fulfilled. You might say