

# ***Common Misconceptions***

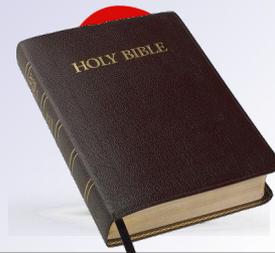
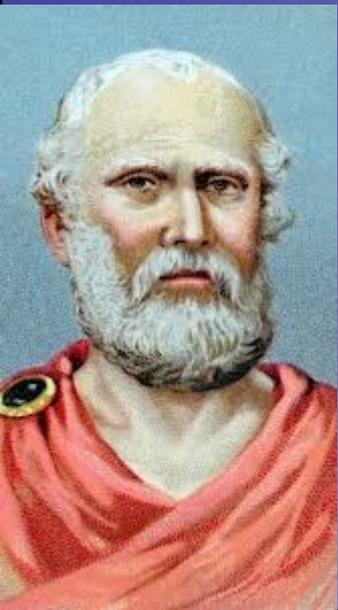


# Common Misconceptions

- *Tithing*
- *Cultural Depictions*
- *Beloved Biblical Wisdom*

T or **F** The Bible teaches us, “Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools, because they have to say something.”

- Actually, that was Plato...  
... but that was also an easy one

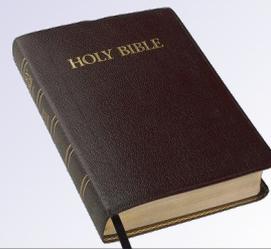
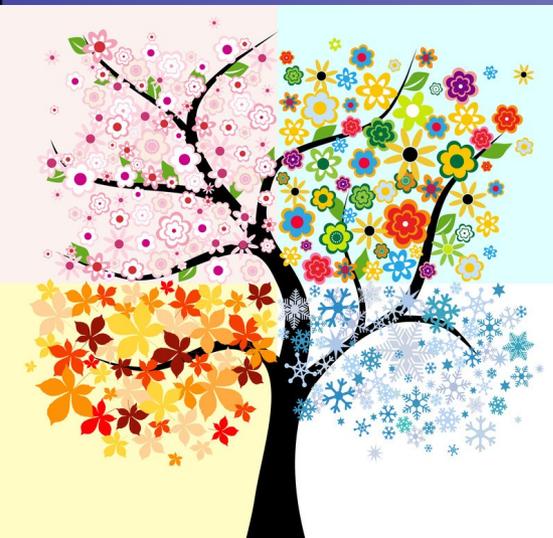


# ***Beloved Biblical Wisdom***

- There are *tons* of sayings or concepts that are commonly misattributed to the Bible
  - So let's take a quiz to see how many things you can correctly attribute—which of these are Biblical??

**Y** or N “To everything there is a season.”

- This comes from Ecclesiastes 3:1 *ff*—  
“There is a time for everything,  
and a season for every activity under heaven:  
a time to be born and a time to die,  
a time to plant and a time to uproot,  
a time to kill and a time to heal,  
a time to tear down and a time to build,  
a time to weep and a time to laugh,  
a time to mourn and a time to dance,  
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,  
a time to embrace and a time to refrain,  
a time to search and a time to give up,  
a time to keep and a time to throw away,  
a time to tear and a time to mend,  
a time to be silent and a time to speak,  
a time to love and a time to hate,  
a time for war and a time for peace.” (NIV)

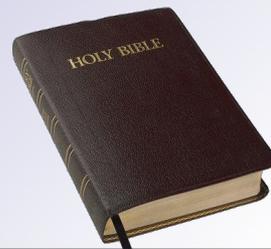


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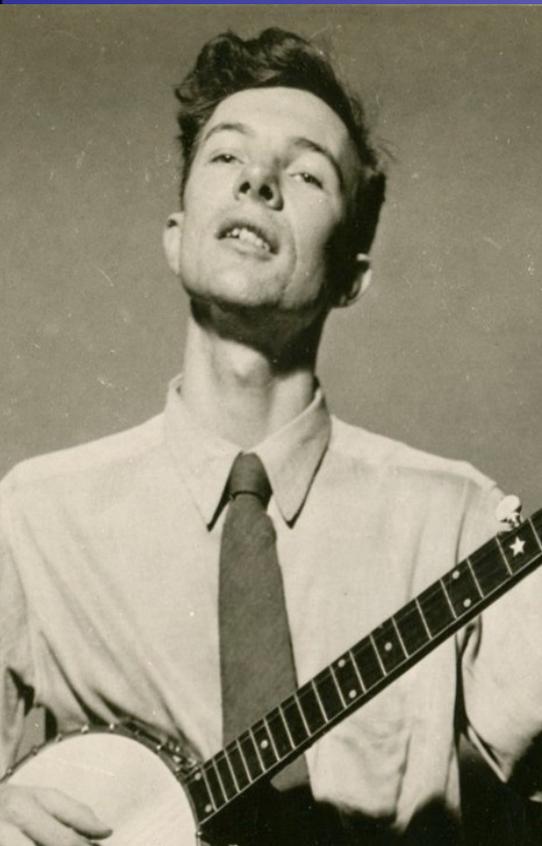
**Y** or N “To everything there is a season.”

- This comes from Ecclesiastes 3:1 *ff*—  
“There is a time for everything,  
and a season for every activity under heaven”
- So what does that *mean*?
  - Someone that I know has often used this section of Scripture to mean that “Everything that you want to do is acceptable to do, if it's the right time” —is *that* what this section is saying?



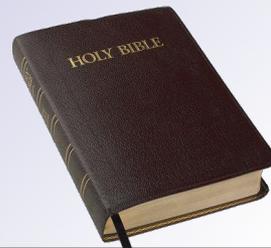
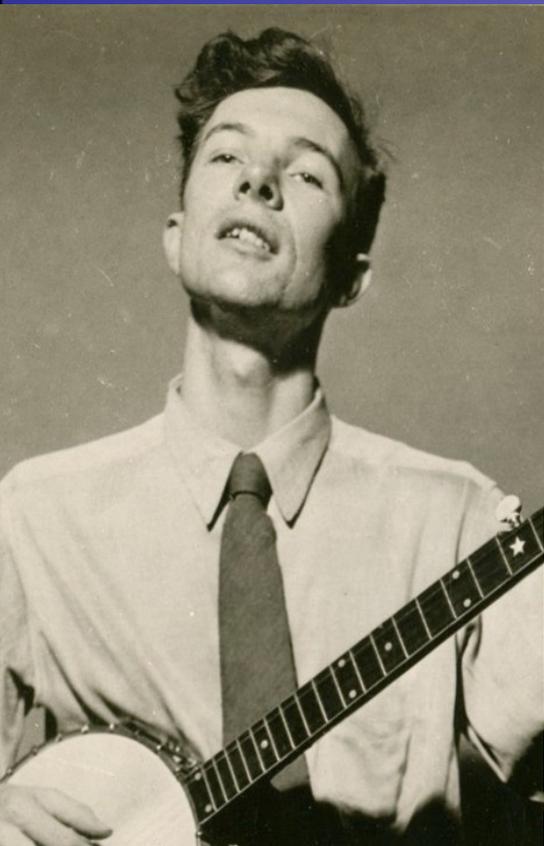
# *Beloved Biblical Wisdom*

- Funky little teaching moment...
  - In 1959, folk singer Pete Seeger wrote a popular song called “Turn! Turn! Turn!” based on this text that was later turned into a hit by The Byrds in 1965
    - It was intended as an anti-war song, and though it followed the section from Proverbs almost verbatim, the song did change the text a little bit
      - Seeger dropped two couplets (“a time to search and a time to give up” and “a time to be silent and a time to speak”)



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      - Seeger dropped two couplets and then in the last stanza, he changed the final couplet from “a time for war and a time for peace” (quoted earlier in the song) to “a time for peace, I swear it’s not too late...” (suggesting that maybe there *isn’t* ever “a time for war” or, at the very least, that we should focus on peace and not assume that *this* is a “time for war” all of which suggests that we can often use Bible verses—especially poetical sections—to mean pretty much whatever we *want* them to mean...)

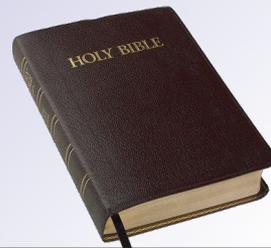


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Y or **N** “This too shall pass.”

- In 1993, outgoing Bears coach Mike Ditka quoted this in his press conference, saying, “Scripture tells you that all things shall pass” (and then repeated the phrase, “This too shall pass” throughout his speech)
  - But that's not from the Bible at all (the closest that we have linguistically is maybe Matthew 24:35, where Jesus says, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away,” or 1 John 2:17, “The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever,” etc.)



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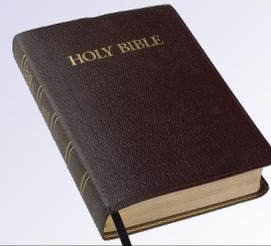
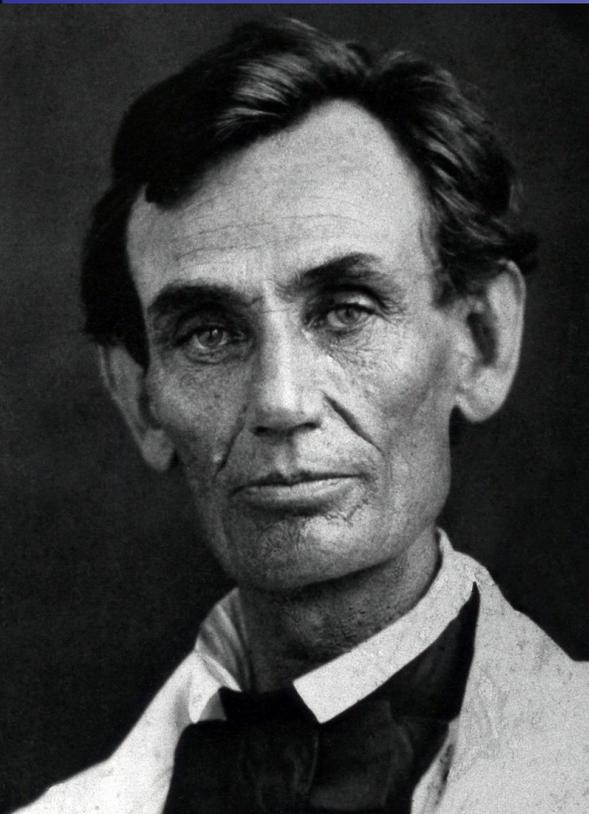
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  - But that's not from the Bible at all—though there is at least some historical precedent for the phrase
    - In an 1859 speech, Abraham Lincoln used the phrase as part of an anecdote:

“It is said an Eastern monarch once charged his wise men to invent him a sentence to be ever in view, and which should be true and appropriate in all times and situations. They presented him the words, 'And this, too, shall pass away'...”

(i.e.; during turbulent times, it's always healthy to remember that nothing lasts forever—neither the *good* things nor the *bad* things)

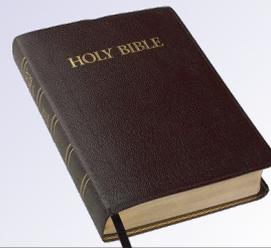
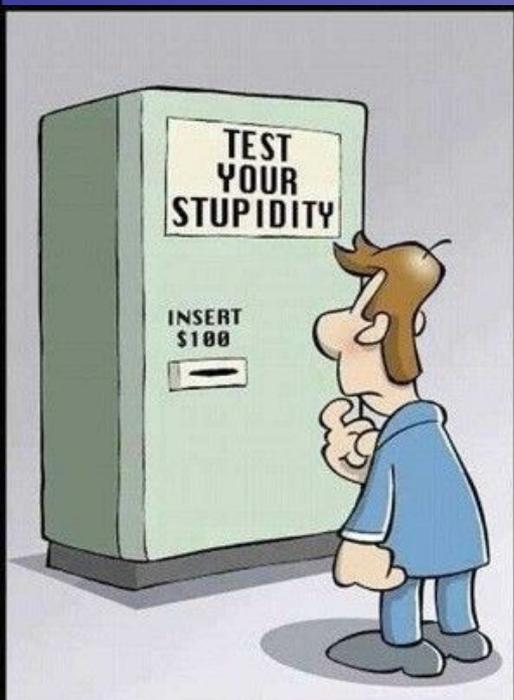


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Y or **N** “A fool and his money are soon parted.”

- This was written in 1557 by poet Thomas Tusser in his book, *A Hundreth Good Pointes of Husbandrie* (NOTE: Tusser is the same guy who gave us “April showers bring May flowers” and “a rolling stone gathers no moss”)  
(Though that last one, he pirated and translated from an Latin phrase written by Desiderius Erasmus earlier in that same century)

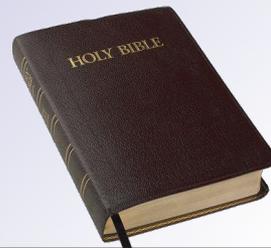
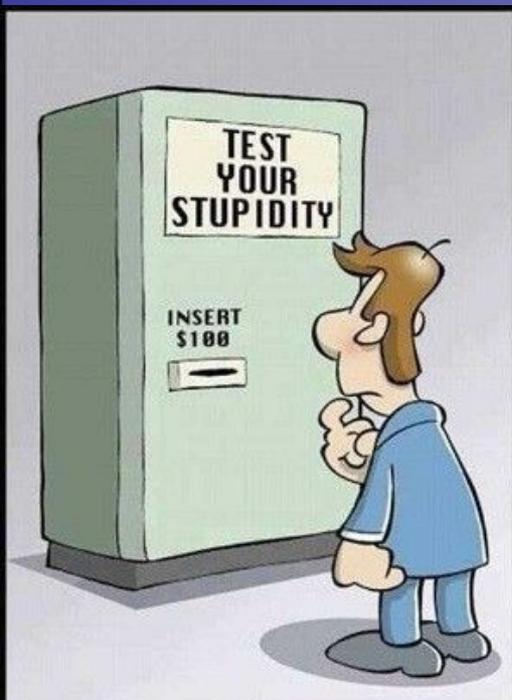


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- Still, what does the Bible warn about fools and their resources in verses such as Proverbs 21:20?
- And what does the Bible say about resources stored up here on Earth in general in verses such as Proverbs 23:4-5 or Matthew 6:19-20?
  - So this 1557 quote is more or less still *Biblical*, right?



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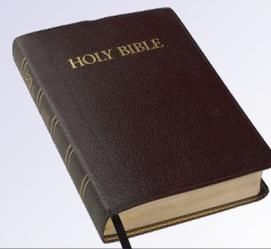
Y or **N** <sup>-ish</sup> “All things work together for good.”

- Okay, yes, these words *do* come from Romans 8:28 but by taking them out of their context this way, this phrase crucially changes their meaning—
  - “We know that **all things work together for good** to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (KJV)

ALL THINGS WORK  
TOGETHER FOR GOOD



with CHRISTIAN BERDAHL from SHEPHERD'S CALL MINISTRY

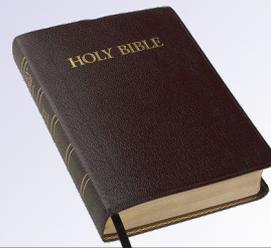


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  - “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (KJV)
  - “We know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” (NASB)
    - How many crucial differences do you see between the full Bible quote and the oversimplification?
      - Does the Bible teach that everything in life ultimately works for our own good?



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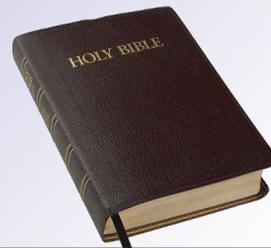
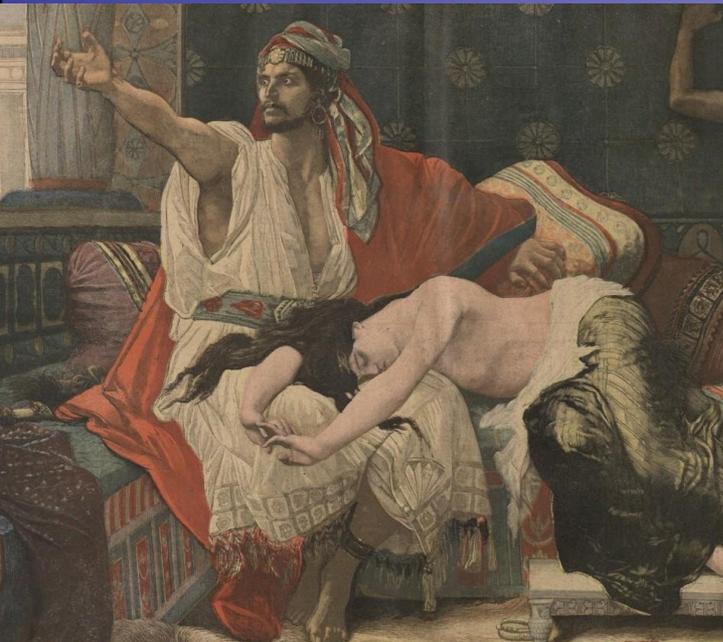
- There are *tons* of sayings or concepts that are commonly misattributed to the Bible
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Y or **N** “It is better to cast your seed in the belly of a whore than to spill it out on the ground.”

- This is a famous but rather cynical saying that came out of the Catholic reading of Genesis 38—specifically the story of Onan, who spilled his seed onto the ground when having sex with Tamar

(NOTE: Within Catholicism, “Onanism” is the sin of wasting precious sperm through masturbation or *coitus interruptus*—which is why most forms of contraception are considered to be sin)

(NOTE<sup>2</sup>: But please read Genesis 38:6-10 (and for background on that Middle Eastern tradition, you can read Deuteronomy 25:5-6))



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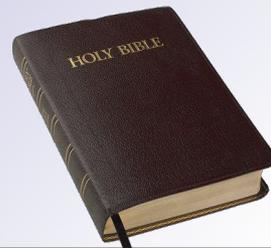
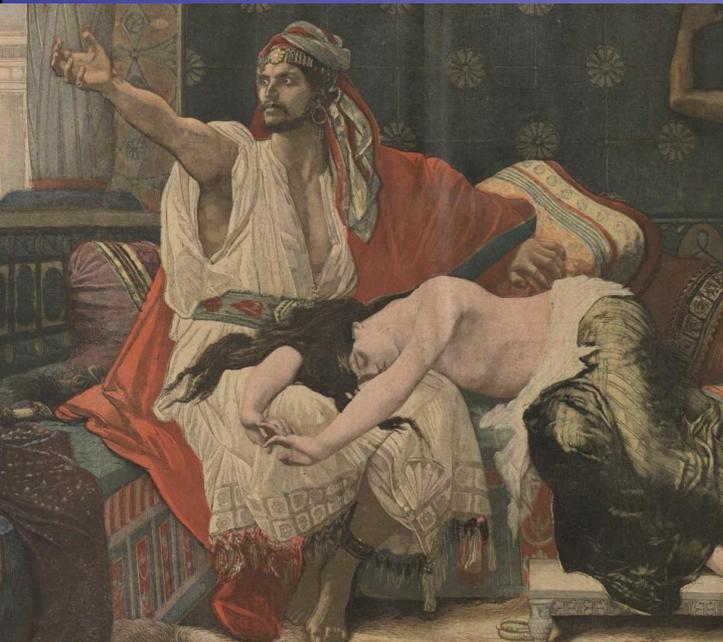
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(NOTE<sup>2</sup>: But please read Genesis 38:6-10—what was Onan's sin here? Was it really that he spilled semen, or that he had no problem repeatedly sleeping with his brother's attractive widow, so long as he didn't actually have to produce an heir that would someday end up taking the lion's share of his own inheritance?)



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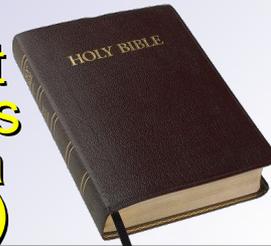
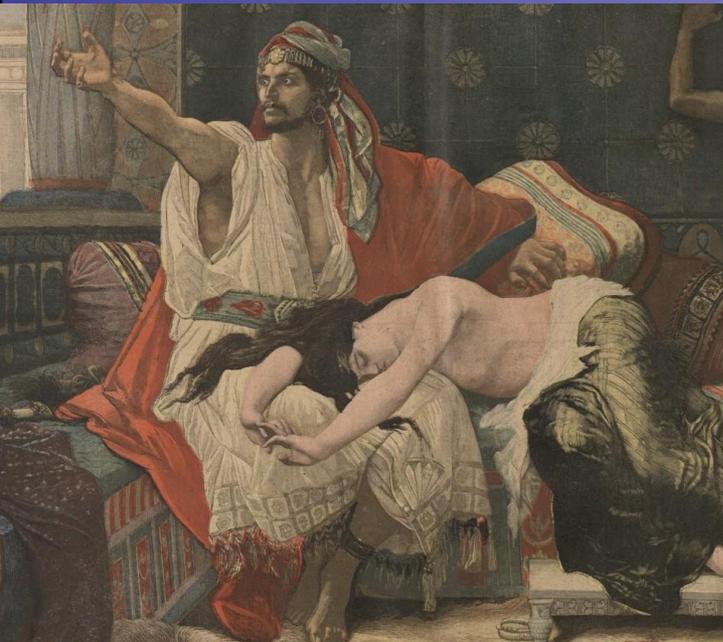
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(the “whore” part comes in later in the story, when Tamar disguises herself as a prostitute so that Judah would unknowingly sleep with her to produce the heir that his sons couldn't or wouldn't—which is why people argue that sleeping with a whore was better than spilling semen)



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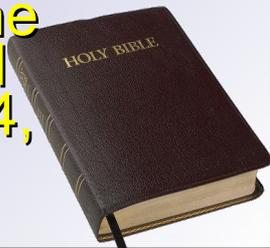
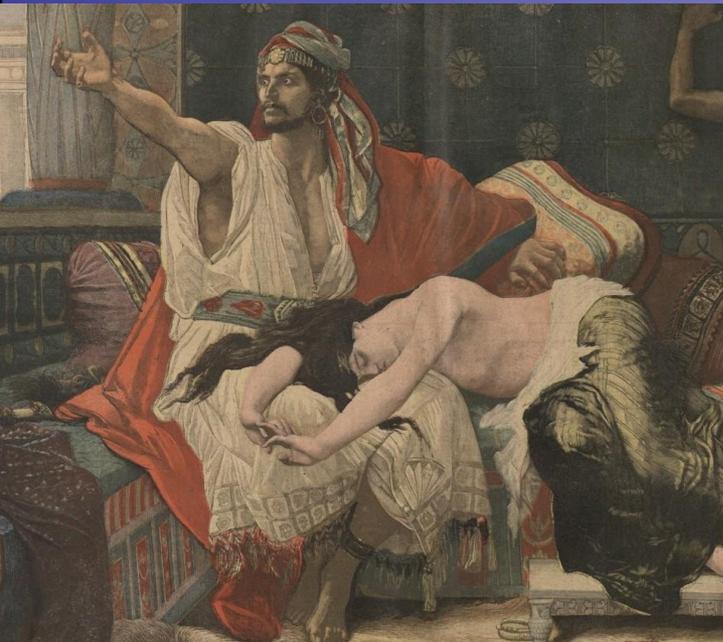
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(NOTE<sup>3</sup>: FYI—the sinful part of masturbation isn't in the spilling of semen, but rather that we're indulging sexual fantasizing rather than the healthy marital sexuality designed by God—check out verses such as Hebrews 13:4, 1 Corinthians 6:15-20, etc.)

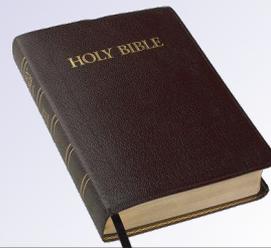
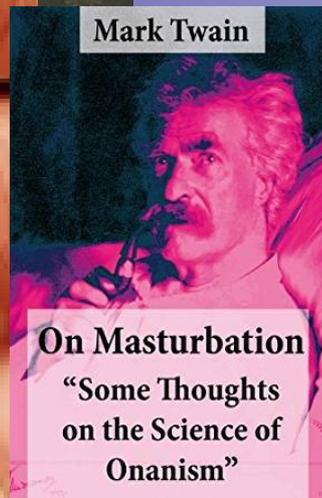
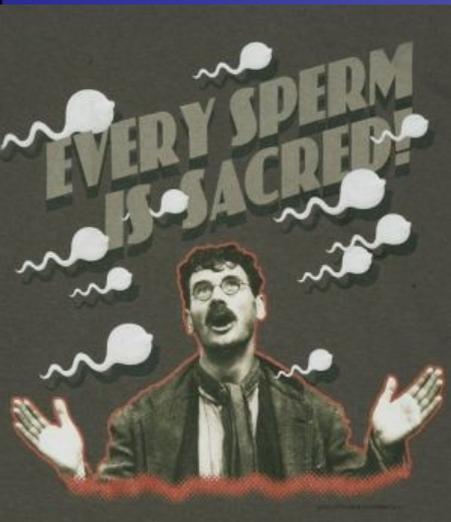


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- This is a famous but rather cynical saying that came out of the Catholic reading of Genesis 38
- This misinterpretation may not seem like a big deal to you, but it is to the 1.2 billion Catholics in the world
  - It's also a big deal to the billions of *non*-Christians in the world who view the general condemnation of spilling semen as ridiculous (including Mark Twain, who lectured and wrote on the subject as part of his ongoing, scathing indictment of organized religion's inability to actually be familiar with its own religious texts—kinda suggesting a rationale for this class...)

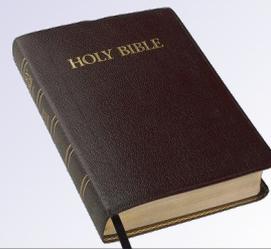


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- People could be quoting from Isaiah 22:13, though this drops off the context that makes it make sense—  
“The Lord, YAHWEH Almighty, called you on that day to weep and to wail, to tear out your hair and put on sackcloth. But see, there is joy and revelry, slaughtering of cattle and killing of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine! 'Let us eat and drink,' you say, 'for tomorrow we die!'" (NIV)  
(i.e.; instead of repenting because the day of judgment was coming, the people wanted to have one last bash before it was all over)

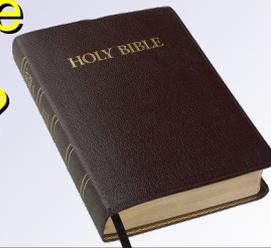


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- But it's a *direct* quote from Ecclesiastes 8:15—  
“So I commended pleasure, for there is nothing good for a man under the sun except to eat and to drink and to be merry, and this will stand by him in his toils throughout the days of his life which God has given him under the sun.” (NASB)
  - But in the context here, Solomon's wisdom isn't suggesting that we should party, either—he just got finished saying that he'd realized that people don't get what they think they “deserve” in life, and is just about to conclude that even the wisest men can't figure the world out, so why not just enjoy what comfort you've got in life while you can?

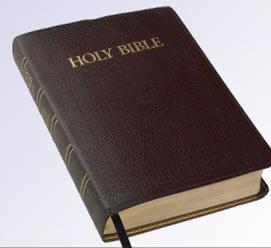


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  - But even then, the whole point of the book is that Solomon was walking through all of the possible perspectives on life, and successively finding each of them to be empty and ultimately pointless without the basis of our obedient relationship with God—so *he's* not recommending even the “just enjoy life” conclusion, either

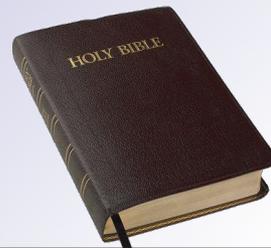


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  - So what if Isaiah had been alluding to what Solomon had written earlier...?



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- But it's a *direct* quote from Ecclesiastes 8:15
- So with either verse you point to, the Bible is actually saying the *exact opposite* of our common, modern usage of it to support general partying and merriment (and no, it doesn't have anything whatsoever to do with Christmas—it's just that in America, we associate the word “merry” pretty much solely with Christmas, so that's what most of the internet connects this chunk of Scripture to...)

