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A STROLL THROUGH THE BIBLE

A LAYMAN'S PERSPECTIVE, INSIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

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"I had no idea how you would approach your subject and beliefs but I found it inviting and liked your folksy and congenial tone. It is indeed a stroll which meanders as do our thoughts, conversations and daydreams often move (all the while imparting relevant occurrences, specific details, people with their particular foibles and grand gestures...)"

Victoria Guarino

"I believe your book will be welcomed and used as an accessory to serious study. You give added insight to God's word. Great job."

Ray Hermann, D.Min.
The Outlaw Bible Student

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DEDICATION

TO MY PARENTS, WHO I MISS VERY MUCH

Thank you for the love and moral guidance that you illustrated throughout your life. I'm sure I was a handful at times, but you were always gracious and humble and allowed me to follow my dreams. Your laughter and sense of humor still rings through me daily. I'll be knocking on the Pearly Gates one day and I look forward to our reunion.



Ann (Sabastianna Spina) Pierro and Nicholas Pierro, author's parents

Cover Painting: Hebrew Symbols of Faith

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INTRODUCTION

OK, LET'S KIBITZ!

Regardless of the fact that atheist do not believe in God, and even though the Bible was written thousands of years ago, unbelievers must acknowledge that the Old and New Testaments display cosmological knowledge and medical wisdom, among other things, that quantifies it thousands of years ahead of the modern era.

In this book, I will compare Biblical scripture, prophecies and commonsense instructions to what man, in all his wisdom, has learned, followed or subjected us to—illustrating how advanced in knowledge the authors of the *Tanakh* (Jewish Old Testament) and the New Testament were.

Of course I am going to throw in a few observations, questions and sprinkle in my religious background and history so, please be patient and kind.

For the most part, I have used the King James Version (KJV) Bible for scripture reference and may have edited text to read easier, get a point across or to save space. Also, a few scripture verses may repeat due to similar topics.

The KJV Bible was first published in 1611 AD for the Church of England and is not protected by a copyright and is considered Public Domain—which allows me to publish their scripture without permission, or being sued.

Although old English is a tougher read, many Biblical scholars and theologians prefer using the KJV because in the process of translating it to modern English publishers have changed the wording, and/or, phasing (which may alter the interpretation) allowing them to copyright and protect their Bibles.

Every once in a while I will use the name Yeshua, which is Jesus in Hebrew and means salvation, and Tanakh, which is what Christians call the Old Testament, in respect for our Jewish brothers and sisters. Jesus and his disciples, more then likely, spoke Hebrew, Aramaic and/or Greek with a Galilean

dialect. We will also delve into Biblical history, archaeological discoveries, and with permission, other author's published accounts of some of the above. Obviously, I cannot include everything, so read your Bible, do your research, and scan the web to find answers to questions you may have.

Fellow travelers: unbelievers, baby and mature Christians, Jews searching for their Messiah, and open-minded spiritual souls looking for answers...I know you will all enjoy this book. It is a short read, easy on the eyes and you should find it entertaining and informative. After all, it's based on the Bible.

The topics may jump around a bit, but I'm trying to make this book interesting and fun to read. I've also included photos of my 2019 tour of Israel.

LET'S START STROLLING

Even though I have always been a believer, there are many things I struggle with in the Bible that often test my faith...the idea of a supreme being for one. I know many of you have struggled as well. With the help of this book we will stroll together, ask questions of faith, and search for answers that will, hopefully, bless us for an eternity.



Jewish cemetery, eastside of The Temple Mount and Old Jerusalem, Israel

When reading about ancient civilizations and religions, Biblical tales and legends, fables and myths, we learn that many have similar foundational stories: the formation of the world: the creation of man: a global flood that devastated humanity: and, of course, gods from Heaven. My instinct tells me, with that many civilizations recording very similar stories, there is a chance that they are based on something other than fables and myths and may be emanating from the same source or shared experiences.

As a Judeo/Christian I believe the Bible is inspired by God. And, after reading this book, maybe a few of the unbelievers will acknowledge that the people who wrote the Bible were at least a few thousand years, in knowledge and commonsense, ahead of the "Dark Ages," let alone the, so called, "Enlightened Age."

If I have told you earthly things, and you believe not, how shall you believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?(John 3:12)



Placing a prayer at the Western Wall, Old Jerusalem, Israel

CHAPTER ONE:

SEARCHING FOR MEANING

IN THE BEGINNING...

When I was a youngster I attended Sunday school at St. John's The Evangelist Catholic Church in the little seaside town of Swampscott, Massachusetts. One Sunday after mass my friends and I headed for Sunday school, which was in another building, through a hallway, next to the church altar. As I was about to enter the classroom, a nun, I don't remember her name, said while padding my head, "Richard, one day you'll make a fine priest."

Even though I was about 10 years old that simple statement and memory has stayed with me all these years. It was as if she anointed me with a blessing: "Go forth, be a good boy, man, and Christian." I must admit, I haven't lived up to that nun's declaration as well as I could have, and as I age, I am beginning to envision a set of foot prints where I've been jumping on and off that straight and narrow path. With life's many temptations and cavalier secular beliefs, hopping on for good is the hard part.

Something deep inside of me knows that what happened to the Hebrew nation of old, the Biblical accounts, archeological discoveries, multiple miracles and all the prophecies coming true, have to be something other than pure fiction and fables.

SELF REFLECTION

Being a bit of a self-centered, narcissistic lad growing up, I thought, as the famous line goes, "*God was my copilot and Jesus was my wingman.*" The world would exclaim my artistic gifts and creative talents as the second coming of Leonardo da Vinci. Of course, my questionable talents, from high school through Vesper George School of Art, until today, have been marginal at best. After awhile, I realized I wasn't as talented as I believed. Plus, I'd have to work harder to develop my artistic talents and flesh-out my social skills as well.

Although I was well liked and had friends across many cliques, I didn't have

many friends to confide in, or to critique me, or my work. And now, looking back, that carried into my early adulthood as well.

I was married for all of 3 years, 1972-75, and never remarried. I came close a few times but always remembered the scripture verse, Matthew 19:9, [...] *whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.*

Entering marriage at twenty-two, I was way too young, plus, my wife was my first conquest, and as a typical guy, I wanted to add a few notches to my belt to satiate my ego. So much for not committing adultery! I regret not waiting until I was mature enough and settled in business, as well as, in my faith. I robbed myself of a family that I always thought I would have.

After my divorce, I read one of Erich Von Daniken's books called *Chariots of the Gods?* which is based on the theory of alien astronauts interacting with Earth's ancient civilizations and introducing our ancestors to extraterrestrial beings, advanced technology and knowledge, and perhaps morality and religion. After reading that book, as you could imagine, I had a lot of questions to work through, so, I decided to read and compare it to the Bible.

In the first book of the Old Testament, I began to question one of the first scriptures that I read, Genesis 1:26, which talks about creating Adam and Eve, and it reads, *Then God said, "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness [...]."* My Catholic Sunday school lessons did not prepare me for multiple gods, or even reading the Bible, to tell you the truth.

I thought, maybe Erich Von Daniken was on to something. So I started re-searching the Bible and jotted down notes on its pages and underlined sentences that I thought had questionable content and needed research. All the while, just the thought of marking up the Bible felt sacrilegious and a sure-fire way to anger the Big Guy.

And then a funny thing happened, as I read through and marked-up the Old

and New Testaments: I began to believe scripture more so then *Chariots of the Gods?* The Old Testament stories came alive with Adam and Eve, Noah and the Ark, Abraham and Isaac, and all the Old Testament Patriarchs, prophets and the many women of faith like: Rebekah and Sarah, Rachel and Leah, just to name a few.

And then the New Testament, a short read, was also full of inspirational stories, parables and lessons of Jesus and of His apostles. Just being with Jesus must have been spellbinding, and to listen to His sermons and witness His miracles must have been breathtaking. I've been to Israel three times and visited many of the places that Jesus lived, taught and walked, and it was easy to imagine being an Apostle or follower blessed with His presence and insights into the prophecies of old.

Over the years I've waffled back and forth a few times, aliens or Jesus? UFO's or God? I find it helps me to read a few verses or chapters in the Bible, or other books of faith, every night in bed. By doing so, my mind stays focused on the teachings and lessons in the Bible and strengthens by faith.

I always believed that by the grace of God, faith in Jesus and being baptized in his name, along with the knowledge that Jesus died for our sins, guaranteed us a spot in Heaven. Many people, including myself, thought once saved our future sins are forgiven as well.

The more I read the Bible and the Book of Revelation it becomes obvious to me that after our baptism into the family, our deeds from that point, good and bad, will be accounted on the day of reckoning.

Jesus' parable of the wealthy man, Matthew 25:14-30, that gave three of his workers treasure to take care of until he returned, helps prove my point. The treasure represents the knowledge we as Christians have of Jesus and how we are saved. If we don't spread the Word, love our neighbor or increase the kingdom in some way, our faith is not a testament to the glory of God. Faith without works is dead.

When the wealthy man returned and asked for his treasure, the first two workers said they had invested it well and gave him back two to three times what they were given. The third worker buried the treasure he received and returned the same amount. The wealthy man, who represents God and the treasure, Jesus, reprimanded him for not increasing his treasure, took it and gave it to the first worker, banishing the third worker to the outer darkness where they'll be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Now I've always thought of myself as one of the fruitful workers, but while driving down to Florida from Boston one year, I started thinking how my faith was always being sidetracked by things in life that I thought were so important. I turned off the car radio and said a prayer asking God to increase my faith and to help me become a bountiful worker. A few minutes later I began singing songs of praise that made me thankful that I found a place to tune-out the world and start thinking about my faith and where it was going.

Now, I am not a religious scholar or a professional writer, just a guy that reads a bit and is curious enough to ask a few questions. Over the years I have done a little research, read a variety of books, including multiple translations of the Bible and have always been drawn to the love of Jesus and all that He represents.

I am also working from a lifetime of admittedly, limited knowledge, a bit of intuition, and a lot of guidance from the Lord. So please cut me some slack as I outline a layman's perspective of God's grace, religion, and a few affiliated and interesting facts found in and outside of the Bible—along with a little biographical information on yours truly.

CHAPTER TWO:

SEARCHING FOR GOD

I NEED A SIGN

Eventually, anyone truly searching will ask God for a sign—some proof that he is real. One evening, about forty years ago, I found myself in that situation and the next morning as I walked to my car I noticed the windshield wipers were up, as if someone was about to wash the windshield. I looked about for the prankster and saw only parked cars and no one else in sight. I wondered if this was the sign I had asked for, but shrugged it off and thought someone would own up to it, but to date one ever has.

Nine years later, in 1988, after reading one of the books in the bible, I prayed for guidance and asked God to send me someone to study the Bible with, and to help me better understand the scriptures.

The very next day I got a call from an illustrator who wanted to show me his art portfolio. I had time that day, so I invited him to my office. A few hours later I was looking at his illustrations of Jesus and other Christian themes. He was very a good illustrator, but I had no work for him. So we talked about religion for a while and parted ways. An hour later he called back and invited me to a Bible study, and I said, "Ok, when?" He said, "this evening."

That night I was studying the Bible, less than twenty-four hours after my prayer request, and with ten to twelve wonderful people, including my new friend, Eddie, the illustrator.

This group was affiliated with the Boston Church of Christ, a non-denominational church, that met at member houses once or twice during the week, and Sunday services at the original Boston Gardens in downtown Boston. The parishioner's median age seemed to be around thirty-five and the young crowd for the Sunday Garden services numbered close to two-thousand.

It was a very exciting time for me. I studied the Bible, went to multiple Bible study sessions each week, and eventually got baptized in a pond behind one of the member houses. If you never experienced the feeling and emotions of truly believing and getting baptized, you are missing out on something wonderful. When I came up out of the water after being totally immersed, I felt born again; a follower of Jesus, clothed in the mercy, grace and glory of God, sin-free, unblemished and filled with the Holy Spirit—it was a feeling I'll never forget.

That lasted about five years. For one reason or another I felt the church, in one area, was heading in the wrong direction, so I dropped out of the church and began to check out other denominations, including the local Catholic church where my family were members since the 1890's. I didn't find a church or sermons as passionate as in the Boston Church of Christ, so I stopped attending church services and slowly began to fall away back into the world, until I met Dean Truog.

A TWENTIETH CENTURY APOSTLE

I met Dean at a Swampscott Rotary meeting. He was a new member, and he and his wife Dorothy just moved into town from France. Dean was a tall, lanky, loveable man with dark hair and a goatee, and Dorothy was a petite and humble inquisitive lady. They both committed their lives to the Lord in high school and maintained that love until their death.

Dean and Dorothy lived and worked many years in France for an international Christian group called The Navigators and brought many families and dignitaries to Christ. The three of us became fast friends; we shared a passion for Jesus, tennis, cooking and hosting dinner parties, and were caregivers to elderly parents.

Dean started a Bible study at his home with two mutual friends and myself, and the four of us spent many hours reading and studying the Bible, surrounded by hundreds of books. Dean had a very impressive library that must have included every known book written about religion, philosophy

and Biblical history, and he, more than likely, read them all.

One year, Dean invited me to attend the National Prayer Breakfast, in Washington, D.C. The Navigators were involved in putting it together, and I was lucky enough to attend a couple of years and got to see President Clinton, Reverend Billy Graham, many Christian and Washington celebrities and people of different faiths and nationalities from around the world.

The first time I went to the National Prayer Breakfast was 1994, the year of Newt Gingrich's "Contract with America." Talk about being excited, I was going to our nation's capital where President Clinton was the headline speaker at the Prayer Breakfast, tour the monuments and war memorials, and go to the Congress to watch Newt, the Speaker of the House, and his new Republican majority in action.

Dean and I arrived a day early in D.C. He had meetings planned so I checked into my room, freshened up a bit, and ran out the hotel door on my way to see the monuments, memorials, and the U.S. Congress. As I walked toward the Lincoln Memorial, I noticed a beautiful lady about forty yards ahead of me. Picking up my pace, hoping to catch up with her, I noticed that she was crossing the street and the light was about to change. As I ran across the street, hurrying to catch up, I jumped onto the curb and twisted my ankle so badly I almost cried. I came within three paces of meeting that lady, and there I was hopping around on one foot, in pain, watching her walk away. I looked up to the sky and laughed, here I was chasing a skirt and the good Lord reminded me, via a twisted ankle, why I was in Washington. So I mustered up my pride and hobbled over to a store and bought an Ace bandage, wrapped my ankle, and limped over to the monuments, memorials, and Congress—humbled.

And as luck would have it, President Clinton's motorcade passed by, just after I hobbled across the street near the Viet Nam War Memorial. He must have seen me hobbling because he smiled and waved as he passed by. How poetic is that?

After viewing the war memorials and a few hours watching Newt and the congress, from the congressional balcony, I was in so much pain that I took a taxi back to the hotel. My ankle was swollen and black and blue on both sides, and it was killing me—and then I remembered that my father and uncle always put iodine on bruises. They would use a brush or small paint roller to apply the iodine, sounds funny, but they swore by it. It didn't matter if it was a cut, bruise, scratch, itch, they'd cover the whole area affected, plus 6" north and south. So I had the taxi driver stop at a pharmacy and I bought a small bottle of iodine.

In my room I applied the iodine and rewrapped the Ace bandage, and when my roommate walked in I told him the story. After a good laugh, my roommate, who was a priest, said a healing prayer over my foot. The next morning, incredibly, I could walk on my foot without any pain. It was still black and blue on both sides of my ankle, but the swelling and pain were gone. Can I get an Amen for healing prayers and iodine!

The second time I went to the National Prayer Breakfast with Dean, I took my older cousin Tony and as we walked down the sidewalk I told him the story of twisting my ankle chasing after a woman. After a few chuckles we started crossing the street and as I stepped off the curb I stumbled, fell forward, rolling head over heels, and popped up to my feet unharmed. I looked at Tony and chuckled, "I guess God is reminding me to be good."

Looking back fondly at those days, I realized how much Dean helped me with my religious walk, not only in scripture, but also as a loving friend, and together with Dorothy they showed me how rewarding a family living as modern day disciples of Christ lived and presented themselves. Sadly, Jesus took Dean home a little earlier than we expected but I am sure he will greet his family and friends at the "Pearly Gates" with his trademark smile and angelic twinkle in his eyes.

CHAPTER THREE:

SEARCHING THE BIBLE

SCOTTY, BEAM ME UP

[...] God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness [...]

(Genesis 1:26)

This verse, along with the evolution/creation theory, is where most of us first questioned the validity of the Bible. Who are “us?” Are they gods or aliens? Is he talking to angels or a team of geneticists planning out the day’s agenda. Both choices conjure up a myriad of questions that will not be answered until one or the other shows up. This is where faith extends its spirit.

The U.S. government, in the summer of 2019, publically acknowledged that UFO’s are real. The national news media showed incredible videos of recent sightings. Over the years, military pilots have photographed many UFO’s some doing amazing maneuvers that are far beyond the realm of our technology but they were not allowed to comment or attest to it, until now.

Area 51, in Nevada, is a world famous, highly classified Air Force facility that has been at the center of the UFO debate ever since it was rumored a UFO crash site.

Now, I have not read Erich Von Daniken’s book, *Chariots of the Gods?*, for quite a while, and if I remember correctly he points out many of the same comparisons I’ll be citing from the Bible, so please forgive me if I tread on his well-thought-out and researched theories.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. (Genesis 1:27)

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Genesis 2:7)

There are 92 elements that occur naturally on Earth. The human body is made up of four major structural elements: oxygen, hydrogen, carbon and nitrogen, and accounts for 96.2% of the body's weight. The other 3.8% is composed of Common and Trace Elements. Most of the minerals in a human diet come from eating plants and animals or drinking water (askabiologist.asu.edu).

I believe in evolution to a point. I do not believe my ancestors came from a puddle of goo that was impregnated by a space rock. With today's technology, in-vitro fertilization is child's play, and with the advances in DNA, disease free designer babies may become commonplace in the near future. But, if all the geniuses in the world combined their talents to create a prototype human from scratch, it would not happen.

So, we are left with Aliens or God. If it were aliens they would know about DNA and would have been very capable of creating Adam and Eve in their own image, and if it was God, making something from nothing was not a problem—two humans to go, thank you very much! I fall in with our eternal Father who made the aliens also.

EVOLUTION VS CREATIONISM

In 2014, there was a wonderful debate sponsored by NPR, held at the Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky, called The Creationism vs. Evolution Debate, featuring best-selling Christian author Ken Ham and Emmy Award-winning educator Bill Nye. This debate received over 7 million hits online and although I thought Mr. Ham was more persuasive and well prepared neither speaker probably changed many minds.

In answer to that debate, Dr. Denis Lamoureux presented a third option, called "Beyond the 'creation vs. evolution' debate" sponsored by TEDxEdmonton, an independent TEDx Talks event that presents speakers on a vast array of topics.

He asked the audience, "Are there only two creditable positions when it comes to origin?" Rather than evolution vs. creation, science vs. religion, no God vs. God, Dr. Lamoureux informed the audience that he is an evangelical theologian who believes the Bible is the Word of God and is a creationist. At the same time he is an evolutionary biologist who believes the evidence for evolution is overwhelming and he is an evolutionist. Holding a PhD. In both disciplines, Dr. Lamoureux offers his views of how both ideologies can exist together.

He quotes Charles Darwin, "It seems to me absurd to doubt that man maybe an ardent theist (one who believes in a personal God) and an evolutionist." And points out that when Darwin wrote his autobiography and published his book *Origin of Species* he believed in a personal God.

Dr. Lamoureux says that evolution is a scientific theory and creation is a religious belief and over the past twenty years there have been many books published by worldwide scholars that show how it is possible to have a peaceful and truthful relationship between science and religion. And there are science and religion professors at prestigious universities like Oxford, Cambridge, Princeton and Harvard that also agree with that philosophy.

We need to understand that science is about observation, experiments, theory's and laws based on the physical; and religion is metaphysical (beyond the physical), where one uses intuition, reason and faith, and develops ultimate beliefs, philosophy and religion.

Dr. Lamoureux then broached the subject of "Intelligent Design," which he says has been manipulated and mangled by a group of American anti-evolutionist. Intelligent Design is not a scientific theory, it is a belief that beauty, complexity and functionality in nature points to an Intelligent Designer. This was Darwin's belief also, and then Dr. Lamoureux discussed DNA and all the scientific information from one cell which leads us to question does this reflect an amazing engineering mind and the reality of Intelligent Design?

Overall Dr. Lamoureux's message is to respect both principles; evolution and creationism, and I agree. There are many unanswered questions on both sides and that's where faith and theory step in to fill the metaphysical voids.

NEPHILIM, SONS OF GOD, GIANT MEN OF RENOWN

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they conceived children with them, the same became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown.

(Genesis 6:1-4)

Very interesting finding this in Genesis, let alone in the Bible. Sounds like the myths of the Greek Olympians could be based on the "men of renown" in the Bible. This must be where Erich Von Daniken's first theories on Aliens and UFOs were launched.

The Olympians were a race of immortal beings, a family of gods and goddesses, who lived on Mount Olympus in Greece. Many of the Olympian myths are amazing and some hard to comprehend. I'm sure that you're familiar with them and will recall: Zeus, king of the gods, Poseidon, god of the seas and Aphrodite, the goddess of love. As with all tall tales, the stories tend to grow larger than life, then again, they were immortal.

In the scripture above, Genesis 6:1-4, did God mean that He is spirit and man is flesh and after the immortal sons of God mated with the daughters of men their children were spirit and flesh? And God's spirit would not always be with man, so they would only live hundred and twenty years. Or did God mean, he is spirit and flesh and would not allow man to rejuvenate their flesh

by eating from the Tree of Life, use its medicinal leaves, or drink from the river of Life and live for eternity?

In the book of Genesis, the Bible says, Adam lived 930 years; Noah lived to 950 years; Abraham lived to 175; Isaac to 180 and Joseph lived to 110. It took awhile for the spirit of God's life giving-properties to wear off Adam and Eve, and all of their ancestors up until Noah, who averaged a life span of 900. Without the fruit of the Tree of Life and the water of the River of Life to rejuvenate their bodies and spirit, man's lifespan was reduced from an eternity to 120 years. So humans went from living forever to a life span that basically maxed out at 120.

I had an uncle that lived to be a super-centenarian (110 or older), he was one week shy of 111 when he passed, and he was very healthy and active until the last month of his life. He is the 93th oldest verified person to have lived since records have been kept; and there has been only one person recorded that lived to 120 and her name is Jeanne Calmest, from France. The spirit of God must have been with those super-centenarians. I know Uncle Tony was blessed.

In the following Tanakh scripture the giants were dying out and/or being overpowered, by the Israelites, under the protection of God.

And there we saw the giants (Nehalem), the sons of Anak, which come of the giants [...](Numbers 13:33)

And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man of great stature, whose fingers and toes were four and twenty, six on each hand, and six on each foot and he also was the son of the giant. (1 Chronicles 20:6)

And David put his hand in his bag, and took out a stone, and slung it, and struck the Philistine in his forehead, and the stone sunk into Goliath's forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. (1 Samuel 17:49)

For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants; behold his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits (13') was the length thereof, and four cubits (6') the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man. (Deuteronomy 3:11)

An ancient cubit is approximately 17.5 inches from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. My arm measured 19.5" and I am 6'1," the Israelis must have averaged 5'4"-5'6" in height and against a giant, eight feet or more, must have felt even shorter.

We have giants still with us.

1760-1806: Patrick Cotter O'Brien; 8'1"

1846-1888: Anna Haining Swan; 7'11"

1895-1922: Jane Bunford; 7'4"

1935-1957: Robert Wadlow; 8'11"

1926-1981: Don Koehler; 7'10"

1964-1982: Zeng Jinian; 7'11.5"

1982- : Brahim Takioullah; 8'.097"

1982- : Sultan Kosen; 8'2.8"

1982- : Sun Mingming; 7'9"

1998- : Kevin Bradford; 7'1"

(guinnessworldrecords.com)

CHAPTER FOUR:

GODLY KNOWLEDGE

BIBLICAL EVIDENCE

LIFE IS IN THE BLOOD

When lay people like myself read Leviticus 17:11 in the *Tanakh* (Old Testament), *For the life of the flesh is in the blood*, I have to laugh when I think that less than a couple hundred years ago doctors prescribed patients to be bloodletted. They would actually drain the ailing person of a pint, or more, of blood, and/or, apply bloodsucking leaches to cure the sick and ailing.

Bloodletting was first recorded around 3,000 years ago in Egypt, and reached its peak in the 19th century, that's only two hundred years ago. Charles II (1630-1685) and George Washington (1732-1799) died after copious amounts of bloodletting. (The History of Bloodletting, BCMJ, vol. 52, No. 1, January February 2010, Pages 12-14 Premise By Gerry Greenstone, M.D., bcmj.org).

Imagine the brightest minds in the medical field actually harming their patients rather than curing them. And to top it off, these doctors were, for the most part, educated religious people (many were rabbis, priests, monks and nuns) that knew and read the Bible, especially, once it became available, hot off the Gutenberg Press mid 15th century, A.D.—they, or their local rabbi or priest, should be aware of the biblical wisdom and medical advice listed in the *Tanakh* or Old Testament.

DNA, GOD'S BUILDING BLOCKS

In 1866, Gregor Mendel, who is known as the "Father of Genetics," was actually the first to suggest that characteristics are passed down from generation to generation. Five years later biochemist Friedrich Miescher identified "nuclein" which would become known as DNA; in 1881, Nobel Prize winner and German biochemist Albrecht Kossel, who is credited with naming DNA, isolated the five building blocks of DNA. In the late 1940's Oswald Avery realized DNA contained a human's genetic blueprint.

In 1953, James Watson and Francis Crick discovered the double-helix structure and in the year 2,000 a consortium of scientists completed a working draft of mapping 97 percent of the genetic instructions of the first human genome. (The History of DNA, Luna DNA, April 2019, lunadna.com)

In 1996 Dolly the sheep was the first mammal cloned from an adult cell after 277 attempts. In 1999, the first human chromosome was decoded and in 2003, "The Human Genome Project" was completed and included a 90% sequence of all three billion base pairs. (The History of DNA Timeline, DNA Worldwide, dna-worldwide.com)

Every human shares 99%-99.9% of his or her DNA with everyone else on the planet. Everything you wanted to know about yourself, locked up in a drop of DNA, and were afraid to ask: genetics, health, designer babies, cloning. One drop of whatever from your body holds the building blocks of life, billions of strands of our genetic markings, what are now call DNA—and hopefully the bloodlettors won't be tempted to drain a pint, unless it's used for analysis or a transfusion.

Life is in the blood! For an old book, supposedly compiled, by religious Neanderthals and zealots, I'd say that's very impressive, wouldn't you?

UNCLEAN, CLEAN & QUARANTINE

The four Bible verses below are very obvious examples of how the Israeli rules on cleanliness were thousands of years ahead of western medical guidelines and practices.

And the Lord spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, [...] when any man has a running issue out of his flesh, because of his issue he is unclean. [...] Every bed, where he lays on that has the issue, is unclean: and every thing, where he sat, shall be unclean. And whosoever touches his bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water [...](Leviticus 15:1-5)

And when he is cleansed of his issue; then he shall number to himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water, and shall be clean. (Leviticus 15:13)

Can you imagine your team of doctors preparing to lance a boil on your neck, their 11th operation of the day, and they have not sanitized, let alone, washed their hands before they visited you, the next patient? They spread bacteria, infections and diseases—exponentially increasing the death rate wherever they practiced medicine.

Just wiping their hands on a cloth was standard procedure for doctors up until the mid 19th century (Ten Of The Top Scientific Facts In The Bible, Ray Comfort, livingwaters.com).

Bed linen and laboratory coats were not washed and surgical instruments were only cleaned before they were stored away. Disgusting as it sounds, the same probe was used for the wounds of all patients during rounds to look for pockets of pus.

Thankfully doctor Joseph Lister, called the “Father of Modern Surgery,” applied his intuition, commonsense and innovation and developed an antiseptic to sterilize, and dramatically increase healing of surgical wounds. Hospitals internationally adopted Lister’s antiseptic technique, which developed into the procedures of today. (Joseph Lister: father of modern surgery, Dennis Pitt, MD Med and Jean-Michel Cubin, MD, US National Library of Medicine National Institute of Health Can J Surg. 2012 Oct.; 55(5): E8–E9, ncbi.nlm.nih.gov). As a sidebar: Listerine mouthwash was named after Dr. Lister; “Kills germs that cause bad breath” was their slogan.

WORLDWIDE DEVASTATION

In the days of the infamous plagues, hundreds of millions of people from around the world died a horrible death. Doctors at the time did not quarantine plague patients. If someone was recuperating with a minor illness or broken bone, they were placed in the same room as the plague patients,

which helped spread the deadly plague, along with disease carrying rats and their fleas, throughout Africa, Europe and Asia.

All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; outside the camp shall his habitation be.

(Leviticus 13:46)

Thus shall you separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in in their uncleanness [...](Leviticus 15:31)

History's deadliest plagues:

1. 541-544 A.D. The Plague of Justinian: 25 million estimated deaths
2. 1347-53 A.D. The Black Death: 50 million estimated deaths, more than half of the population Europe.
3. 1629-31 A.D. The Italian Plague: 280,000 estimated deaths
4. 1665-66 A.D. The Great Plague of London: 90,000 estimated deaths
5. 1720-72 A.D. The Great Plague of Marseille: 100,000 estimated deaths
6. 1855-1950s A.D. The Third Plague Pandemic: 15 million estimated deaths. This plague led to several breakthroughs in doctors' understanding of the bubonic plague. In 1894, Alexandre Yersin identified the bacillus pestis as the cause of the disease spreading from the bites of rat fleas. (6 Devastating Plagues, Evan Andrews, 2018, History.com)

As I write this book there has been an outbreak in China of a plague called the Coronavirus, which infects the nose, sinuses, mouth and throat. It is also being called a Modern Black Plague and over the past few months has killed 1000+ people. The Chinese government has issued a city-wide lock down of Wuhan, a city of 11 million people and countries have restricted travelers to and from China, as well as, quarantining them for a two week incubation period, which is when the illness becomes apparent.

The virus initially spread by humans eating exotic animals like snakes, bats and kola bears and now is spreading person-to-person. It seems to be in-

fecting the elderly and to date has a low conversion rate from infection to death; 1000 deaths to 40,000 infections. Also, because of recent SARS viruses over the past twenty years scientists hope they have a jump on developing a vaccine. Let's pray that they do and quickly.

I just watched a report of nurses working in one of the hospitals in Wuhan telling how they worried for their health, even while wearing protective Hazmat suits. They obviously know more than the government and media are letting us know.

BLOOD CLOTTING

"He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations..." (Genesis 17:12)

Why was circumcision to be carried out on the eighth day? Medical science has only recently discovered that blood clotting in a newborn reaches its peak on that day. That's when the coagulating factors in the blood are at optimal levels: vitamin K doesn't reach sufficient quantity until after day seven, and day eight is when prothrombin is the highest, reaching 110 percent of the normal level. (Ten Of The Top Scientific Facts In The Bible, Ray Comfort, livingwaters.com)

ORIGIN OF LIFE

Almost all forms of complex life have both male and female—horses, dogs, humans, fish, moths, monkeys, elephants, birds, etc. The male needs the female to reproduce, and the female needs the male to reproduce. One cannot carry on life without the other. But if evolution were true, which then came first according to the theory?

If a male came into being before a female, how did the male of each species reproduce without females? How is it possible that a male and a female each spontaneously came into being, yet they have complex, complementary reproductive systems? If each sex were able to reproduce without the other, why (and how) would they have developed a reproductive system that re-

quires both sexes in order for the species to survive? (Ten Of The Top Scientific Facts In The Bible, Ray Comfort, livingwaters.com)

HEALTHY MIND, BODY & SOUL

When you jump out of bed are you looking forward to life's daily challenges or are you ready to slink back in between the sheets?

A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance: but with a sorrowful heart the spirit is broken. (Proverbs 15:13)

Amen to that. I have always felt the wisdom of that philosophy throughout my life. We should have, at least, three 10-minute belly laughs a day—preferably one hour after eating!

I was blessed with loving parents, strong family ties and many friends. Granted, when one has that for a support system, life looks a lot less daunting. But what tied it all together was the innate knowledge that God exists and by his grace all my sins are forgiven. When you place life's challenges at the feet of God and truly believe, your mind, heart and soul will thank you for allowing them to grow in spirit, love and hope.

THE FLAT EARTH SOCIETY MEETS THE UNIVERSE

Can you believe there are still people, not many thankfully, that adhere to the misguided belief that the Earth is flat. Talk about stubborn!

Many ancient cultures believed the world was flat. Around (pun intended) the 6th century B.C. the Greek philosopher Pythagoras first proposed that the earth was round and in the 4th century B.C. Aristotle provided evidence for earth's spherical shape. In 240 B.C. King Ptolemy III appointed Eratosthenes of Cyrene, as the chief librarian at the library of Alexandria in Egypt. Considered to be the foremost scholar at the time, Eratosthenes measured the Earth to be between 24,000 and 29,000 miles around, which is close to the actual 24,900 miles around the equator. (Alan Chides, APS Physics News, 2006, Volume 15, Number 6, APS.org)

Although it took awhile to get the word out and convince everyone, the flat Earthier had to overcome his or her fear of age-old sea monsters, especially after Columbus successfully sailed the ocean blue.

It is he that sits upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants are as grasshoppers; that stretch out the heavens as a curtain [....](Isaiah 40:22)

BUDA BING, BUDA BOOM

Since the middle of the 20th century the Big Bang Theory has been one of the most popular subjects discussed throughout the theological and cosmological communities.

Astrophysicist Sir Fred Hoyle coined the term Big Bang in 1949, as a slight, he did not believe in an expanding universe. It took awhile to catch on; but when it was discovered that the universe was expanding the theory was embraced, and the rest is history.

Hoyle found a way of testing the formation of carbon in the laboratory and developed a theory based on the prevalence of carbon-based life forms on Earth and an undiscovered resonance within stars. It was this work that caused Hoyle, an atheist to begin to believe in the guiding hand of a god, what would later be called "Intelligent Design." (The Physics of the Universe, Important Scientists, physicsoftheuniverse.com)

The Bible has a few things to say about the universe and how it was created from nothing. Expanding works for me. God's a mover and shaker.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made out of things which do appear. (Hebrews 11:3)

Sounds like He's describing creating the universe from things we cannot see; neutrons, protons, electrons etc.; and the moment of creation: light, energy and matter.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)

It took awhile (the 19th century) for scientists and physicists to discover subatomic atoms and nuclei which are the universes unseen building blocks—along with the mystery of the universe; dark matter.

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. (Genesis 1:2)

He stretches out the north over the empty place, and hangs the earth upon nothing. (Job 26:7)

In this next scripture Job is asked what he knows about the earth and how it came into being. I think we are being asked as well.

Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth, declare, if you have understanding. Who has laid the measurements of the earth, do you know, or who stretched the line upon it? Where are the foundations of the earth fastened, or who laid its cornerstone? [...] Have you entered into the springs of the sea or have you walked in the search of the depth? [...] Where does light and darkness dwell, where is the place thereof [...] By what way is the light parted, which scatters the east wind upon the earth? [...] Has the rain a father or who has begotten the drops of dew? [...](Job 38:4-30)

The Lord's response to Job, in his darkest hour, after the loss of his family and all worldly treasures, illustrates how little we know and how insignificant we are in comparison to our eternal Father; and for us not to question His wisdom, or any personal trauma we may experience, in our short finite life.

THE ARK HAD PERFECT DIMENSIONS

In 1993, Dr. Seon Hong, the principal research scientist at KRISO, a world-class ship research center in South Korea, headed up a major scientific study comparing 12 ship hulls designed for maximum seaworthiness.

Dr. Hong and his team found that the Ark's biblical proportions were perfectly balanced, with maximum stability, strength and comfort. Interestingly enough, modern cargo ships have similar proportions as the ark and can handle waves up to 100' (Thinking Outside the Box, Tim Lovett, 2007 & 2016, Answers Magazine, Answersingenesis.org). Absolutely amazing, but I would not want to see a 100' rogue wave coming my way.

And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood, make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. This is how you are to build it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high.
(Genesis 6:13-15)

As I stated before, the length of a Hebrew cubit is approximated at 17.5 inches. It was measured from the elbow to the fingertips. When you convert the ark's cubits to feet that's 438' long by 73' wide by 44' high. Unfortunately the original length of a cubit is unknown, but as you can see it was a very large craft. We may not know the exact length of a cubit, but I would bet that it was based on Noah's arm length when he measured out the ark. After the flood, of course, everything was built new.

The ark was built, I'm assuming, in the middle of a gopher wood forest large enough to supply the lumber to build it to God's specifications. It must have been quite a sight to see. As far as how Noah built the ark with just his family, I like the recent Paramount Picture's concept of fallen angels helping Noah, and by doing so, redeemed their souls.

Tom Pickett, a military imagery analysis, states in his extensive "Population of the Preflood World" report, "a reasonable estimate of the preflood population is between 5-7 billion." Seems incredible, but don't forget the average life span was 900 years and Mr. Pickett based the population on 18 generations from Adam to Noah over a period of 1,656 years; other reference sites

say 10 generations over 1056 years. ("Population of the Preflood World" report," Tom Pickett, tom pickett@sbcgolobal.net)

Regardless of the number, that was a lot of people that perished. You would think archaeologists would find human bones under every rock, but for some reason as the dinosaur bones, they are MIA, missing in action. They will make an appearance on judgment day for sure.

Talking about MIA, where's Noah's Ark? Tradition has it coming to rest on a Turkish mountain called Ararat. There have been multiple sightings over the years and even pieces of wood retrieved and presented as evidence, but to date nothing conclusive.

If you would like to see a life-size recreation of the ark look up Kenneth Ham's Ark Encounter. He and his ministry have constructed a full size 3-story wooden ark in Kentucky, complete with animals and a zoo. I went there a few years ago with my buddy Gary and we thought it was very impressive.

PATHWAYS OF THE SKY AND SEA

The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatever passes through the paths of the seas. (Psalm 8:8)

U.S. naval officer Matthew Fontaine Maury had Psalm 8:8, and many other Psalms committed to memory as a youngster. And after a stagecoach accident broke his right leg, lieutenant Maury's sea going days came to an abrupt end and he devoted his life to the study of naval navigation, charting the wind, ocean currents, and seeking the "Paths of the Seas" mentioned in Psalm 8:8.

Nicknamed "Pathfinder of the Seas," Maury studied thousands of ship logs and charts, at the depot of Charts and Instruments, which would later become the United States Naval Observatory. He published the Wind and Current Chart, showing sailors how to use the ocean currents and winds to their advantage, reducing the length of ocean voyages—which was later adopted

by navies and merchant marines worldwide (Matthew Fontaine Maury, Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019 Britannica.com).

Have you ever noticed how flocks of birds and schools of fish glide in formation as in a ballet with nature? Similar to the wind and surface water currents, are massive sea currents flowing under the surface of the world's oceans. The Atlantic Gulf Stream is the best know in America and Europe. These mega currents are generated by many factors, including wind, temperature, Earth's rotation and gravity. They circulate cool waters from Antarctica, merge with equatorial warm waters, and flow north to the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans—along with nutrients and billions of bait fish being hunted and chased by larger fish, dolphins and whales.

Thy way is in the sea. Far down in secret channels of the deep is thy roadway. [...](Psalm 77:19)

Along with Man, solar flares and thousands of miles of volcanic intercontinental tectonic plates, Earth's weather patterns, for better or worst, are influencing climate change; global warming; and future ice ages that will live and die by the paths of the sea until the second coming.

It's amazing that Matthew Fontaine Maury's love for the sea and the lessons learned and memorized in Psalm 8:8 led him to illustrate to us how much hidden information and knowledge there is locked away in the Bible.

HIDDEN MESSAGES

It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings to search out a matter. (Proverbs 25:2)

Are there hidden messages in the Bible? Many scholars and linguists say yes and point to the Hidden Torah Secret, the Rabin Code and The Gospel in Genesis which translates the 10 names in Noah's lineage, similar to what is listed below.

| HEBREW | ENGLISH |
|------------|-----------------------|
| Adam | Man |
| Seth | Appointed |
| Enosh | Mortal |
| Kenan | Sorrow |
| Mahalalel | The Blessed God |
| Jared | Shall come down |
| Enoch | Teaching |
| Methuselah | His death shall bring |
| Lamech | The despairing |
| Noah | Rest, or comfort |

Put together, this could be as follows:

Man (is) Appointed Mortal Sorrow; (but) the Blessed God shall come down teaching (that) His death shall bring (the) despairing rest (or comfort).

(Hidden Messages in the Bible, Joel, 2017, Christianevidence.net)

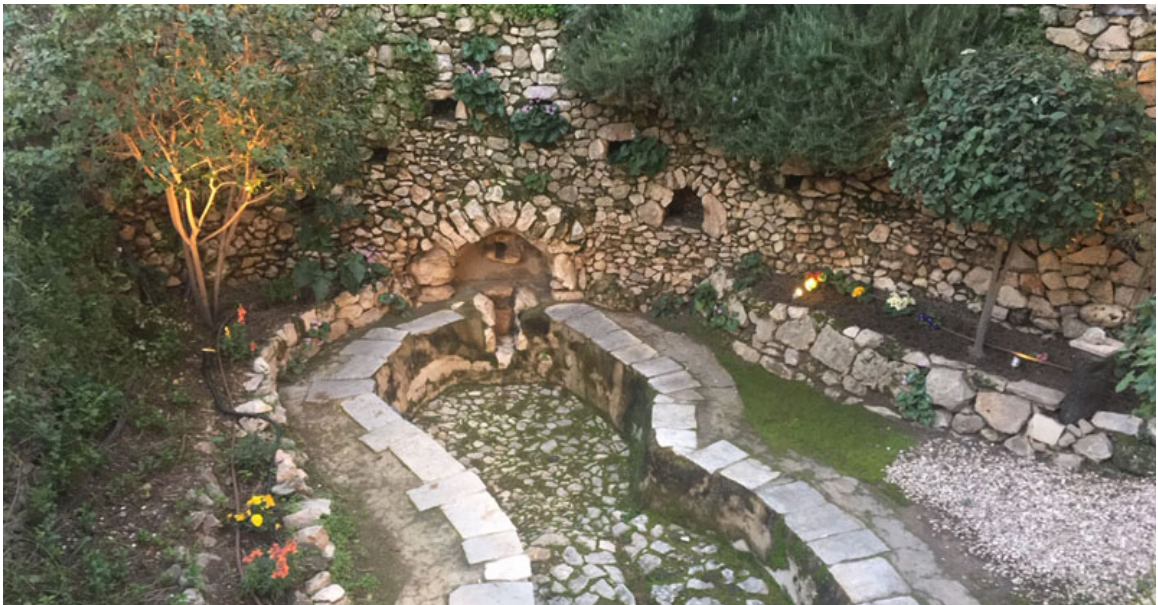
The Bible Code is a best-selling book written by Michael Drosnin. His theory is that the *Tanakh*, the five books of Moses, has hidden messages of past and future events within its pages. With the advent of computers he has taken all the words in the *Tanakh*, from Genesis to Deuteronomy, and strung them together without spaces between letters, words or paragraphs—one long sentence without a break or comma from start to finish.

Mr. Drosnin then processes a search request to find a word or name, like Jesus. Eventually, using a sequential lettering formula, a multi-lined, crossword like, maze of letters will appear in which we are challenged to find the hidden messages; names, dates, and phrases pertaining to, in this case, Jesus. After studying the crossword-like image that prints out, words like messiah, Roman's crucified, rabbi, Herod, healer, etc. would become evident. It's all very interesting and worth a read.

CHINESE CHARACTERS AND GENESIS

As unlikely as it sounds, deciphering ancient Chinese pictographs (lettering) may help qualify Biblical history and Genesis. The inventors of the original Chinese characters, estimated to have lived after the Tower of Babel, must have heard and believed the account of creation. It's picture-symbol characters correlate to the accounts in Genesis: God the creator, the creation of heaven and earth, a garden, man made from earth, etc. You'll be impressed how the graphic composition and meaning of original Chinese pictograph letters came to be.

Amazingly, they correlate to the accounts written in Genesis and are easily deciphered and understood by anyone fluent in Chinese—and, obvious to the non-fluent as well. (*Genesis in Chinese Pictographs*, James J. S. Johnson, J.D, TH.D. 2015) There are close to 1.5 billion people living in China and if 10% become followers of Yeshua (Jesus) that would be 150 million new believers on their way to Heaven. Imagine the line at the "Pearly Gates."



Garden area at Garden Tomb, north of Damascus Gate. Jerusalem, Israel

CHAPTER FIVE:

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

BIBLICALLY ORGANIC

THE WORLD OLDEST PROFESSION IS GARDENING

And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. (Genesis 2:15)

Well, my father would have been thrilled about that. He had a landscaping business for many years and he loved watching things grow, especially bull's heart tomatoes.

My father came to our family's promise land, America, with his mother and two brothers in the fall of 1920. As they left Naples, Italy he thought about seeing his father and two older brothers who sent them money for passage, via ship, to America after a long separation because of WWI.



Produce market, Old Jerusalem, Israel

My father, like his father and brothers, had a gift for growing vegetables and producing children. They ate mostly organic foods that they grew, as their ancestors did in Forenza, Italy. Meat was not often on the menu in Italy, so they foraged for tree and ground mushrooms, which have the texture of meat and are very tasty when prepared with onions and olive oil.

They did hunt for rabbit, birds, snakes and squirrels, but as you can imagine, they were far and few between. And up until the late 19th century everything was roasted or boiled over a stone, mud, clay or brick fireplace, fueled by wood or charcoal; which was what most people cooked with worldwide—going back to the days of Eden.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN BUFFET

Did you know that Adam and Eve and all the animals in the Garden of Eden were originally vegetarians?

And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and every thing that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.
(Genesis 1:29-30)

Animals and humans lived together peacefully in the Garden of Eden; eating fresh, perfectly formed, vegetables, juicy worm-free fruit and drinking cold pure water from the life preserving “River of Life.” It must have been something to see. I would have loved to have had a lion for a friend, snuggling up to all that warmth, comfort and purring, drinking River of Life smoothies; sounds like heaven to me.

Have you ever wondered how long Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden before they took that fateful bite from the fruit of “The Tree of Knowledge”? As we know, God forbade them to eat the fruit from only that tree and after Satan goaded them into taking a bite they were banished

from Eden. Up to that time they never knew shame, fear, envy, starvation, pain, insomnia, pimples or the mumps, just to mention a few human emotions and physical maladies!

The Garden of Eden was Heaven on earth, the only home Adam and Eve knew. They were the honored guests for eternity and they blew it all for a bite of knowledge. Satan is an excellent salesman and con artist.

The sad thing is that Adam and Eve denied us, and the creatures of earth, from being with God in the Garden of Eden where our souls would have overflowed with His love, basked in His glory and on call to serve our eternal Father and Jesus 360/24/7 for an eternity.

The more that I think about it, I wonder why Satan with all his firsthand experience and knowledge would want to be counted with the enemies of God. Like many sons, Satan must have thought he knew all the answers; or maybe he felt equal to God, maybe as a brother, or even a sister.

The ancient Chinese philosophy of yin and yang, good and bad, male and female is founded on the theory of the universe being governed by a cosmic duality, sets of two opposing and complementing principles or cosmic energies. Interesting, that I just thought of that connection. I am sure there have been books written about it since the dawn of time. I may have read one 40 years ago for all I know.

Anyway, He/She, brother/sister, angel or demon, Satan convinced an army of angels to rebel against God and thankfully they lost and were banished to earth. Satan must have been and still is a force to be reckoned with, until judgment day that is.

GOD BLESSED NOAH WITH MEAT

God said to Noah, And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moves upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hands they are

delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. (Genesis 9:2-3)

Mankind was now allowed to eat meat. I can imagine the look on the faces of the livestock and chickens when they heard that command; up to that point they all were vegetarians. Because of Adam and Eve's folly and the pre-flood sins of man, animals and humans lost the bond of eternal understanding, trust and love in one another.

But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall you not eat. And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Who so sheds or eats man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for the image of God made he man. (Genesis 9:4-6)

Did you catch that—"from every beast?" So what do we make of that? I guess the animal kingdom was not allowed to kill humans in the immediate days after the flood. Animals, as well as mankind, must have been aware of God, understood his commandments, and wanted to rise on judgment day to live with God in Heaven, just as we do. When I think about it, if animals were allowed and acquired a taste for humans early, we would have been extinct years ago.

From Adam to Moses there were no restrictions on eating except for the lifeblood of animals. After leaving Egypt, God gave strict dietary rules to Moses for the nation of Israel. In Leviticus 11, there is an extensive list of creatures and animals that were clean and not clean—to be eaten and not to be eaten. In Leviticus 11:7-8, eating pig was forbidden. It was not until recently that we learned that uncooked or undercooked pork may carry little critters and diseases such as tapeworm, E. coli, Salmonella and trichinosis, just to name a few tasty facts.

I do not know when animals started killing man, but I'm sure when it happened mankind was more of a threat to them.

During Jesus' ministry he taught his disciples and followers that they were allowed to eat anything.

[...] Do you not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without enters into the man, it cannot defile him; because it enters not into his heart, but into the belly, and goes out purging all meats? (Mark 7:18-19)

So we have come full circle: "Eternal Life" in the presence of God; to "Death," in Adam and Eve's Original Sin; and by the grace of God "Eternal Life" through the blood sacrifice of Jesus. We are all invited guests to the wedding, and feast, of our Lord that restores man sinless to the family of God for an eternity—that's if we believe in Jesus as our Lord and savior.

ORGANIC WISDOM

Biblical traditions, both oral and written, helped guide ancient farmers in many areas including gardening, crop rotation, and cultivation, as well as, agriculture and letting the land rest (be renewed).

And six years you shall sow your land, and shall gather the fruits thereof: but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie still; that the poor of your people may eat, and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner you shall deal with your vineyard, and your olive garden. (Exodus 23:10-11)

He that tills his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that follows vain persons is void of understanding. (Proverbs 12:11)

The days of hunting and gathering were the rule until the middle of the 9th millennia B.C. when people began to grow their own wheat, barley, peas and lentils instead of gathering them wild. Soon there after they began domesticating sheep, pigs, goats and cattle.

As far as archaeological and paleontological evidence can tell us, farming first began in the Fertile Crescent, which stretches from Israel north to southeast Turkey then curves southeast the Persian Gulf.

Agriculture was also invented independently in other parts of the world as well. By 4,000 B.C. central Europeans were using oxen to pull plows and wagons and people in the Middle East began using donkeys as beasts of burden.

In ancient Israel farmers grew olives, flax (for linen), wheat and barley. They also planted vegetables, grapes, pomegranates and figs. Shepherds tended sheep and goats and farmers raised oxen and donkeys for pulling plows and threshing grain.

In the Middle Ages farming improved by using a new heavy plow in the clay soil of northern Europe. They also introduced a 3-field system where the land was divided up into three huge fields and each year two were sown with crops while one was left unused to allow it to recover. Sound familiar?

Nothing much changed until the 18th century when Englishman Robert 'Turnip' Townsend popularized the Dutch innovation of planting turnips (which restored the soil's fertility) in the land they were leaving fallow. (A Brief History of Farming, Tim Lambert, 2019, localhistories.org)

So the good Lord seeded the world and gave the farmers directions on how to harvest it and maximize the land until they were able to take it to the next level. And as the population increased, so did production and man created many mechanical innovations and introduced better methods of delivery to feed the masses.

They also developed fertilizers and pesticides, which worked well until someone figured out that the soil and water sources were being depleted of nutrients, polluted or saturated with chemicals.

Today we are working our way back to the Biblical methods of organic farming and agriculture. Many even want to go back to the days of Eden and refrain from all types of meat, I'm sure that will bring a long lost smile back to the animal kingdom, livestock and chickens.

MADE IN ISRAEL

Two videos from a series of five videos created by the Christian Broadcasting Network document how, after WWI, Jews from around the world took a leap of faith and returned to the Jewish homeland. They felt a calling to pioneer uninhabitable land in what was then called Palestine, in the beginning of the twentieth century. It is truly a remarkable story that illustrates how blessed and prolific God's chosen people are.

The Jews were only allowed to buy, what was thought to be uninhabitable malaria-rife swampland, in the coastal plains and Jordan Valley. They drained the swamp and killed the mosquitoes to solve the malaria problem and rerouted the water for farm irrigation transforming useless land into a cornucopia of food products to consume or sell.

In 1948, when Israel became a state, Jews from around the world migrated back to their ancestral homeland. They formed farming communities called Kibbutzim and pretty much turned everything they touched into a fertile and productive agricultural oasis.

In the process of reclaiming the land, they also developed innovations like drip irrigation, water desalinization, saltwater desert fishponds and water reclamation; increasing agricultural and aquatic production throughout Israel.

They also developed new breeds of vegetables: tomatoes and potatoes; and breed insects and bees to organically protect crops and to pollenate vegetables and flowers; and introduced barn owls to control mice.

And, being the good neighbor, they shared innovations in water management methods, grain storage systems and are now selling water to abutting countries, as well as water technology worldwide. ("Made in Israel: Water;" "Made in Israel: Agriculture," Christian Broadcasting Network)

CHAPTER SIX:

NATURE'S APOTHECARY

MEDICINAL PLANTS AND TREES

God's organic health foods were germinated in rich and fertile Mother Earth. Adam and Eve, was the world's first indigenes tribe, and Eden was the first organic garden.

There are thousands of medicinal plants that we know of and tens-of-thousands that gone extinct, or have not been discovered or yet. The Bible mentions the healing properties of tree leaves, wine, olive oil and figs.

[...] on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. (Revelation 22:2)

For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover. (Isaiah 38:21)

The western world was very slow on the benefits of homeopathic medicines and refused to consider thousands of years of knowledge and wisdom their brethren to the East held. Since the 20th century the natural health business has grown into a massive international and profitable industry.

Three of God's marvels are:

Aloe Vera, good on burns and as a refreshing health drink.

Ginkgo, one of the oldest tree species, used for brain health.

Turmeric, known for anticancer properties.

TREES OF THE BIBLE

In the Bible, Revelation 22:2, the Tree of Life has twelve varieties of fruit that grew every month, year in and year out. Now that is productive. My father had a pear tree in our yard that he grafted two additional types of pears into. It only produced once a year, but didn't we look forward to picking ripe, juicy pears every fall. Although that tree is long gone and I live in another

location, I remember as a kid climbing that tree and biting into those delicious pears. It's an essence of a time long since passed.

And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:9)

I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together. (Isaiah 41:19)

The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languished; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men. (Joel 1:12)

ARE TREES FEMININE OR MASCULINE?

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. (Genesis 1:11)

In this scripture the seed of grass, herbs and fruit trees were masculine and already in the earth, and when watered the seeds grew into various foods of it's kind.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. (Revelation 22:2.) The Tree of Life is feminine.

And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine. (Ezekiel 47:12.)

These trees are masculine. This is a little confusing; were they allowed to eat only the fruit from the trees outside of the sanctuary?

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. (Psalm 1:3.) These trees are masculine.

For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spread out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat comes, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. (Jeremiah 17:8.) These trees are feminine.

Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. (Leviticus 26:4.) These trees are feminine.



Israel College of the Bible logo and signage, Israel

CHAPTER SEVEN:

THE IMAGE OF JESUS

SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND

SHROUD OF TURIN

The shroud of Turin is believed to be the burial cloth of Jesus Christ. After his crucifixion, Jesus was taken down from the cross, his body was wrapped in a linen cloth, 14'5" long by 3'7" wide, and placed in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy Sadducee and disciple of Jesus.

As foretold, after three days, Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven. When his disciples went to the tomb, they discovered that it was empty—Jesus had risen and his bloody burial shroud was the only thing that remained.

Imprinted on the shroud, along with crucifixion marks and bloodstains, head to toe, is a front and back image of a naked man with his hands crossed over the groin. It is not known who originally preserved the Shroud, or when the image of Jesus was discovered, but there has been much debate over how it got there.

The skeptics say the Shroud is a medieval forgery, the image and bloodstains painted by an artist. Believers and advocates claim the Shroud is not a forgery and the image happened when Jesus was transformed into the Spirit of God and ascended to Heaven.

Through the centuries the Shroud was transferred to many locations in Europe and ended up in Turin, Italy. Over the years the Shroud has been damaged by fire, has had multiple restorations, and with the Pope's blessings, been photographed, analyzed, and carbon 14 tested.

To date there is no conclusive scientific data that proves that it is the original Shroud of Jesus. Carbon dating tests point to the linen being made between 1260-1390 A.D. Some proponents for the authenticity of the Shroud

discount those dates by claiming the material tested was from where the Shroud was repaired. Other tests ranged from 300 B.C. to 400 A.D. (What is the Shroud of Turin? Facts and History Everyone Should Know, Myra Adams and Russ Breault, Christianity.com)

The bottom line, to me, is the image and how it was created. With today's technology and imaging techniques maybe, but in the 13th-14th century no way could it be painted or manually created, plus, the image is a photo negative, something that wasn't even invented until 1816 by Nicephore Niepce (Timeline of photography technology, Wikipedia).

As a sidebar, the Shroud of Turin is the first example of negative photography in the world. Watch YouTube's "The Shroud of Turin, the Face of Jesus" documentary, it will make you a believer. (The Shroud of Turin, the Face of Jesus" documentary, History Channel)



Mosaic of the burial of Jesus, Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Old Jerusalem

THE SHROUD OF TURIN AND THE SUDARIUM OF OVIEDO

The blood stains and unique markings from wounds were compared using forensics and geometry, in a study done by Dr. Juan Manuel Minarro and what has been concluded is the Shroud of Turin and the Sudarium of Oviedo "almost certainly covered the same person." A sudarium is a cloth placed over a person's face before the linen shroud was wrapped around the head and body of the cadaver.

The study doesn't prove that the person was Jesus, but it does clearly demonstrate that both linens covered the same cadaver. (New Study: The Shroud of Turin and the Sudarium of Oviedo Cover the Same Person, 2016, Aleteia Archives, Translated from Spanish by Kathleen Hattrup). The sudarium was also used as a handkerchief, a cloth to wipe the face, and in Jewish weddings over the groom's head.

In another study of the Sudarium of Oviedo, the summary results stated:

1. The Sudarium of Oviedo is a relic, which has been venerated in the cathedral of Oviedo for a very long time. It contains stains formed by human blood of the group AB.
2. The cloth is dirty, creased, torn and burnt in parts, stained and highly contaminated. It does not, however, show signs of fraudulent manipulation.
3. It seems to be a funeral cloth that was probably placed over the head of the corpse of an adult male of normal constitution.
4. The man whose face the Sudarium covered had a beard, moustache and long hair, tied up at the nape of the neck in a ponytail.
5. The man's mouth was closed; his nose was squashed and forced to the right by the pressure of holding the cloth to his face.
6. The man was dead. The mechanism that formed the stains is incompatible with any kind of breathing movement.
7. At the bottom of the back of the head, there is a series of wounds produced in life by some sharp objects. These wounds had bled about an hour before the cloth was placed on top of them.

8. Just about the entire head, shoulders and at least part of the back of the man were covered in blood before being covered with this cloth. This is known because it is impossible to reproduce the stains in the hair, on the forehead and on top of the head with blood from a corpse. It can be therefore be stated that the man was wounded before death with something that made his scalp bleed and produce wounds on his neck, shoulders and upper part of his back.
9. The man suffered pulmonary edema as a consequence of the terminal process. (Comparative Study of the Sudarium of Oviedo and the Shroud of Turin, Guillermo Heras Moreno, Jose-Delfin Villalain Blanco, Jorge-Manuel Rodriguez Almenar,

DOCTOR'S ANALYSIS OF CRUCIFIXION

The first time I read the article on Dr. William D. Edwards' analysis of the death of Jesus called, '*On the Physical Death of Jesus,*' in 1986, I was shocked at the amount of torture Jesus endured. The Romans were brutally efficient when it came to torture and killing.

The movie *The Greatest Story Ever Told*, which aired in 1965, and *Jesus of Nazareth*, in 1977 (my personal favorite), kept the scourging to a minimum.

It was the first time that I learned that the spikes were not nailed through the palm of the hands but in between Jesus' wrists bones, to lock in and support the body. And, the scourging whip included lead balls, and small sharp sheep bones tied to leather tongs, which caused deep stripe-like lacerations and considerable blood loss.

Dr. Edwards' analysis of Jesus' scourging and death on the cross was very graphic. Sorry, you'll have to read about it on your own, I am lost for words at how Jesus suffered for us—a guilt offering to God for man's sins (On the Physical Death of Jesus, Dr. William D. Edwards, 1986).

One of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. (John 19:34)

DOCTOR, I HAVE A QUESTION

How were the nails in Jesus' feet and wrists removed without breaking bones? The Romans must've had a method of removing crucifixion nails without damaging the body. I don't imagine it was for humanitarian reasons. There needed to be a quick and easy way to maximize military efficiency of time and effort.

DO WE KNOW JESUS' BLOOD TYPE?

With all the analysis of the Shroud to date, the blood type has not been identified. Many in the religious community say that Jesus' blood type is AB positive and claim recent scientific blood analysis of the Shroud, as well as previous studies, confirm their claim, but as we stated before, the actual date of Shroud, and whether it was Jesus, has yet to be determined.

AB blood (both positive and negative) is the rarest blood type and is referred to as the "Universal Receiver" blood type. People who have AB blood can receive blood from anyone. Plus, AB+ is also the universal "plasma donor" blood type and can be transfused into any person, regardless of their blood type. (Jesus Blood Type, Mystics of the Church) Sounds like a Godly blood type to me.

There are eight common blood types: A+, A-, B+, B-, O+, O-, AB+, AB-. The universal "red cell" donor has Type O negative blood and can be used in transfusions for any blood type. The universal "plasma donor" has type AB blood. (Facts About Blood and Blood Types, American Red Cross: Blood Services)

CHAPTER EIGHT:

BIRTH OF A NATION

BLESSED BY GOD

JACOB, FATHER OF THE 12 ISRAELI TRIBES

Jacob had four wives, Leah and Rachael, that were the daughters of his uncle, and two servant concubines, named Bilhah and Zilpah. (Genesis 29:15-34 and Genesis 30:1-25) In all, they conceived 12 sons and their descendants became known as the twelve tribes of Israel.

The sons of Leah: Reuben (Jacob's firstborn), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun.

The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin

The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid: Dan, and Naphtali

The sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid: Gad, and Asher

Jacob also had a sister, Dinah.

Were Bilhah and Zilpah daughters of the covenant? If they were Arab then the tribes of Israel are, in part, also the tribes of Ishmael. Jacob's brother Esau married women from Canaan, one of which was a daughter of Ishmael. Bilhah and Zilpah were called wives of Jacob. (Genesis 36:2-3, 37:2)

According to rabbinical beliefs, Bilhah and Zilpah were younger daughters of Laban and one of his concubines. Laban was Jacob's uncle, who was also the father of Leah and Rachael. (Kadari, Tamor. "Zilpah: Midrash and Aggadah, Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia. 27 February 2009. Jewish Women's Archive, jwa.org)

In Genesis 32:25, Jacob wrestles with God and is blessed by him, and given the name Israel and from that time forward his descendants were called Israelites and will become a great nation, and a community of nations will come from him. And he and his descendants will inherit the lands of Abraham and Isaac. What is the message to be gleaned from this wrestling all night passage? Wrestling with faith?

The story of the twelve tribes begins when Jacob and his family of seventy moved from Canaan to Egypt because of a drought that was devastating the region. Israel's (Jacob new name given by God after their wrestling match) clan prospered in Egypt and grew for a few hundred years until the oppressed times of the Pharaoh Ramses when Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt to the "Promise Land"—after forty years roaming the desert, that is.

Israel's sons and their families were the founders of the twelve tribes and each family was given land in Canaan, which became the nation of Israel. The Levites didn't receive land because they were the priests and Temple functionaries and lived among the other tribes. Also, no tribe was named after Joseph although two tribes were named after his sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

JOSEPH WAS EMBALMED IN EGYPT

So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. (Genesis 50:26)

And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver; and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph. (Joshua 24:32)

ON THE TRAIL OF MOSES

In a video called "Finding the Mountain of Moses: The Real Mt. Sinai," by military analyst Ryan Mauro and the Doubting Thomas Research Foundation, accounts of the travels of Moses and the Israelite nation after it left Egypt. Although the Book of Exodus tells the story, the historical locations have always been questioned.

This video is a must see, Ryan Mauro visited all the locations listed below.

1. Mount of Moses in NW Saudi Arabia—has a blacken top
2. Moses' Well, Midian, where Moses met future wife Zipporah.
3. Red Sea crossing: Nuweiba Crossing, underwater objects that look like

remnants of chariots covered with coral.

4. Elim Oasis, 12 Springs/Wells
5. Golden Calf worship site. Cow petroglyphs
6. Burial Site of 3,000 killed
7. Spilt rock site, petroglyphs

(Finding the Mountain of Moses: The Real Mt. Sinai," Ryan Mauro and the Doubting Thomas Research Foundation, SinaiinArabia.com, the Ryan Mauro Show, 12/17/18)

LOCATION OF JUDAH

This then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families; even to the border of Edom the wilderness of Zin southward was the uttermost part of the south coast. (Joshua 15:1-63) Lists complete boundaries.

LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL

The tribes of Israel, throughout their history, in the Promised Land, was typically in a state of fragile unity going back to the sons of Leah and Rachel. One tribe was at war or rebelling against the other, In 930 B.C., the tribes of Israel formed two independent states: in the north 10 tribes formed the Kingdom of Israel and in south the tribe of Judah and Benjamin formed the Kingdom of Judah.

The 10 Tribes of Israel that comprised the Kingdom of the north began worshipping Baal and other gods, made idols and assimilated into the heathen culture. They rejected the warnings of Jeremiah the prophet and the covenant and commandments of the Lord that brought them out of Egypt.

In 721 B.C. the Assyrians conquered and dispersed the Kingdom of Israel, and over time they were assimilated by other nations and disappeared from history. Only the Tribe of Judah, in the Kingdom of the South remained (2 Kings 1.) Through the years there have been many theories of where the people of the lost tribes migrated, Europe and Africa top the list. (Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019 Britannica.com)

LOOKING FOR THE LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL

In a Timeline World History Documentary video called "Quest for the Lost Tribes" film director and producer Simcha Jacobovici researches and visits locations that he believes the lost tribes of Israel may have migrated to after the Assyrian captivity. Mr. Jacobovici interviews people now living in Ethiopia, India, China and Tunis and credible remnants of the "lost tribes" that maintain orthodox Jewish beliefs and traditions. (Quest for the Lost Tribes, Simcha Jacobovici, Timeline World History Documentary)

FATHER OF THE 12 ARAB TRIBES

Abraham's first son Ishmael, father of the 12 Arab tribes and a half brother to Isaac, was the son of Abraham's Egyptian slave, than wife, Hagar.

And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. (Genesis 17:25)

And God was with the lad: and he grew, and lived in the wilderness, and became an archer. (Genesis 21:20)

And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall live in the presence of all his brethren. (Genesis 16:12)

Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid bare unto Abraham: And these are sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth, and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadar and Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedmah: These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations. (Genesis 25:12-16)

The sons of Ishmael became the tribes and nations, along with others, that dwelt from Havilah to Shur, and from Egypt to Assyria.

For one family the history of the Nabataeans and the Twelve tribes became a passion. David J. Gibson devoted much of his life to the study and research of how the Bedouins originated and the history of Ishmael's twelve sons and tribes. After his death, his son Dan picked up the trail and lived, on and off for 30 years in the Middle East, chronicling the Muslim understanding of their heritage. His website has an in-depth analysis that is very informative. (The 12 Tribes of Ishmael, Nabataean History, Nabataea.net, <http://nabataea.net/12tribes.html>)



Bedouin about to grind roasted coffee beans, Southern District Israel

CHAPTER NINE:

OLD TESTAMENT QUESTIONS

FATHER, MAY I HAVE A MINUTE OF YOUR TIME?

WHAT DOES GOD LOOK LIKE?

The following verses give us many images of what God looks like; He's a majestic Godly figure of white: He is the image of man and woman, made of flesh and spirit; He's immortal, invisible and has no darkness in Him, for He is light. I'm sure that He has a lot more images that we will be made aware of as we serve Him over an eternity.

[...] and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool [...](Daniel 7:9)

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. (Genesis 1:27)

And the Lord said, my spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years. (Genesis 6:3)

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. (1 Timothy 1:17)

[...] God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5)

REPLENISH THE EARTH? WERE THERE PREVIOUS CIVILIZATIONS?

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And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of

the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. (Genesis 1:28)

At the end of the 1700s and during the 1800s, when the scientific study of geology became firmly established, intellectuals “determined that the Earth was far older than common interpretations of Genesis and the bible-based flood geology would allow.” The religious geologists (the majority at that time) found need to “reconcile their faith in the Bible with the new authority of science.”

Since Creationism theorizes a six-day production period, they needed a solution to explain the new scientific observations involving the age of the earth and the new large animal and exotic plant fossil records being discovered.

A new concept of gap Creationism or “Gap Theory” evolved. Simply put, “there was a gap of time [millions of years] between two distinct creations in the first and the second verses of Genesis.” A previously created civilization grew and was then supposedly destroyed. Needless to say, this Gap Theory was a perfect explanation for the need to have Adam and Eve replenish the Earth, as stated in Genesis 1:28.

There are seven times in the *King James Version* where the words *replenish* or *replenished* are used, and each time it means “fill” or “filled” (Genesis 1:28, Genesis 9:1, Isaiah 2:6, Isaiah 23:2, Jeremiah 31:25, Ezekiel 26:2, Ezekiel 27:25). There are plenty of other versions that do the same in some or most of these instances. So, although today the word *replenish* is commonly used to mean *refill*, that just wasn’t what it meant a long time ago. Strong’s dictionary indicates that the greatest number of uses of the Hebrew word used in ancient manuscripts means *to fill*.

The Bible is a history of humankind created by God. If there was ever a previous non-human, but intelligent, life form living on this planet in the distant past, there is no reason to expect it to be listed within a human historical

document. The ideas and evidence have been presented and it is your choice of what to believe. But for me, until I can find evidence otherwise, the word "replenish", as used in Genesis 1:28 (and similar verses) printed in The King James Version, as well as some other versions, definitely means "fill". (Genesis 1:28 - God tells Adam and Eve to 'replenish' the Earth. Was a previous civilization destroyed? (OutlawBibleStudent.org))

LOCATION OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN?

And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.



Flower market, Old Jerusalem, Israel

And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which encompasses the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that encompasses the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goes toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates. (Genesis 2:8-14)

Ever since Adam and Eve were cast out from the Garden of Eden, man has been trying to find its location. Of course the flood didn't help, but maybe ancient stories and traditions passed down through the ages; along with a few names on a map, and a little guidance from the Lord will point us in the correct direction.

So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim, and the flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way to the tree of life. (Genesis 3:24),

Adam and Eve were sent east from Eden. Africa? Middle East? I never hear Ethiopia, Africa mentioned as a possible location for Eden. In Ethiopia there is a small city or town named Adama, formerly known as Nazret. It is 50 miles southeast of Addis Ababba, near the Koka Reservoir and the Awash River that leads into Lake Abbe, 130 miles north of Dire Dawa and the Ahmar Mountains. There is also a city called Aden in Yemen, 250 miles northeast on the coast of the Gulf of Aden. I wonder if anyone has researched these areas? THE GULF OF ADEN (Adam) –sounds like a good place to start (Wikipedia, Awashrivermap.png).

PHARAOH ADAMENEMHEPT I –THE AUTHOR OF GENESIS?

Now I must admit, I've always had an affinity for Egypt. I've been lucky enough to visit the pyramids and many of the ancient tourist sites, which were amazing. Being an artist, hieroglyphics always projected a majestic, graphic simplicity, and mystery to me. All that history and information locked up in an ancient form of writing that we know so little about.

I came across an article on website written by Henry Davis, about Egypt and its various links to Adam/Adamenemhept I and Genesis, a day after I thought about Ethiopia possibly being the location of Eden.

Mr. Davis presents a compelling case based on comparisons and translations of historic Israeli and Egyptian names of Gods, Pharaohs, Adam and Eve and a formula for Biblical lifespans. He states that many scholars ques-

tion the validity of the Biblical Exodus story because of another accounts of a people called Hyksos that were 12th dynasty Egyptian rulers expelled from Egypt. They see problems with ancient historians merging the two similar stories of Exodus and Hyksos that may have occurred centuries apart. (Pharaoh Adamenemhept I –The Author Of Genesis? Henry Davis, medium.com)

MEASURING THE SANCTUARY

In the book of Ezekiel 40-48 the Prophet Ezekiel had a vision of an angel who described and measured the third temple in preparation for the return of the Messiah. The angel demanded that Ezekiel remember all that he was told and then proclaimed the sacrificial laws and how they should purify themselves and dress.

Then the Lord appointed the Levites as ministers of the sanctuary and to slay the burnt offering and the sacrifices for the people. Only the Levites from the sons of Zadok were allowed to perform the Priestly duties of ministering to the Prince (?) and God in the Holy of Holies. (Ezekiel 40-47:1-13)

WHO IS THE PRINCE?

And the burnt offering that the prince shall offer unto the Lord in the sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish, and a ram without blemish.
(Ezekiel 46:4)

And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening.
(Ezekiel 46:2)

The prince in Ezekiel 46 is not the Messiah; he seems to be the overseer of Jerusalem, serving under the Messiah's authority. We know that this prince is not the Lord Jesus because he must make a sin offering for himself as well as the people: "On that day the prince is to provide a bull as a sin offer-

ing *for himself* and for all the people of the land" (Ezekiel 45:22), emphasis added). Whoever the prince is, he is a man that needs a sin offering.

According to premillennial, dispensation theology, this section of Ezekiel describes the worship of the Lord that will take place during the future 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth during the millennium (see Revelation 20). Christ will be reigning in Jerusalem. There will be a temple, the massive size of which is detailed by Ezekiel. The prince mentioned in Ezekiel 46, it appears, is the leader of the nation of Israel during this time. He is the representative of the nation of Israel and will bring offerings to the Lord and provide an example of devout worship (Who is the Prince in Ezekiel 46? Got Questions: Your questions. Biblical Answers. Got-questions.org).

TRIBES SOUTHERN BORDER NEAR EDEN?

Ezekiel was taken outside a house (part of the sanctuary), and watched as an angel measured the building's exterior dimensions, and both walked through a river of water that was ankle-deep on one side and increased on the other side, so much so, that they had to swim to cross.

The river flowed east from the house, through the country and desert to the sea by Ein Gedi and Eglaim. As the river passed, it healed whatever it came into contact with, all except the miry and marsh areas, used for salt (sounds like the Dead Sea.) A variety of fruit trees grew along both sides of the river and provided fruit to eat and leaves to make medicine from—sounds like Eden. Ezekiel 47:1-12. Ezekiel 47:13-21, lists the location and borders of the land that the Lord gave to the twelve tribes of Israel.

WAS EGYPT A GRANDSON OF NOAH?

In Genesis 9:18-20, the Bible states that from the three sons of Noah (Shem, Ham and Japheth) came the people who eventually scattered over the Earth, establishing towns, cities and countries throughout the known world. Egypt is the name of one of Noah's grandsons, and guess where he settled? If you said Egypt you are correct. So, if all these sons and daughters of Noah es-

established towns, cities and countries you'd think they would have treated one another as distant relatives throughout the known world. I'm surprised it's not mentioned more in the Bible, other than in Genesis.



A herd of goats grazing along desert valley road, Southern District, Israel

YOU TAKE THE HIGH ROAD

In an article called "The Sixteen Grandsons of Noah" I found a lot of information on the migration of Noah's ancestors. I have outlined below just one of them.

Secular history is replete with real cities and nations named after Biblical figures of the Old Testament, like the sons and grandsons of Noah. After the flood Noah's three sons and their wives were charged to repopulate the world through their children. (Genesis 10:1-32).

Noah had three sons and sixteen grandsons (Genesis 10) and after the Babel calamity his descendants spread out over the known world establishing cities and nations often named after them, or an ancestor.

The descendants of Noah's grandson Gomer went to the "north quarters," which is in New Testament times was called Galicia (Ezekiel 38:6), today northern Turkey. Historian Flavius Josephus states that the people called Galatians or Gaul's in his day were previously called Gomerites. Eventually they migrated to France and Spain, and for many centuries France was called Gaul and northwest Spain is called Galicia to this day.

The Welsh historian Davis records that some Gomerites migrated to what is now called Wales from France about three hundreds years after the flood, according to a traditional Wales belief; and the Walsh language is called Gomeraeg after their ancestor Gomer.

Others of their clan migrated to Armenia and Germany. The Hebrew word for Germany is *Ashkenaz*, which is the name of one of the sons of Gomer. (The Sixteen Grandsons of Noah, Harold Hunt and Russell Gregg, *Creation Magazine* website Creation 20(4):22-25, September 1998, creation.com)

It is amazing that with all the historical data secularist, with a straight face, declare that the majority of the Bible's stories are based on fairy tales and myths.

THE TOWER OF BABEL

In the days of Babel, the world spoke one language and when God noticed they were building a city and a tall brick tower to reach the heavens He became concerned. He said if as one people speaking one language can do this, then nothing they plan to do would be impossible. So God confused their language so no one understood each other and scattered them all over the world (Genesis 11:1-9). What a confusing day that must have been!

Before the Internet, after a few generations, if families were not close they'd lose track and interest in one another. My family was very close growing up, but after my grandparents, parents and uncles died the family began to lose touch and had their families to worry about.

After awhile, families wouldn't correspond, some moved, a few died, and a couple of generations later they do not know who you are.

It was a thousand times worse in the days before email, cell phones and the Internet, now with websites like Facebook we know what a cousin had for breakfast half a world away. And with the ancestry sites we may find that we are all related to one another.

WHO WAS MELCHIZEDEK, KING OF SALEM?

[...] he was priest of the Most High God. [...] He is without father or mother or genealogy. As a Son of God, having no beginning of days or end of life, a priest forever. [...] A man revered and compared to Jesus [...] (Hebrews 7:1-28)

After a battle, Abraham paid a tithe (a tenth of the booty) to Melchizedek, King of Jerusalem. Not much else is known about Melchizedek, but he is considered to be a great king and a prototype of the messiah.

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH ABRAHAM AND ABIMELEK?

This is a story of Abraham telling his wife Sarah to pose as his sister to protect him from being harmed by the local king, Abimelech. Abraham was concerned of being killed and Sarah, although advanced in years was so beautiful, would be taken and married by the king. This takes place after Ishmael's birth by Sarah's handmaiden Hagar and before Isaac was born. (Genesis 12:10-20)

In Genesis 26, Isaac and his wife Rebekah went through a similar story with the same king, Abimelech. This is the third story like this.

THE BIRTH OF ISAAC

Abraham was at least 100 and Sarah was 90, past the age of childbirth, when an angel visited and told them that Sarah would have a son. Sarah laughed to herself, because of her age, but the angel asked, "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?" To her delight she conceived and gave birth to Isaac and lived to see him grow into manhood.

God tested Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah. God stopped Abraham just as he was about to thrust his sword into Isaac, killing him as commanded.

The Lord declared, now I know you fear God, because you have not with-

held from me your son, your only son. I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky. (Genesis 22:1-18)

Sarah lived to 127 and Abraham had more children with his concubines who he sent away, further adding to the Arab nation. And he lived to the ripe old age of 175, (Genesis 25:1-11). Ishmael lived to 137 and had many children who became the 12 tribes of the Arab nation and lived in hostility, with all the tribes related to them, near eastern Egypt. (Genesis 25:13-18)

HOW DID THE HEBREW GET THEIR NAME?

My guess is that they came from Hebron, the revered "City of the Patriarchs." I've not come across anything that states that the Hebrew were named so because they lived in Hebron. Abraham, and his family, stayed there many years and it was stated in the Bible that Hebron was his favorite city. Also, that's where God made his covenant of circumcision with Abraham, and angels foretold of his barren wife Sarah conceiving and having a child.

Hebron is the traditional burial site of Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob (Israel) and Leah. Also, The name Hebron comes from the verb, *habar*, meaning to join, bind or team-up. The noun *habbura*, means strip or mark. (Abarim Publications' Biblical Dictionary, chabad.org)

TWO OF ISRAEL'S 12 TRIBES HAVE EGYPTIAN BLOOD

Joseph, married the daughter of an Egyptian priest and had two sons; Manasseh and Ephraim, his father Israel adopted and blessed them.

And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. (Genesis 41:45)

Bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude.

(Genesis 48:16)

And they became founders of two of the twelve tribes of Israel? Does this mean that the Egyptians were acknowledged as brothers from the line of Ham, the son of Noah? Or, once blessed by Israel and circumcised, they were accepted into the covenant of Abraham? If so, are the Jews and the Egyptians blood brothers in more than name?

LOT'S DAUGHTERS

After the angels saved Lot from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah Lot and his two daughters lived in a mountain cave near Zoar. Lot's daughters feared that because they were so isolated they would be the last of Lot's family, so they got Lot drunk and slept with him and they conceived and both had a male child. (Genesis 19:30-38) Was this a normal consideration.

WHAT IS IT?

God rained manna from heaven to feed the people. The word *manna* literally means "what is it." Scripture describes it as a white wafer with the taste of honey and coriander seed (Exodus 16:31.) While wandering for forty years in the desert, they also ate quail and meat from their livestock and drank of their milk.

ARK OF COVENANT AND NOAH'S ARK

While writing this book I have found myself asking questions that have never crossed my mind, such as, is there a word association of Noah's Ark and the Ark of the Covenant? Interestingly enough, thankfully, it has crossed other minds as well. One for Israel, a messianic ministry, has published on the web an article called "Why Is It Called an Ark?"

In Hebrew the words for ark are different, and yet, the theme of salvation resonates between three arks. Noah's Ark, The Ark of the Covenant and the Moses' Basket (which is called ark in Hebrew) The word *ta-va* (like Noah's *ta-va*) means floating zoo in Hebrew and is used twice in the Bible. Not only did it refer to an enormous boat, but also to a small cradle (the Moses' basket). Noah's Ark was salvation from judgment and death, Moses' basket/ark was

deliverance from slavery and death; the Ark of the Covenant and Tabernacle was a place where the people could be saved from the wages of sin.

Noah's Ark is very much supposed to be linked in our minds with the Tabernacle and all its accouterments, including the essential Ark of the Covenant. Equally, Moses' appearance in his "ark" or basket foreshadows Yeshua's presentation in a manger, because Moses was a prelude to the Savior to come. (Why Is It Called an Ark? One For Israel, oneforIsrael.org)

DID KING SOLOMON HAVE MANY CHILDREN?

King Solomon had a harem of over 1,000 wives, princesses and concubines. The Bible lists only three offspring. God warned Solomon that because some of his wives worshiped heathen gods and they eventually will turn his heart from the Lord. The Lord was right and was angered when an aging Solomon built sacrifice alters to others gods. (1 Kings 11)



My Israeli tour group, not King Solomon's children, Israel

CHAPTER TEN:

NEW TESTAMENT QUESTIONS

BROTHER, WOULD YOU ENLIGHTEN ME?

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

In today's world a virgin birth via artificial insemination is not a problem. With God, two thousand years ago, it was not a problem either.

The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the most high will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. (Luke 1:35)

I recently watched a movie called "The Young Messiah," and to my surprise it was excellent. It portrays one year in the life of Jesus at the age of seven. The scenery and location shots were very well done and the actors were incredibly believable in their roles and the story line was very interesting.

What made it so interesting to me was that it told a story of how Mary and Joseph may have raised Jesus as a child, knowing he was the Son of God, and how they and Jesus may have lived, the questions they may have asked and how they may have handled them.

The movie is very well done and should not offend any Christian, regardless of their parental, and movie critiquing, experience!

WHO WERE THE THREE WISE MEN?

We assume that there were three wise men because of the three gifts that were given: gold, incense, and myrrh (Matthew 2:11). [...] There could have been many more. Tradition says that there were three and their names were Gaspar/Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, but since the Bible does not say, we have no way of knowing whether the tradition is accurate.

Did the wise men visit Jesus at the stable on the night of His birth? Some people believe they may have come days, months, or possibly even years

later based on Matthew 2:11 which says the wise men visited and worshiped Jesus in a house, not at the stable.

We know that the magi were wise men from "the East," most likely Persia, or modern-day Iran. This means the wise men traveled 800 to 900 miles to see the Christ child. Most likely, the magi knew of the writings of the prophet Daniel, who in time past had been the chief of the court seers in Persia [....]

The wise men were guided to look for the King of the Jews by a miraculous stellar event, the "Star of Bethlehem," which they called "His star" (Matthew 2:2.) They came to Jerusalem and asked concerning the birth of Christ, and they were directed to Bethlehem (Matthew 2:4-8). [...] When they arrived in Bethlehem, they gave costly gifts to Jesus and worshiped Him [....]

So, the magi were men who 1) read and believed God's Word, 2) sought Jesus, 3) recognized the worth of Christ, 4) humbled themselves to worship Jesus, and 5) obeyed God rather than man. They were truly wise men! (What does the Bible say about the three wise men (Magi)? Got Questions: Your Questions. Biblical Answers, Gotquestions.org)

WHAT WAS THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM?

Historically there is not much to go on, but there are two theories worth mentioning that I found on the *EarthSky* website, written by Mr. Larry Sessions:

1. It may have been a nova or supernova that was recorded by the Chinese in 5 B.C, and lasted for two months.
2. Astronomers know there were a series of close meetings of three planets: Jupiter, Saturn and Mars in 6 and 5 B.C. in the constellation Pisces (the Fishes) which was considered the astrological sign of the Jews, and later became a secret sign for Christians. Planets were considered wandering stars to the ancients and to many had great astrological or mythical significance. (Was the Christmas Star real? Mr. Larry Sessions, 2019, *EarthSky*, earthSky.org)

HOW MANY BROTHERS DID JESUS HAVE?

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:7)

Growing up Catholic I was taught that Jesus was an only child. The bible never states categorically that Mary had children with Joseph.

There are two verses, Mark 6:3 and Matthew 13:55 that say: *Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?*

Actually, that does sound conclusive, but through the centuries there have been three views discussed:

1. Their parents were Joseph and Mary and were siblings, half brothers and sisters of Jesus.
2. They were the children of Joseph by a prior marriage.
3. They were cousins of Jesus

(Did Jesus have any brothers, sisters or siblings? Bibleinfo, Bibleinfo.com)

BIBLE VERSES ABOUT JESUS' BROTHER AND SISTERS

Let us first sum up what we know from the New Testament of the brothers and sisters of Jesus. They are mentioned in Matthew 12:46-50, 13:55-56; Mark 3:31, 6:3; Luke 8:19; John 2:12, 7:3; Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 9:5; and Paul speaks of a James the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:19.)

Of the brothers, there seem to have been four who are named in Matthew 13:55: James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. The books of Matthew and Mark mention sisters, but neither the number nor the names are given.

In Matthew 13:54-56 the Nazarenes ask, [...] *"Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they asked. Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren't all his sisters with us? Where than did this man get*

all these things?” There must have been at least two, probably more, and apparently married, and resided in Nazareth (How Many Brothers and Sisters Did Jesus Have? christianity.com).

WAS JESUS JEWISH?

Believe it or not, many people do not realize that Jesus was Jewish and considered a rabbi (teacher) from the royal tribe of Judah. And that he was born to a virgin, named Mary, in Bethlehem, a few miles south of Jerusalem around 2,000 years ago.

Jesus lived with his mother and stepfather Joseph who was a stonemason and carpenter in the hillside village of Nazareth (population 300-400) about 15 miles west of the Sea of Galilee in northern Israel.

WHAT IS THE BEST-KEPT SECRET IN ISRAEL?

The fact that Yeshua (Jesus) and all his disciples were Jewish, and the New Testament stories are historical and took place in Israel. Most Rabbis won't acknowledge the fact that Yeshua came to fulfill the scriptures not to replace them. When many Jews learn this information it blows their mind and it ignites a desire to read both the Old and New Testaments, as well as, question their rabbi on what is the truth. From early childhood they were warned not to read scriptures like Isaiah 53 in the Tanakh, which has many messianic prophecies, or the Gentile's New Testament; and not to mention the name of Yeshua, which means salvation in Hebrew.

Old Testament scripture has thirty prophecies about Yeshua, and after doing their religious homework, many believe that the New Testament fulfills the Old Testament messianic prophecies and become messianic Jews, believers in Yeshua—which they say, makes them feel like “a complete Jew.”

WHEN DID JESUS START HIS MINISTRY?

Around the age of 30 Jesus started his ministry teaching and often debating fellow Jews and rabbis wherever he roamed, which was in Israel—70% of the time in the Sea of Galilee area.

Jesus visited and preached in Jerusalem's Second Temple and many local synagogues. He read scripture, taught in parables, and gave witness to God's love for Israel. Jesus also cast out demons, healed the afflicted, raised the dead, made the crippled walk and the blind see.

Throughout his travels he gathered many Jewish followers during his short three year ministry, twelve of which he made disciples before he was crucified, died and rose from the dead.

JUDAS ISCARIOT

Are there lessons to be learned from the disciple Judas? He is known by his betrayal of Jesus, for thirty coins of silver and leading the Romans to the Mount of Olives to arrest the man he greeted with a kiss.

"It's easy to dismiss Judas as a villain or a victim, but I'm struck by the fact that, in many ways, he was just like me." States Colin Smith.

Judas followed Jesus for three years, he witnessed the miracles, heard the Sermon on the Mount, got to know Jesus up close and personal, and he still betrayed Jesus.

Judas teaches us that even the ultimate environment for incubating faith cannot change the human heart.

Satan made a relentless assault on Judas's soul and ours as well. Unconfessed sin always opens the door to Satan's power. And the story of Judas reminds us that nothing good can come from giving up on Jesus (4 Things We Can Learn from Judas, Colin Smith, Christianity.com)

Boy, that resonates that with me. All my life I've believed, searched and studied and professed my love of Jesus, and then something will come up and I'll sell our soul to gratify our desires.

PHARISEE DO YOU HAVE A COIN?

The Pharisees were always trying to find contradiction in Jesus' teachings, so they asked him if it is lawful to give tribute to Caesar? Jesus rebuked them and asked for a coin. Jesus asked the Pharisees, *"whose image was on the coin,"* they said *'Caesars.'* Jesus responded *"render to Caesar the things that are Caesars, and to God the things that are God's."* (Mark 12:14-17)

This also applies today to us as the things of this world divert our attention from the treasures of God. When was the last time you shared with Jesus your innermost personal thoughts? Or thanked him for a child's love? Our time here is short, As Matthew 7:7 says: *Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and the door will be opened to you.*

WHO WAS THE CORNERSTONE?

The cornerstone is also called the foundation stone and is the first stone set in the construction of a masonry building. All other stones are set to this stone that determines the position of a building. In ancient times they would sacrifice an animal or human and let its blood flow over the stone. Jesus is God's cornerstone, blood sacrifice and all. The twelve apostles, prophets and every Christian, from then until now, represent the many stones of a Heavenly building that must reach to the stars—and by the look of things there will many more building stones in the future.



The Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, Israel

*Therefore thus says the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation [...]
(Isaiah 28:16)*

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. (Ephesians 2:20)

Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him does this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone, which was rejected by you builders, which is become the corner stone. (Acts 4:10-11)

HOW MANY DISCIPLES WERE THERE?

After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. (Luke 10:1)

Originally there were twelve disciples and Jesus added sixty more and sent them out two by two to heal the sick and proclaim the gospel.

ARE THE MIRACLES OF JESUS REAL?

The miracles of Jesus are well documented in the Bible, as well as, published non-biblical sources. The first miracle was changing water into wine at the wedding at Cana in Galilee; Jesus healed ten lepers, a dying Roman centurion's servant, a blind beggar, a person that was mute and deaf, a woman ill for 18 years, walked on water and stopped a storm, cast out demons, filled a boat's nets with fish, fed thousands of people with a few loaves of bread and fish, made the lame walk, need I go on?

WHAT IS THE WATER OF LIFE?

When you look in the mirror what do you see? Up to 60% of the adult human body is water. Each day we must consume water to stay healthy and alive, and that's for only a short period of time in the grand scheme of things.

What Jesus is talking about is spiritual water. He wants us to drink in His love and encourage others to do so as well. Jesus came to redeem souls by the grace of God and our faith in Him. When our heart truly tastes Jesus, the Water of Life, our mind and soul will want nothing else.

But whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. (John 4:14)

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. (Revelation 22:1)

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is thirsty of the fountain of the water of life freely. (Revelation 21:6)

WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

One of the most interesting things about the Holy Spirit is we do not know a lot about Him. He seldom takes form and we do not have many visual images of Him as we do with God and Jesus.

Many people don't realize that the Holy Spirit was very active throughout the Old Testament from Genesis to the birth of Christ and Jesus warns not to blaspheme the Holy Spirit, because that sin will not be forgiven.

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.
(Genesis 1:2)

And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of council and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. (Isaiah 11:2)

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesied about the Holy Spirit and Jesus. He's the third person in the Trinity; the Holy Spirit of God who resides within us; a Comforter; a messenger of God; He appeared as tongues of fire to the Apostles and as a dove landing on Jesus when John baptized Him.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. (John 14:26)

When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. (John 16:13)

If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray to the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees him

not, neither knows him: but you know him; for he dwells with you, and shall be in you. (John 14:15-17)

Wherefore I say to you. All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. (Matthew 12:31)

THE HOLY GHOST VERSES THE HOLY SPIRIT

During the Middle Ages, Christian translators and theologians created a way to reflect their belief that the Holy Ghost was not the Holy Spirit. They coined the phrase "Holy Ghost" to designate the Third Person of the Trinity and used Holy "Spirit" when referring to the Spirit of God then in the 16th century the printers used small case letters for "spirit and "holy spirit" in the Old Testament. These translations do not exist in the Bible. (From holy spirit to holy ghost, Paul Sumner, Hebrew Streams, hebrew-streams.org)

WAS JESUS NERVOUS ABOUT DYING?

There was a moment in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was so nervous he sweat drops of blood and asked his Father to lift the burden of what was to come. Jesus knew he was to be brutally tortured and crucified; and as Jesus the man weakened, Jesus the Son of God, rose, submitting his spirit, body and soul, to the will of his Father and the mission ahead.

And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in agony He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. (Luke 22:43-44)

At the crucifixion, exhausted and wracked with pain, Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" He then gave up His spirit and last breath as a man.



Judas betrays Jesus. Basilica of the Agony, Garden of Gethsemane, Israel

COULD YOU CARRY THE SINS OF THE WORLD?

I once saw a scene in a movie where a soldier used his body to cover a hand grenade that was about to explode—saving the lives of his fellow soldiers. The self-sacrifice and bravery that it would take for a person to do that is seldom witnessed.

Jesus did that for us by submitting his mind, body and spirit to the will of his Father. His atoning blood sacrifice was required to bridge the divide between God and man.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

Greater love has no one than this, that a man lay down one's life for his friends. (John 15:13)

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)

LEONARDO DA VINCI'S LAST SUPPER

He rose from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poured water into a bowl, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. (John 13:4)

If Jesus took off his outer clothing to wash the disciples feet he would have been in his under-clothing (underwear) and women would not be allowed in the room. Plus, he may have been naked when he wrapped and girded a towel around himself. I should think that the traditional role of first century women would apply here; they more than likely prepared and served the food and were asked to leave the room when Jesus washed the feet of the Apostles. No doubt, the women were disciples and more than likely shared the "last supper" with Jesus.

As for the theory of women apostles in da Vinci's *Last Supper*, the first figure to the right side of Jesus looks effeminate; and is one of three without a beard; and one of six wearing a brooch. And he is very pale, which was typical more so of women not working outside under the sun, as were the tanned male apostles who were mostly fishermen, and walking far and wide evangelizing.

More than likely Leonardo may have done this intentionally to create a little controversy. If my memories serves me correctly Leonardo painted *The Last Supper* in 1498, well over fourteen hundred years after the fact; he never went to Israel and definitely never saw a color photo of *The Last Supper*, but he may have viewed the paintings by Cosmo Rosselli circ: 1476-82; or Domenico Ghirlandaio circ. 1476-80.

In their "*Last Supper*" paintings, which predated Leonardo's, are a few beardless apostles that look effeminate, and I'm sure in those days a few men were beardless and effeminate.

Leonardo, Cosimo, and Domenico were great artists And as with all artists, great or not, creating something from nothing is the challenge. Their imagination is their reality, faith is a test of talent, and their color palate is what brings a painting to life.

MIRACLES AT THE CRUCIFIXION

The events of the crucifixion were recorded and documented by at least seven contemporary and historical figures. Many mentioned there was a three-hour eclipse witnessed throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Roman historian Thallus, in 52 A.D. recorded the eclipse, and Julies Africanus, a leader in the Roman Empire quoted Thallus' in an account from his five-volume set called "*History of the World.*"

Phlegon of Tralles, Pontius Pilate and Pliny the Elder all mentioned an earthquake on the day of the crucifixion. The U.S. Agency NOAA, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has a website that lists all earthquakes

in recorded history and lists an earthquake that happened on 33 A.D. in Palestine (Israel). Published geological studies in scientific journals have also noted an earthquake that happened on 33 A.D.

Pontius Pilate wrote a letter to the emperor that attests to people rising from the graves and there are many secular accounts of this event. (Miracles at the Crucifixion of Christ, YouTube video, 2017)

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? [...] Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in torn from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. (Matthew 27:46-54)

PHARISEES HEAL THYSELF

Will the Catholic Church recover from the pedophilia scandal? Of course it will. They will need a major course correction and cleansing, but as they say, time heals all wounds.

As long as the church has existed it has contributed many things to society and to the benefit of mankind, such as: art, music, architecture, philosophy, theology, education and the preservation of literary, religious and historical documents. When God and man work together they create wonderful things such as St. Teresa of Calcutta and the Sistine Chapel, or when left to their own devices and with the help of Satan they screw up—The Inquisition and the Crusades are two classic cases in point.

B.C.E./C.E. MODERN DATING SYSTEM

Did you know that many people in the academic, scientific and religious communities have started to use the dating system B.C.E. (before common era) and C.E. (common era) rather than B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. (Anno Domini, which means "in the year of the Lord," in Latin)? To me, B.C.E. is simply an abbreviation for (Before Christ's Era) and C.E. (Christ's Era.)

The word-police are still hard at work 24/7/360°. It began years ago by people renaming things like "Mankind" to "Humankind," which spawned the "Politically Correct" (PC) movement and books of PC words and phrases approved and sanctified by the OZ like word-police; to be used in the media, places of higher learning and in public discourse; presently it is morphing into an anti-white-male-privilege-group-think political agenda. It's beyond me how the dog's tail wags the dog—where it ends is anyone's guess.

1 Corinthians 8:10-13, says, even though we can eat everything, don't eat whatever upsets a weaker brother or sister. In this case I'm not eating but turning what may offend people, on both sides of the argument, into a positive alternative, without malice. So whatever is used: PC, B.C., A.D., B.C.E. or C.E., Christ will never be abbreviated out of my life.

CHAPTER ELEVEN:

OF ANGELS AND MEN

HEAVEN'S SPECIAL FORCES

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angel, And prevailed not: neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: He was cast out to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

(Revelation 12:7-9)

This is the story of God's angels defending the birth of Jesus and his legacy. It's hard to comprehend a war in Heaven between angels—but one third of the angels followed Satan in rebellion against God. (Revelation 12:4)

The ancient serpent reads as a clue that goes back to the Garden of Eden. Satan now has an army of angels and they have been banished to earth fermenting hate, greed and envy throughout every nation, believers or not, until the second coming and judgment day. By the blood sacrifice of the blameless lamb, Jesus, and being born again in Him, we will not have to worry about that.

ARCHANGELS

The Bible only lists Michael as an archangel but mentions Gabriel and many unnamed angels that have had a number of duties: ministering to Jesus; announcing messages to God's prophets; saving Daniel in the lions den; engaging in spiritual combat and incinerating Sodom and Gomorrah, just to mention a few. And of course the fallen archangel Lucifer, better known as Satan, is mentioned many times.

There are other types of angels: Cherubim, who were placed at the Garden of Eden to keep Adam and Eve out after they had sinned, and golden figures of them were placed on the Ark of the Covenant; Seraphim, six-winged angels who sing God's praises without ceasing; Principalities and Powers, other ranks of angels mentioned in the Bible, whether fallen or not.

Angels are mentioned 273 times in the Bible. They were created to live forever. The Bible tells us that angels were present when God created the world (Job 38:1-7), they didn't marry, are wise and take an interest in the affairs of men and perform the will of God.

[...] there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents. (Luke 15:10)

This is so amazing, and this scripture applies to all of us. I watched Kenye West being interviewed about his conversion and new *Jesus is King* album and film—AMEN, AMEN, AMEN. What this man is now presenting is hope, love and vision to millions of sinners (and believers) worldwide—Thank you Mr. West!! There's going to be millions of lost souls turning their backs on Satan, and the angels will be rejoicing around the clock.

We should be very happy for Mr. West. What he is doing is a blessing to himself and to all of us. Believers worldwide should evangelize to the best of their ability. That's the reason I'm writing this book. Even though my faith may wander, moments as we are witnessing with Mr. West, should embolden all of us to join the call.

For he shall give his angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. (Psalm 91:11)

What is man, that you are mindful of him? and the son of man, that you visit him? You have made him a little lower than the angels and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him to have dominion over the works of your hands; you put all things under his feet. (Psalm 8:4-6)

In the above psalm David is asking God why he has blessed and protected mankind, making him the ruler over everything on earth. He also states that God made man a little lower than the angels. Hope we'll still get a full set of wings!

And I fell at his feet to worship him. And the angel said unto me, See you do it not: I am but a fellow servant, and one of your brothers that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 19:10)

ANGEL WINGS

I cannot tell you how many times I have dreamt of flying, with and without wings. I always loved Jimmy Stewart's movie *It's a Wonderful Life*, where an angel gets his wings after helping George Bailey (Stewart) realize his blessings after a series of traumatic moments in his life.

He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be your shield and buckler. (Psalm 91:4)

MORNING STAR

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. (Revelation 22:16)

WHY IS JESUS CALLED THE "MORNING STAR"?

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I think it relates to HOPE and his immanent second coming. When Venus rises, it means the sun will follow very soon (in a morning, usually within an hour or two, sometimes just a matter of minutes). Christ's coming—and in a broad sense this could apply to both his first and his second coming—means/will mean God's light is about to shine forever on the universe, making all wrongs right, wiping away all tears, and fulfilling Revelation, with the creation of the new heavens and new earth, etc.

On a long dark night, the appearance of the morning star means daybreak is imminent. In the long dark night of suffering on earth, Jesus being seen as

the morning star means the eternal morning is about to dawn. Hence, Christ as the morning star is a picture of great promise and hope.

In one of my books I call Jesus the Morning Star and several readers have gotten very upset, wondering why I would give Jesus a name that belongs to Satan. They are of course referring to Isaiah 14:12: "How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!"

The point is that Morning Star was a name for Lucifer before his fall, and there is no inconsistency with two very different beings called by the same name. Lucifer was a creature of beauty and power. Christ is God, the Creator, beautiful and powerful beyond measure, the one Lucifer rebelled against. But the name Morning Star is not tainted—it is Satan who is tainted. Obviously this is the case, or Morning Star wouldn't be used of Christ as it is in Revelation 22:1-15, nor used in a positive way as it is in 1 Peter 1 and Revelation 2. (Jesus, Venus, and the Morning Star, Randy Alcorn, Eternal Perspective Ministries, www.epm.org)

JESUS TALKED TO MOSES AND ELIAS

Jesus was visited by: God, the Holy Spirit, Satan, angels and prophets during the course of His short life on earth. They were there to deliver messengers from God, to fulfill all requests of Jesus, to help Him through the pending anguish of His crucifixion—Jesus was probably tormented by Satan daily.

And after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them up to an high mountain, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Jesus. (Matthew 17:1-3)

EVIL SPIRITS

Do you believe in guardian angels, evil spirits, or the Devil? Well if you believe in God you had better believe in the whole package. Evil spirits, demons and the Devil are hard at work trying to claim your soul. The Bible is

chock-a-block full with scripture that have examples and warning that we should take serious if we intend to reside with God in Heaven one day.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, prowls as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking someone he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8)

For we wrestle not flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Ephesians 6:12)

SATAN, LUCIFER, DEVIL

This guy is the top dog when it comes to evil and sin. He and his minions have been corrupting souls since Adam and Eve, none stop—24/7/360°.

Satan was one of God's angels, probably on par with Michael, but his envy corrupted his mind and lust for power corrupted his soul. Thankfully his days are coming to an end and the world will be rid of him and his brood of vipers.

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made [...](Genesis 3:1)

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Revelation 12:9)

How did you fall from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How were you cut down to the ground, where you weaken the nations! For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet you shall be brought down to hell [...](Isaiah 14:12-15)

CHAPTER TWELVE:

OF LAND AND SEA

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE PRO AND CON

About thirty years ago a small but vocal group of Biblical archaeologists, nicknamed minimalists, discounted much of the Bible's historical accuracy.

Their two main tenants are:

1. The Bible cannot be considered reliable evidence for what had happened in ancient Israel.
2. "Israel" itself is a problematic subject for historical study.

Advocates, nicknamed maximalists, believe in the accuracy of the Bible—and point to many archaeological excavations and artifacts found throughout Israel, as well as, people and places mentioned in the Bible that have been verified and dated.

Despite the efforts of the Bible minimalist, archaeology throughout Israel, Egypt & the Middle East has proven many of the cities and towns mentioned in the Bible existed where mentioned. And, over the next millennia there will be more archaeological excavations that will render historical artifacts and treasures from Israel and Jerusalem's past, which will further substantiate the accounts as portrayed in the Bible.

DEAD SEA SCROLLS

In the 1940's Bedouins living in the Dead Sea desert area, known as Qumran, found 11 ancient caves that were used by a Jewish religious sect called Essenes. The Essenes, who lived nearby, hid a variety of things in these caves including over 900 Old Testament manuscripts that were written by them, dating back over 2,000 years. Manuscripts dating back to the 8th century also have been found. The text has great historical, religious and linguistic significance because they include the second-oldest known surviving *Tanakh* manuscripts. There are six near complete manuscripts and the vast majority are scraps with text.



Ancient caves used by Jewish sect called Essenes to hide Dead Sea Scrolls, Southern District, Qumran, Israel

The Dead Sea Scrolls are thought to be some of the earliest copies of the *Tanakh* (Old Testament) and have been found to be similar to today's text with very few differences. In 2017 two additional caves were found and are presently being excavated.

ARTIFACTS FROM THE TIME OF THE CRUCIFIXION

It is rare to find artifacts that directly relate to historic figures. But over the year's archaeologists have been reclaiming pieces of Israel's history throughout Israel's many dig sites—one of which I participated in at ancient Tiberias near the shore of the Sea of Galilee. We didn't find anything of importance that week but I had a great time.

The first is the Caiaphas ossuary, a burial box that has an inscription carved on it that reads: Joseph, son of Caiaphas. Caiaphas was the High Priest, from 18-36 AD, that was instrumental in the trial of Jesus.

The second is a limestone block with a partially intact inscription mentioning Pontius Pilate, a prefect of the Roman province of Judaea from 26-36 A.D. Discovered in an archaeological site in the coastal city of Caesarea Maritima, in 1961. This carved block is only one of two references to Pontius Pilate mentioned in the four gospels, as the person who sent Jesus to be crucified.

The third is a copper ring that may have belonged to Pontius Pilate and whose name is inscribed on it.

The fourth is evidence of a Roman crucifixion, a heel bone that has a large iron nail through it—the only one of its kind.

I've been a subscriber of *Biblical Archaeology Review* for many years and have read many articles on artifacts similar to the treasures listed above. They have a number of archaeological digs all over Israel that you can participate in, from one week to many, on land and sometimes underwater.

Recently I came across a website called listverse.com which listed their "Ten Top Relics of Jesus Christ." As with the Shroud of Turin, the debate is on going and the authenticity is uncertified but they are old, historic and very interesting. A few are listed below.

1. The Holy Tunic of Christ, worn by Jesus before or during crucifixion
2. The Holy Lance, the lance used to pierce Jesus' side
3. Crown of Thorns, placed on Jesus' head by the Roman soldiers
4. The True Cross, Hundreds of pieces of the cross are in many churches
5. The Shroud of Turin, a linen burial cloth imprinted with the image of Jesus
6. The Holy Grail, cup used by Jesus at the last supper

OLD TESTAMENT ARTIFACTS

On the World Video Bible School website, there is a video called "9 discoveries that confirm the Bible / Proof of God," they discuss nine artifacts and places that correlate to the biblical stories found in the Bible. Many are recent discoveries that discount minimalist claims of no evidence, no truth.

Hezekiah's Tunnel

A 583 yard water channel carved beneath the City of David. The Bible says that King Hezekiah blocked the spring's water outside the city and diverted it inside into the Pool of Siloam, protecting it from an Assyrian attack.

Sennacherib Prism

A Hexagonal clay prism, dating back to 691 B.C., It lists campaigns of Sennacherib until the start of the final war against Babylon and includes a description of the tribute received from Hezekiah, King of Judah.

Pool of Shiloam

In 2004, Construction workers uncovered the Pool of Siloam in Old Jerusalem. The Second Temple period pool is where the account of the miracle of Jesus healing a man, blind from birth, took place.



Tel Dan Inscription

A fragmentary stela containing the first historical reference and evidence of the "House of David." Discovered at Tel Dan, northern Israel, 1993.

Cyrus Cylinder

A clay cylinder document issued by Cyrus the Great in 539 BC, describing the conquest of Babylon. It was excavated in 1972.

Hittite Tablets

Bible critics had long sneered at references in the Bible of a people called the Hittites. Their opinion was that the Hittites were simply one of the many mythical people made up by Bible writers. Toward the end of the 19th century, Hittite monuments were uncovered at Carchemish on the Euphrates River in Syria, proving the Bible right. (from an article written by Dennis Leap, called "Archaeology Proves Bible History Accurate," on the Trumpet.com website).

IS THERE A DETECTIVE IN THE HOUSE?

Yes there is and his name is J. Warner Wallace, a cold-case homicide detective in Torrance, California. Mr. Wallace who was an atheist until he was 35, converted to Christianity after investigating the gospels as potential eyewitness accounts to the life of Jesus.

He has written four books addressing the evidence for Christianity, one of which is Cold-Case Christianity. In an article called, "Is there any evidence for Jesus outside the Bible," he researched the evidence for Jesus from outside Bible sources.

Mr. Wallace has researched a number of ancient classical accounts of Jesus from pagan, non-Christian sources, and lists them on his website Coldcase-christianity.com.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN:

BIBLICAL FACTS AND FIGURES

FROM CREATION TO JOSEPH

These dates are formulated from the dates recorded in the *Book of Genesis* by James Ussher, the 17th century Archbishop of Armagh, Ireland.

The Creation: 4004 B.C.

Death of Adam: 3074

Birth of Noah: 2948

Deluge: 2348

Death of Noah: 1998

Confusion of Tongues: 2233

Birth of Abram: 1996

Birth of Ismael: 1910

Birth of Isaac: 1896

Birth of Esau and Jacob: 1836

Birth of Joseph: 1745

Joseph sold into Egypt: 1728

Death of Isaac: 1716

Death of Jacob: 1689

Death of Joseph: 1635

Bishop Ussher, one of history's most famous historians, published *The Annals of the World*, a 1,600 page complete history of the world in 1650 A.D.

He was a well-respected academic, theologian and scholar.

(The World: Born in 4004 BC? Larry Pierce, 2006)

<https://answersingenesis.org/bible-timeline/the-world-born-in-4004-bc/>)

CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS

Why is the Christian church so divided? I know the history and you know the adage about a house divided. Jesus didn't send his disciples out to spread the gospel and divide into denominations.

Google's search engine lead me to a website called philvaz.com which lists a total of 47,722 Christian Denominations worldwide as of 2019 A.D. 47,722 can you wrap your mind around that?

COPTIC CHRISTIANS

The Copts are one of the oldest Christian communities in the Middle East and Africa. Although integrated in the larger Egyptian nation state, the Copts (which means Egyptian) have survived as a distinct community since 42-62 A.D. They are estimated to be 5 to 20 percent of the Egyptian population. They pride themselves on the apostolicity of the Egyptian Church whose founder, Mark, is the author of the Gospel of Mark and it's first bishop.

For sixteen centuries the Coptic Church has been out of communion with both the Roman Catholic Church and the various Eastern orthodox churches. In 452 A.D. Christian leaders met at the Council of Chalcedon, in what is now Kadikoy, Turkey, to discuss the incarnation of Christ, one person who shares two distinct natures, which became orthodoxy. The Coptic understanding was that Christ is one nature from two natures. In this understanding Christ is from, not in, two natures: full humanity and full divinity. There was some controversy over whether they actually believed that or if they were misunderstood, maligned and exiled due to their refusal to take part in politics, and even a rivalry between Roman and Alexandrian bishops—surprise, surprise. (What is Coptic Christianity, and what do Coptic Christians believe? 2020 Got Questions, gotquestions.org, <https://www.gotquestions.org/Coptic-Christianity.html>)

RELIGION BY THE NUMBERS

Christians today are the largest religious group in the world. As of 2015 there are an estimated 2.3 billion Christians, 1.8 billion Muslims, 16.5 million Jews, of which, there are approximately 500,000 Messianic Jews

Christians make up nearly a third of earth's 7.3 billion people, according to a Pew Research Center demographic analysis. Not bad numbers for a small village rabbi. (Christians remain world's largest religious group, Conrad

Hackett and David McClendon, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/05/christians-remain-worlds-largest-religious-group-but-they-are-declining-in-europe/>)

DID YOU KNOW

Solomon had 700 wives, princesses and 300 concubines.

Hebrew's were allowed to sell daughters and sons as slaves.

Moses led 600,000 men, plus their families out of Egypt.

The word Rabbi is never mentioned in the *Tanakh* (Old Testament).

Jesus is the first person to be called Rabbi.

Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies, 30 in the Old Testament.

Over 2,000 Biblical prophecies have been fulfilled.

Jesus is mentioned more times in the Quran than Muhammad.

Jesus was most likely not born on the 25th of December.

Jesus had several siblings.

The Bible is historically accurate.

The Bible is the world's best selling book.

Armenian Christians celebrated Jesus' birthday on JAN-6.

All the rabbi's clothing and components of the Tabernacle of Moses are built and stored in Jerusalem, ready for the third Temple to be built.

Ancient Israel's greatest enemy was the Philistines who inhabited the southern seacoast of Canaan.

Unicorns are mentioned in the Bible. Job 39:9-11, Numbers 23:22, Psalm 92:10, Deuteronomy 33:17

Horses aren't afraid of battle. Job 39:19-25, Jeremiah 8:6

DEAD SEA AND SEA OF GALILEE

The lowest land area below sea level is the Dead Sea, located between Israel and Jordan. It is 1,355 feet below sea level and is the second saltiest body of water in the world. Its maximum depth is approximately 1,050' deep and it measures 42 miles long and 11 miles wide at its widest point.

The Dead Sea is completely landlocked, with the Jordan River the only major water source flowing into it; there are also smaller rivers and streams

flowing down from the surrounding hills that feed into the sea. With an average annual rainfall of 2-4" and despite a few recently found undersea water fissures, the Dead Sea is going the way of the Dodo bird; or Sodom and Gomorrah, which is said to have been located somewhere in this area.

Back in the day, salt was very valuable and was used to purchase or barter with. The Roman's controlled access to the Dead Sea and sometimes paid their soldiers in salt. Not my idea of a good day's pay but it obviously worked for them.

The Sea of Galilee, located in northern Israel, is 700 feet below sea level and was the world's lowest freshwater lake, until the fresh water lake, .3 miles, under the Antarctic was found. Jesus spent most of his ministry preaching in this area. Also called Lake Kinneret, the historian Flavius Josephus, around 50 A.D., described it as having a thriving fishing industry with 230 regularly working boats and 9 cities along it's shores. Its approximate dimensions are 13 miles long by 8 miles wide and its maximum depth is 140.' Its main water source is the Jordan River and local fishermen have only three types of fish to catch: tilapia, sardine and catfish. (Sea of Galilee, New World Encyclopedia)

I've had the privilege of crossing the Sea of Galilee by boat and swimming in the Dead Sea, both equally amazing. I was a little nervous though when I first viewed the 60' Galilee tour boat as I walked down the pier where she was tied up. The hull looked high mid-ship and the bow had been wacked a few times and was shoddily repaired. I thought to myself, "I may have to swim to get across," so when I first stepped onboard I took a quick look-see before we cast off. She may have looked a little shaky, but she turned out to be a sturdy craft that held 25 people easily and cut through the calm water on our way to the Biblical city of Capernaum.



Tour boat, Sea of Galilee, Israel

As you know Jesus walked on water here, but did you know there are scriptures that prophesy that event?

*Who alone spreads out the heavens, and treads upon the waves of the sea.
(Job 9:8)*

[...] There, where the billows surge and swell, thou still dost walk; Lord of each crested wave [...](Psalm 77:19)

OLD TESTAMENT NAMES OF GOD

Elohim, God

Adonai, Lord, Master

Yahweh, The Lord

Abba, Daddy or Father

El Elyon, God Most High

El Roi, The God Who Sees

El Shaddai, God Almighty

Yahweh Yireh, The Lord Will Provide

Yahweh Nissi, The Lord My Banner

Yahweh Rapha, The Lord That Heals

Yehweh Shalom, The Lord is Peace

(<https://www.ibelieve.com/faith/10-powerful-names-of-god-and-what-they-mean-for-us-today.html>) Debbie McDaniel

NEW TESTAMENT NAMES OF JESUS

Yeshua, Jesus, in Hebrew means salvation or Savior

Christ, Messiah, in Greek

Emmanuel, God with Us

Rabbi, Teacher

Almighty One

Bread of Life

Light of the World

Lamb of God

Prince of Peace

THE NAMES AND HISTORY OF THE APOSTLES OF JESUS

1. Peter, Simon, Cephas, Rock, God has heard, Early follower of John the Baptist, leader and spokesman, only married Apostle, denied Jesus three times; crucified head down
2. Andrew, Andropos in Greek, Adam, man; Peter's Brother, early follower of John the Baptist, first to follow Jesus; crucified
3. James, Ya'aqov, follow, heel, Jesus nicknamed him and brother John 'Sons of Thunder;' son of Zebedee, he witnessed Jesus' transfiguration on the Mount of Olives, first apostle to be martyred and recorded in scripture; beheaded
4. John, Yehochanan, Aramaic/Hebrew, God is gracious, brother of James, known as disciple Jesus loved, evangelized in Ephesus; died in 100 A.D.
5. Philip, Greek, means lover/friend of horses, evangelized in Phrygia; stoned and crucified
6. Bartholomew, Ben Tholomyahu, Nathanael, son of Ptolome, evangelized in India and Armenia; beaten, crucified and beheaded
7. James, Son of Alphaeus, James the less, crucified or stoned

8. Thomas, Tau'ma, means twin, evangelized in India; killed by spear
9. Matthew, Mattanyahu, Levy, gift of God, tax collector, evangelized in Ethiopia and Egypt; killed by spear
10. Thaddaeus, Judas, Thaddeus, son of James, means heart, evangelized in Edessa; clubbed to death
11. Simon the Zealot, evangelized west coast of Africa, crucified 74 A.D.
12. Judas Iscariot, Yehuda, Judah, betrayed Jesus; hung himself
13. Matthias, Matityahu, chosen to replace Judas

(Who were the 12 Disciples and What Should We Know About Them? Allyson Holland, <https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/bible-study/who-were-the-12-disciples-and-what-should-we-know-about-them.html>)

(Sheila Renae, <http://www.city-data.com/forum/christianity/1663181-apostles-their-name-meanings.html#ixzz6BonNJV00>)

(Johd, Christian Forums, <https://www.christianforums.com/threads/real-names-of-apostles.1461201/>)

MULTIPLE GODS?

For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. (1 Corinthians 8:5-6)

There were many pagan gods that were worshipped in the ancient world and many that are still worshiped today. The previous verse sums up the multiple god question well enough for me. Heaven and earth are full of princes and lords, all of which, are sons and daughters of God and serve at His behest.

THE JERUSALEM DRAGON WELL

In the book of Nehemiah, the Israelis were allowed, by King Cyrus of Persia, to return and rebuild Jerusalem. As Nehemiah assessed the walls and the twelve gates before reconstruction, he mentions seeing something called the dragon's well.

I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem. (Nehemiah 2:13)

The Old Testament seers prophesied against a number of ancient cities. On multiple occasions, the destroyed and abandoned cities were condemned to become the lair of dragons (see Isaiah 34:13 and Jeremiah 51:37). The prophet Jeremiah actually made the prediction that Israel would be carried away into captivity and Jerusalem would be broken down and inhabited by dragons (9:11). It seems this came true sometime before Nehemiah came from Babylon to visit the ruined city and rebuild the Jerusalem walls. By then there was a peculiar name given to a well in Nehemiah 2:13 (all verses quoted are from the KJV), the "dragon well." Perhaps the debris near that well was the den of some reptile that moved in. After killing or chasing off the dragon, the people could again use it and the well was thereafter remembered as the "dragon well." Tradition informs us this well is Warren's Shaft, (The Jerusalem Dragon Well, Genesis Park, GenesisPark.com).

And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. (Isaiah 34:13)

And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant. (Jeremiah 51:37)

And I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant. (Jeremiah 9:11)

SHOW ME THE MONEY

Not only was he wise, King Solomon was the richest king in Israel, he amassed a fortune in gold, silver and goods that is estimated to be worth hundreds of billions of dollars in today money. (1 Kings 3:10-13)

BIBLE SYMBOLS AND MEANINGS

You've heard the saying "a picture is worth a thousand words," well the same goes for symbols, whose images, when invoked, were subtle or blunt messages to whoever received them.

Here is a sampling of Hebrew word symbolism:

Ark of the Covenant, The Presence of God

Armor, War, Spiritual Protection

Arrows, War, God's Judgment

Ashes, Worthlessness

Ass, Piece, Humility

Bowels, Deep emotion or feeling

Chariots, Angelic Hosts

Crown, Victory

Dragon, Satan the devil

Eyes, The heart, mind, disposition of man

Fire, Judgment

Head, One who rules

(Symbolism in the Bible, Bible study, Biblestudy.org,

<https://www.biblestudy.org/beginner/meaning-of-symbolic-words-in-bible.html>)

MARK OF CAIN / STIGMATA OF CHRIST

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Therefore whosoever slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding should kill him. (Genesis 4:15)

Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the Lord. (Leviticus 19:28)

Some scholars have insisted upon the popular view that Cain had been physically marked upon the brow or forehead. Others argue that the mark of Cain could also be interpreted as a metaphoric "brand" of sweat upon the brow, a constant reminder of "Original Sin" and Man's punishment to endure physical labor and mortality. Other interpretations of Cain's mark view it as nothing more than an unspecified "token." Regardless of the literal translation, there is an inherent paradoxical interpretation of the mark or token of Cain: it is at once a punishment and a protection.

A similar paradox exists with respect to the Stigmata of Christ as well. The five marks upon Christ's body have come to represent the Messiah's personal sacrifice upon the cross for sins of the world. Christ's death is synonymous with salvation of all mankind who follows him. Followers of Christ practice baptism and thereby subscribe to a visual cleaning of Original Sin in the name of the redeemer—the Savior Jesus Christ. Therefore, Christians are thus marked, and are cleansed.

Given the text of these Biblical examples of bodily marks and stigmata, there are not only inherent problems of translation and appropriate diction, but there are also distinct parallels between Judeo-Christian origins, beliefs and practices with respect to issues involving tattoo and tattoo practices. In other words, from a historical perspective, the followers of the Christian faith have often times shown the propensity to not practice what they, in fact, preach in revering the marks of Christ. For that matter, many actions committed by Westernized Judeo-Christians have been in stark contrast to basic principles and foundations of their respective spiritual and religious beliefs.

The Judeo-Christian faiths have been both part and parcel with the progression of Western civilization, for antiquity to the present day. For this reason, there is a dynamic spiritual affiliation with tattooing in both the pagan and Judeo-Christian beliefs systems. (Novel Perspectives on Tattooing: Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko, or the Royal Slave*)

PURGATORY?

This is more of a Catholic doctrine where believers, at death or at the resurrection, go to be purified before entering Heaven. There is a book called *"Little Talks with God,"* based on St. Catherine's book *"The Dialogue,"* that I've read and do think there's an argument to be made.

When you read the scriptures below and compare it to *"Little Talks With God"* you may reconsider Purgatory as a means to purify a not so pure believer. God will forgive the sin but may demand penance or punishment.

GOD REVISITING SIN

And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. (Exodus 32:31-34)

For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite being in the Spirit of grace? For we know him that has said, Vengeance belongs unto me, I will recompense, said the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Hebrews 10:26-31)

Google's dictionary definition of recompense:

Verb—make amends to someone for loss or harm; compensate

Verb, Archaic—punish or reward someone appropriately for an action
Noun—compensation or reward for loss or harm suffered or effort made
Noun, Archaic—restitution made or punishment inflicted for a wrong or injury

The following paragraph is from the book "*Little Talks with God.*" God explains to Sister Catherine His pronouncement on sin, grace and punishment:

In general, though, I do not pardon the punishment due to them; I forgive only their guilt, since they are not disposed to receive my love or my servants' (Jesus) love with perfect love. They do not grieve bitterly over their sins, nor do they display perfect remorse for the sins they have committed, so they are not pardoned from the punishment, but only from their guilt. Complete forgiveness requires the proper attitude from both giver and receiver. Thus, since they are imperfect, they receive imperfectly the virtues of those who offer them to me, for the sake of sinners in suffering. Because of the light of their conscience, these flawed ones do receive forgiveness of their guilt. And when they begin to learn, they pour forth the corruption of their sins, and thus receive the gift of grace (LTG 10).

FIRST GENTILES OF GREAT FAITH

The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my servant, Do this, and he does it. When Jesus heard it, he marveled, and said to them that followed, truly I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. (Matthew 8:6, 10-10)

Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. (Matthew 15:25-28)

There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band. A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and always prayed to God. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Your prayers and your alms are come up for a memorial before God. (Acts 10:1-4)

RAINBOWS

After the flood of Noah, God placed a rainbow in the clouds as a covenant between Him and the earth that the waters will never again flood the earth, killing all living things, Genesis 9:13.

In the Bible, only three people are mentioned seeing a rainbow: Noah, after God placed a rainbow in the sky as a reminder of His covenant, and the apostle John and prophet Ezekiel, in a vision, witnessed a rainbow over the throne of God (Revelation 4:3). The rainbow colors red, purple, scarlet and crimson were used throughout Moses' tabernacle in the wilderness.



Holy Land Model, Jerusalem, Israel

Did you know that there is a model of the ancient city of Jerusalem in 1:50 scale? It's located at the Israeli Museum in Jerusalem and spans 22,000 square feet. It was commissioned in 1966 by banker Hans Kroch in memory of his son, Yaakov, killed in the war with Palestine in 1948, and was designed by historian Michael Avi-Yonah and based on the writing of first century historian Flavius Josephus and other historical sources. It was an incredible undertaking and gives us a glimpse of how it may have looked in the days of Jesus. (Model of Ancient Jerusalem, <https://www.seetheholyland.net/model-of-ancient-jerusalem/>)

PHYSICAL LOVE IS GOOD

Adam and Eve were naked and not ashamed. Genesis 2:25

God said be fruitful and multiple and fill the earth. Genesis 1:28

Rejoice in the wife of your youth. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love. Proverbs 5:18-19

Let the marriage bed be undefiled. Hebrews 13:4

Husbands should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. 1 Corinthians 7:3-4

Solomon had over 1,000 wives

LET THERE BE LIFE

I was listening to Glen Beck and his guest Rabbi Daniel Levin on the radio as they were talking about Old Testament sacrifices of children to Baal, a Canaanite god that was reviled by the Biblical prophets and was the enemy of Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews. I was in and out of the car shopping, but I thought, that lead them to the topic of abortion. I may be wrong, but it got me thinking that the abortion rights advocates are similarly worshiping at the sacrificial altar of the "right to chose."

I used to be pro-choice until I heard a doctor describe how an abortion was done. It is sad that so many people have to make that decision, especially when they have birth control pills available in every pharmacy and drug store worldwide—24/7/360°. Not to mention people looking to adopt.

I think the reason this is such an emotional topic is that many of the women have had the procedure and feel obligated to defend themselves and their decision to abort their child. We should pray for them, the children and the world as it comes to terms with this difficult subject.

PRECIOUS STONES OF THE BIBLE

You have been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle [...](Ezekiel 28:13)

And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. (Revelation 21:19-21)

IN THE RIGHT STATE OF MIND

That's what they say about lefties, along with being creative. In the Bible there are only two references to lefties, Ehud the warrior and judge (Judges 3:15) and in the tribe of Benjamin we are told that there were hundreds of lefties that were deadly accurate with slinging stones. (Judges 20:16)

PATRIARCHAL BURIAL SITE

In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife. (Genesis 49:30-31)

THE HILL OF FORESKINS

More than 600,000 men were circumcised before they entered into the Promised Land of Canaan. They were the children of the Nation of Israel, who after years of roaming the desert with Moses and Joshua were now men. The place where they buried their foreskins was called "the hill of foreskins," (Joshua 5:3).

In a 2004 article, by Lifted Curtains, called the "The Hill of The Foreskins," we learn why circumcision was suspended. A short distance from Jordan the Hebrews made their first encampment in Canaan. Here Joshua "*circumcised the children of Israel;*" "*and the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover.*"

The suspension of the rite of circumcision since the rebellion at Kadesh had been a constant witness to Israel that their covenant with God, of which it was the appointed symbol, had been broken. And the discontinuance of Passover, the memorial of their deliverance from Egypt, had been evidence of the Lord's displeasure at their desire to return to the land of bondage.

Now, however, the years of rejection were ended. Once more God acknowledged Israel as His people, and the sign of the covenant was restored. The rite of circumcision was performed upon all the people who had been born in the wilderness. And the Lord declared to Joshua, "*This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt off you,*" and in allusion to this the place of their encampment was called Gilgal, "*a rolling away,*" or "*rolling off.*" (The Hill of Foreskins, 2014, Liftedcurtains.wordpress.com, <https://liftedcurtains.wordpress.com/2014/11/16/the-hill-of-the-foreskins/>)

RETURN TO SENDER

After the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant in battle with the Israelites, God plagued them with painful hemorrhoids. When the Philistines realized their condition was caused by the Ark, they returned it with a gift of hemorrhoids crafted from pure gold placed inside. (1 Samuel 6:11)

LOOKING FOR THE LOST ARK

Another video from the Timeline World History Documentary Series is called: "Ethiopia: Keepers of the Ark, Journeys to the Ends of the Earth" and is hosted and visited by, adventure traveler, David Adams. Traveling to many remote and humble villages and towns, Mr. Adams, is told that there are 100's of Ethiopia's churches claiming to have the Ark of the Covenant. Although he never finds the Ark he is impressed with the dedication and love of the sacred artifact that has embodied the Ethiopian nation since the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem in 587 B.C.

BLOOD BROTHERS AND SISTERS

If you have been tempted to check out your ancestry, beware. A nationality based DNA ancestry site will be more accurate compared to a generic ancestry site because they work on a 50% accuracy system, due to their clientele gene pool. DNA has 3 billion markers and the generic ancestry sites only use 1 million. In other words, test results will vary from site to site due to their client base.

When a set of twins got their results from an ancestry site, they found substantial differences even though they were identical twins. And when they compared other sites, only one out of four had the twins with similar percentages of nationalities.

DNA testing will eventually provide humanity with who we are, where we came from, and if and how we are related. It's only a matter of time.

THE COHANIM – DNA CONNECTION

Geneticist Dr. Karl Skorecki and associates have taken DNA samples from the families of Cohen, who were the priests of the ancient Hebrews, members of the tribe of Levi and descendants of Aaron, Moses' brother.

The result of the first analysis of the Y chromosome markers (YAP-) was significant at 98.5%. In the second study, Dr. Skorecki and associates found a particular array of six chromosomal markings (known as Cohen Model

Haplo type. CMH) in 97 of 106 Cohens tested. A date calculation based on the variation of the mutations among Cohanim (Cohen plural) yields a time frame of 106 generations from the founder of the line, 3,300 years—the approximate time of the Exodus from Egypt, the lifetime of Aaron HaCohen.

[...] *the priest's office shall be theirs for a perpetual statute [...]* [Exodus 29.9]

[...] *their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.* [Exodus 40:15]

Dr. David Goldstein of Oxford University states, "For more than 90 percent of the Cohens to share the same genetic markers after such a long period of time is a testament to the devotion of the wives of the Cohens over the years. Even a low rate of infidelity would have dramatically lowered the percentage." (The Cohanin – DNA Connection, Rabbi Yaakov Kleiman, 2020, Aish Ha Torah, aish.com)

SUPERHUMANS II

The world-famous physicist, Stephen Hawking is talking to us from the grave. Hawking's final academic paper on future 'Superhumans' threatening the end of humanity, was published posthumously online a few months after his death, and has caused quite the controversy.

In his final book of essays – *Brief Answers to the Big Questions*, billed as his last message to the world – Hawking warns genetic engineering may inevitably alter the trajectory of human evolution. "We are now entering a new phase of what might be called self-designed evolution, in which we will be able to change and improve our DNA." Hawking writes. "We have now mapped DNA, which means we have read the 'book of life'; so we can start writing in corrections."

Hawking predicts a world in which the ability to self-design people ultimately divides society, rather than helping to unite it. He writes, "Laws will probably be passed against genetic engineering with humans. But some people

won't be able to resist the temptation to improve human characteristics, such as size of memory, resistance to disease, and length of life."

"Once such superhumans appear, there are going to be significant political problems with the unimproved humans, who won't be able to compete, Hawking suggests. "Presumably, they will die out, or become unimportant; instead, there will be a race of self-designing beings who are improving themselves at an ever-increasing rate. (Stephen Hawking Warned of Future 'Superhumans' Threatening the End of Humanity, Peter Dockrill, 2018, Science Alert, Sciencealert.com)

ANOTHER BIBLICAL 360°

When we consider what Mr. Hawking proposed in his final book of essays, my sequencing of Biblical past, and future events, may be something to think about.

Past:

God creates the angel's male and female.

God creates the Heavens and Earth.

God creates Adam and Eve.

Adam and Eve become mortal by 'Original Sin,' and their offspring fill the Earth.

Heavenly sons and daughters mate with earthly men and women, giving birth to 'Men and Women of Renown.'

Man becomes corrupt and sinful.

Corrupt and sinful man corrupts Godly man.

God floods the earth killing corrupt and sinful man, all but the family of Noah, and by them repopulate the Earth.

God sends His Son Yeshua (Jesus) to die for man's 'Original sin,' giving birth to spiritually 'Born Again' sons and daughters.

Yeshua's faithful increase worldwide.

Man falls away; becomes corrupt, sinful and Godless.

Future:

Godless man creates Superhumans via DNA.

Superhumans create Superhumans repopulating the Earth.

Messianic Jews and Gentiles light the way to Yeshua.

Yeshua returns and claims His children.

Angels open the Book of Names and Deeds.

God judges: man; believers and unbelievers; Satan and fallen angels.

Godless are thrown into the Lake of Fire.

God creates new Heaven and Earth for His 'Born Again' sons and daughters.

God, resides with Man, now eternal, in the new city of Jerusalem.

Sounds very plausible and not too far off into the future, but I have a few questions: Were the first 'sons and daughters' of God, angels? What happened to their offspring, the 'son's and daughter's of Renown?' Were they immortal? Did they return to Heaven? Was this the catalyst that caused Satan and one third of the angels in Heaven to rebel and fall from God's grace?

IF YOU LOVE ME, PROVE IT!

With the advances in genetics, DNA has proven to be a useful tool worldwide in many areas of life from solving crimes to identifying ancient human migration patterns. Now many fear that DNA may be used as a qualifier in Israel by the Rabbinate (an Orthodox Rabbinical committee who address Israel's societal problems). The Rabbinate wants Jewish couples to submit a DNA sample proving they are Jewish before they are allowed to be married.

And on the migration front, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel is requiring Russian Jews to submit DNA samples to verify their Jewish lineage. The pros and cons of DNA are raising many questions and concerns worldwide.

(What does it mean to be genetically Jewish? The Guardian,

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/jun/12/what-does-it-mean-to-be-genetically-jewish>)

ARE DINOSAURS IN THE BIBLE?

Behold now Behemoth, which I made with you, he eats grass as an ox. His strength it has in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly. He moves his tail like a cedar: the sinew of his bones are wrapped together. His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron. He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him. (Job 40:15-19)

Sounds like he is describing a plant eating Brontosaurus, a gigantic dinosaur with a long neck and tail, that weighed up to 15 tons and measured up to 70 feet long. Many dinosaurs that were once thought to be of a different species may be of the same species at different ages.

I heard that paleontologists have found what maybe DNA from soft tissue found in the remains of a dinosaur that lived 68 million years ago. The age is just a guess, due to carbon 14 dating only being reliable with things that lived or grew 50,000 to 100,000 years ago. I don't know if they found one, 2 or 50 bones, or how they verified it was a young T. Rex and not an ostrich. Could there be living DNA found in the carcass of a dinosaur, frozen, in a glacier, or in a bloodsucking insect that met its end in the sap of a tree preserved in amber, of course, but to date Jurassic Park is only a movie.

GENESIS FIRSTS

Genesis 1:1, God, created heaven and earth

Genesis 1:7, God, creation of man

Genesis 1:8, God, first planting of a garden

Genesis 3:4, Satan, first lie

Genesis 4:1, Adam and Eve, first to bear children

Genesis 4:1, Cain, first child of Adam and Eve

Genesis 4:15, Cain, first mark or tattoo.

Genesis 4:2, Abel, first shepherd

Genesis 4:2, Cain, first farmer

Genesis 4:8, Cain, first to commit murder, slew his brother Abel

Genesis 4:8, Abel, first to be murdered

Genesis 4:8, Abel, first to die

Genesis 4:17, Cain, first to build a city.

Genesis 4:20-22, Jabil, first dwellers in tents, and of such as have cattle.

Genesis 4:20-22, Jubal, first to handle the harp and organ.

Genesis 4:20-22, Tubal Cain, instructor of every artificer in brass and iron

Genesis 6:18-15, Noah, first to build a boat

Genesis 7:6, Noah first to see and survive a flood

BIBLICAL SCRIPTURE MAKES GREAT SONG LYRICS

Many modern songwriters and singers have embraced scripture for inspiration and song lyrics, regardless of their religious or philosophical beliefs.

1. Turn! Turn! Turn! Pete Seeger, #1 hit by the Byrds
 2. He Turned the Water into Wine, Johnny Cash
 3. Highway 51 Revisited, Bob Dylan
 4. Where you Lead, Carole King
 5. Delilah, Tom Jones
 6. His Hand in Mine, Elvis Presley
 7. How Great thou Art, Elvis Presley
 8. The Wanderer, Johnny Cash
 9. Prodigal Son, Rolling Stones
- (Spinditty.com)



David, our excellent Israeli tour guide, Old Jerusalem, Israel

CHAPTER FOURTEEN:

COME TO PAPA

MY CHILDREN PAST AND PRESENT

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES FROM THE *TANAKH*

Take a wild guess as to the number of messianic prophecies in the *Tanakh*? There are over 300 prophecies of a messiah and Jesus has fulfilled all of them. In Hebrew the word for salvation is “Yeshua” and is mentioned approximately thirty times in the Old Testament. Yeshua in English is Jesus.

When the angel told Joseph that Mary was to be the mother of the Messiah, he said of the child, “Thou shalt call his name Yeshua (Salvation), for he shall save his people from their sins.” The name was commanded as assurance that this indeed would be Israel’s Holy One. Not only does that name mean “salvation,” it means “God saves.” Not only was the Messiah to be God’s instrument of salvation, he was to be God in the flesh, reconciling his lost creation to himself. (JewsforJesus.org, <https://jewsforjesus.org/publications/newsletter/newsletter-dec-1987/y-shua-the-jewish-word-for-salvation/>)

Only one person has fulfilled all Old Testament Prophecy. Jesus! [...] The Old Testament is like an intricate jigsaw puzzle. The numerous pieces, on their own, are puzzling – until they are assembled enough to fill out the intended picture. Thus, the New Testament is the decryption key for unlocking Old Testament meaning.

Some might say, after reading through a list of Old Testament prophecy, that some were fulfilled in the deaths of Kennedy, Nasser, King, and other great figures. One could possibly find a prophecy or two fulfilled in the lives of these notable fellas; but not one of them can be credited with fulfilling all of them. *Only Jesus did so.*

Just a handful of prophecy that Jesus fulfilled: He was born in Bethlehem, preceded by a messenger (John the Baptist), entered Jerusalem on a don-

key, was betrayed by a friend who received thirty pieces of silver, was silent before His accusers, and died in the manner Romans used for criminals (crucifixion), during which they pierced His hands and feet. (Sheri Bell, 2018, Josh McDowell josh.org, <https://www.josh.org/jesus-fulfill-prophecy/>)

But you, Bethlehem, though you be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose origins are from of old, from everlasting. (Micah 5:2)

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

But he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his strips we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he had put him to grief: when thou shall make his soul an offering for sin [...](Isaiah 53:10)

If you were first a century well educated Pharisee or Sadducee and knew of these Old Testament prophecies, all of which were read in the temples annually, would you be a skeptic or a disciple?

LIGHTING THE WAY

Why are Jews the chosen people and what does that mean? I always wondered why they were the "chosen" people. They were forever going against

God's commandments and seldom heeding the prophet's warnings. And with all the miracles the Nation of Israel witnessed it's hard to comprehend their stubbornness and worship of other gods.

I guess it comes down to family. They are the children of God and regardless of how many times they have sinned, God is obviously willing to forgive and forget and start over; He may whip something up like a flood to thin out the herd though. Scripture also says that all this has been planned since the dawn of creation, so hold on to your membership card.

For you are a holy people unto the Lord your God: the Lord your God has chosen you to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are on the face of the earth. (Deuteronomy 7:6)

I the Lord, have called you in righteousness, and will hold your hand, and will keep you and give you for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles. (Isaiah 42:6)

For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all people; a light for the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel. (Luke 2:32)

A partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles. (Romans 11:25)

Having therefore obtained help of God. I continue unto this day, witnessing both small and great, saying none other things other than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. (Acts 26:22-23)

Isn't that interesting, the Jews of the world (must be messianic Jews that believe in Yeshua) are the holy people chosen by God to deliver the Word to fellow Jews and to all nations of the world, including the Gentiles.

And Jesus came and spoke to them and said, All power is given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you: and, surely I am with you always, even to the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:18-20)

Boy, didn't Christians and Jews twist that simple and direct command into a perverse pretzel! All Christians, from the Pope to the multiple heads of each and every Protestant denomination will face God's wrath for their part in all the hate and injustice that the Jews endured over the past sixteen hundred years. That's why now I prefer to call myself a follower of Yeshua, Jesus.

Many Christian leaders have taken responsibility and many Jews have forgiven Christians, but we are a long way from a healthy and redeemed brotherhood. God commands us to love, both Him and our neighbor, which means everyone.

MESSIANIC JEWS

What an exciting time we live in, the good Lord is making a comeback in the state of Israel, as well as, worldwide. Over the last millennia a few pockets of Jews heard the calling of their messiah Yeshua (Jesus) and became reticent disciples worshipping in small groups.

With the creation of the state of Israel, in 1948, and the return of thousands of Jews from around the globe, messianic prophecies are falling into place. Many Jews searching for meaning in their lives, found what they were looking for in their own bible, the *Tanakh* (Genesis through Deuteronomy.) Thankfully, after seventy-one years approximately 50,000 messianic Jews in Israel and 500,000 worldwide are hearing their shepherd's Shofar (horn) and coming back to the flock by way of their master and shepherd, Yeshua.

I encourage you to checkout these messianic Jews listed below, and or, get involved in their ministries—they are doing God's work.

Michael L. Brown, author and Bible scholar
Gerry Cori, Biochemist, Nobel Prize winner in science and medicine
Rabbi Jonathan Cahn, world famous prophetic author
Marty Goetz, singer/songwriter
Rabbi Yitzhak Kaduri, Prophetic Rabbi and Scholar, died 2006
Andrew Klavan, International best selling author
Rabbi Henry Morse, messianic rabbi
Steve Olin, billionaire businessman
Dennis Prager, talk show host, political commentator, Prager U
Sid Roth, American televangelist, It's Supernatural Network
Jay Sekulow, chief council for the ACLJ
Dr. Erez Soref, One for Israel, Messianic Bible College and ministry
Israel Zolli, former Chief Rabbi of Rome, Zola Levitt Ministries
MANY RABBIS BELIEVE IN YESHUA

I just happened across a video that makes me very excited about Israel and the messianic movement there. Rabbi Zev Porat, a messianic Jew, interviewed two students of a very influential rabbi that passed at the glorious age of 108, in 2006; his name is Rabbi Yitzhak Kaduri.

Shortly before this prominent and well-respected Rabbi died, he announced to his followers that he had met the Messiah and he would be coming soon. Rabbi Kaduri wrote the name of the Messiah on a small note and requested that it not be opened for a year after his death. When they opened the envelope and read the note it had hand written sentences in Hebrew and when translated to English read:

*"Concerning the letter abbreviation of the Messiah's name,
He will lift the people and prove that His word and law are valid."
This I have signed in the month of mercy, Yitzhak Kaduri.*

The bold text in Hebrew translates to:

"Yarim Ha'Am Veyokhiakh Shedvaro Vektorato Omdim."

The initials spell out the hidden name of the Messiah. I don't know how you get Yehoshua, Yeshua or Jesus out of that but I'm sure it was quite the topic of conversation over the Shabbat dinner table.

The revelation received scant coverage in the Jewish media but a few of Rabbi Kaduri's long time students are now speaking out to Rabbi Zev Porat and exclaiming that Rabbi Kaduri was, and they are, messianic Jews and proud to finally state it publicly.

It was amazing to watch Rabbi Zev Porat interview Rabbi Kaduri's elderly students as they praised God for the opportunity to finally tell their messianic tale. And as they did Satan stirred up the wind and their testimony was hard to hear, thankfully Rabbi Porat was interpreting clearly. And then, when they closed with a prayer, a phone kept ringing in the background! Satan, he's a pain in the derriere. (Israel Today, Monday, April 30, 2007 <http://www.israeltoday.co.il/default.aspx?tabid=128&view=item&idx=1347> Rabbi Zev Porat at messiahofIsraelministries.org, Carl Gallups' book about Rabbi Kaduri, "The Rabbi, The secret Message, and the Identity of Messiah.")

RABBI'S WHO BELIEVE IN JESHUA

In a video by Dr. Al Gaza, he states many Rabbis' and Jews say that there are no Rabbis that believe in Yeshua. So the good Dr. provided the following names as proof of messianic Rabbis that are followers of Yeshua: Rabbi Dr. Daniel Zion, Rabbi Samuel Schereschewsky, Rabbi Stern, Rabbi Slostysky, Rabbi Werhiemer, Rabbi Zion Daniel, Rabbi Dr. Muller, Rabbi Joseph Teichman and Rabbi Daniel Weiss.

Dr. Al Gaza says that when Rabbis or Jews announce that they believe in Yeshua as their messiah they are renounced and disowned as Jews both socially and in temples and synagogues. (Rabbis Who Believe in Yeshua? Dr. Al Gaza) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csyDcqrzSG4>

ATHEISTS WHO BECAME BELIEVERS

Over the years, many prominent men and women, from all walks of life have experienced a conversion from being an unabashed atheist to a believer in Jesus. I listed a few below so check them out and others on the web.

Francis Collins, Geneticist, Headed up the Human Genome Project for President Bill Clinton.

Salvador Dali, world famous Spanish surrealist painter.

Peter Hitchens, journalist and brother of atheist Christopher Hitchens.

C. S. Lewis, author of The Chronicles of Narnia.

(List of former atheists and agnostics, Wikipedia.)

THE STAR OF DAVID

On YouTube I came across messianic Rabbi Ariel Cohen Allure's website where he was describing the symbolism and meaning of the Star of David. The star was adopted as the symbol of Israel and is found on all official documents and the state flag.

Due to Rabbi Allure's accent and broken English I couldn't understand much of what he said, but I knew it was important so I went on the web and found a video called "The Truth behind the Star of David published in 2014, written and produced by Grace Bride.

It started off saying that the Star of David is a satanic symbol used in witchcraft, and even the use of crosses on Masonic and pagan temples and many world flags were considered demonic. Thankfully she stated that Satan's best ploys are at work here and he is always trying to divide the Godly-heart and soul.

Then she explained how the top triangle (point down) represented the triune symbolism of The Father, The Son and The Spirit. And the bottom triangle symbolized man: My Soul, My Heart and My Might. I think Rabbi Allure had it reversed with the bottom triangle (point up) representing God, which sounds correct to me. Also, they said that all 22 letters of the Hebrew alpha-

bet are found in the Star of David. In doing my research I found that the Star of David symbol has some controversy surrounding it. Many consider it a modern day symbol, others say it never was designated as the Star of David but was used as a design on a famous *Tanakh* manuscript in the 13th century and as early as 3rd century on grave stones and synagogues as a architectural ornament; and was original called The Seal of Solomon.

Regardless of the history, we all know that popular designs and symbols become logos, just ask anyone who owns an Apple computer; or for that matter wears a cross or Star of David pendant or necklace. Whether it was by the hand of man or an act of God, The Star of David" was meant to be and will always be the symbol and logo of Israel.

When I went back to Rabbi Ariel Cohen Alloro's website facingeachother.com to double check his video, he was actually talking about finding the Christian cross and Yeshua's name symbolically in the Star of David.

JEWES HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO FEAR AND MISTRUST CHRISTIANS

Over the past 1,600 years, Christians have given the Jews good reason to mistrust and fear them. It's embarrassing to list the many offenses Christians worldwide have inflicted on the Jewish nation, then, as well as now.

God has blessed them, above and beyond, the persecution they have had to endure, because they are the original branches of the "Tree of God," the gentiles are but a wild branch grafted in. Romans 11:11-31 validates that statement. To paraphrase "*Little Talks with God*," the roots of the tree symbolizes God the Father; the trunk, Jesus the Son, and the branches are the Holy Spirit, pruning and grafting the gift of life to the children of man: Adam to Noah, Abraham through Moses, patriarchs and prophets, kings and the nation of Israel, and now the gentiles.

And as the scripture says in Roman 9:27-28: *And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay.*

ONE FOR ISRAEL

There is a Bible college in Israel and its mission is to teach Arabs and Jews the love of Yeshua (Jesus)? The Israeli College of the Bible is the only accredited Hebrew-speaking seminary in the world; and was established for the purpose of training the rapidly growing community of followers of Yeshua in Israel. They offer certificate, BA and Masters degree programs to train pastors in Israel.

I had the privilege of visiting the college in 2019 on one of their Israel ministry tours, which I highly recommend. They are an active community of Jewish, Arab and international scholars and students. They are blessing Israel by educating the new generation of born-again believers, sharing the gospel online and helping holocaust survivors with humanitarian aid.

They have posted online a series of testimonial videos, by an international collection of Jews from around the world, describing how they came to believe in Yeshiva. Their diverse Jewish backgrounds including; secular, traditional and orthodox communities and are heartfelt and inspiring to watch.

To quote their website " This is the first time in history someone is stepping out publicly against the Jewish Orthodox Rabbis, forcing Israel to deal with 'the elephant in the synagogue,' Yeshua (Jesus)!"

Checkout their website at: oneforIsrael.org and please support them if possible, they are on the front lines, often engaging one on one, for the souls of the lost "Chosen Ones.'

THE MYSTERY OF ISRAEL'S SALVATION

For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, that you should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel will be saved: at it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. (Romans 11:25-27)

Wow this scripture says a lot, so lets try to unpack it and understand what the Apostle Paul is telling his Gentile followers. Paul is explaining that they should understand that even though many Jews have not accepted Jesus as their messiah, this is God's will. Once all the messianic Gentiles are countered, only then will Jesus open the hearts and rekindle the spirit of the Chosen Ones to come to Him.

Romans 11:10-23, Paul says that due to the Jews that have stumbled, the Gentiles were allowed to be grafted into the tree of salvation. But remember, the Jews are holy branches growing out of the holy tree and grounded by holy roots. If they repent they will be re-grafted. He that sins is but a branch to be pruned whether Jew or Gentile.



Priests studying the Bible, Southern District, Israel

CHAPTER FIFTEEN:

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

THE COVENANT

After Moses brought the nation of Israel out of Egypt they encamped at the base of Mount Sinai. Moses went to the summit where after 40 days he received God's first covenant of ten laws, on two stone tablets, for the nation of Israel to follow.

While Moses received the Ten Commandments, a group of Israelites were making a graven idol to worship. Moses talked God out of his anger against them just as he was about to incinerate the whole nation of Israel. When Moses returned to his people he realized that they were worshiping naked and formed a golden calf idol. Moses' anger raised, and he asked them whoever is on the Lord's side to separate. Only the sons of Levi gathered to him, and he commanded them to kill the idol worshippers, which added up to 3,000 men. (Exodus 32:31-35)

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

KJV, Exodus 20:1-17

I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:

But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives you.

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

SCRIPTURE FROM THE NEW COVENANT OF GRACE

The following scriptures, found in the New Testament, are from the teachings of Jesus and his apostles as they brought the good news of the messianic prophecies being fulfilled. Loving God and their neighbor are the two most important principles of the new covenant. After Jesus' death and resurrection the apostles preached the gospel of God's grace and love; faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior; and the importance of being baptized into God's family, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Think not that I have come to destroy the law, or the Prophets: I have not come to destroy but to fulfill. (Matthew 5:17)

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus a ruler of the Jews: He came to Jesus at night, and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God: for no man can do these miracles that you do, except God be with him. Jesus answered, "Very truly I say to you, except a man

be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Nicodemus asked him how can a man be born when they are old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, "Very truly I say to you, except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which born of the Spirit is spirit. (John 3:1-6)

He that doesn't love does not know God, for God is love. (1 John 4:8)

I say to you love your enemies, do good to those that hate you. (Luke 6:27)

For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8)

Now the works of the flesh are evident; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envy, murder, drunkenness, reveling and things like these. I tell you, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21)

Do not conform to this world: but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect to God. (Romans 12:2)

He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who believes not shall be damned. (Mark 16:16)

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

Jesus spoke again to them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. (John 8:12)

The most famous and inspired teachings are from Jesus's Sermon on the Mount and are called The Beatitudes, found in Matthew 5-6. I would have

loved to been there, sitting on a patch of grass, listening to his mesmerizing voice and message. Jesus starts with *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”* and covers a host of topics including how to pray the Lord’s Prayer. I hope there’s a video of it in Heaven’s library.

JESUS TEACHES IN PARABLES

Teaching in parables was a way to weed out unbelievers, cynics and free-loaders. Some followers wanted a little entertainment, free food or had a hidden agenda, like gathering information or maligning Jesus to the Pharisees. People truly seeking God’s grace would listen and were blessed with understanding given to them by Jesus, the apostles or the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was a commanding speaker who taught with authority and love. That, along with his many miracles, made him well known, revered and believable as the foretold Messiah of the Nation of Israel—of whom they were waiting for and had read about, in the prophecies of the *Tanakh* (Old Testament) since the death of Moses.

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. (Matthew 13:44)

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the sea and caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen drew to shore. Then they sat down and gathered the good in vessels, but cast the bad away. So it shall it will be at the end of the world, the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 13:47-50)

[...] The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentiful: he thought to himself, saying what shall I do, I have no room to store my fruits? Then he said, this is what I’ll do: I will tear down my barns and build greater; and there I will store my fruits and my goods. And I’ll say to my soul, you have goods laid up for many years; take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.

But God said to him, you fool, this night your soul shall be required of you: then whose shall those things be, which you have provided? So is he that laid up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. (Luke 12:16-21)



Columbarium Cave, used to store ash urns of the dead. Bet Guvrin, Israel

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

WALKING THE WALK

FINDING THE PATH

In the *Book of Revelation*, Jesus tells us what will happen if we squander our lives. Good or bad, righteous and deviant, we will be judged from the '*Book of Life*,' which accounts for all deeds. Revelation 20:11-15 also says, "anyone whose name is not found in the '*Book of Life*' will be cast into the lake of fire."

We live...we will die...be raised from the dead and judged. If we are found wanting we won't survive the second death.

Only by the atoning blood of Jesus, who is the sacrificial lamb required to bridge the void to God, by paying the debt of 'Original Sin,' will we pass over Hades and Satan to God in Heaven.

So how do we step on, or find the path? It's not easy to find with all the lusts of the world parading nonstop across your computer, in movies, magazines and many TV programs. Try finding a place that offers peace and solitude so you can talk to God about your life and the way he wants you to live it.

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it. (Matthew 7:14)

Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)

The Old Testament has Genesis, Isaiah 53 and the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 6), which is a good place to start. Reading the New Testament and the *Book of Revelation* is also a key component in understanding how Jesus lived and what is expected of us. Revelations is twenty-two chapters long, approximately 20 pages, and what I consider a roadmap to Heaven. So put your thinking cap on, say a prayer and start reading!

MODERN DAY PROPHET

Rabbi Cahn is a famous author and one of the world's prominent spiritual leaders. He is a Pastor and Messianic Rabbi with a gift of interpreting Biblical prophecy.

Rabbi Cahn is known for understanding the deep mysteries of Scripture and bringing them to light in speeches, videos and in his best-selling books; the last of which is called "*The Oracle*." He speaks worldwide and has appeared on many TV programs; and was one of the featured speakers at the United Nations in New York and at one of President Obama's annual Prayer Breakfasts in Washington, DC.

SECOND COMING

As Rabbi Cahn says, many of the pieces of the second coming are falling together. Israel has been a state for over 70 years, Jew's are returning to Israel and many are accepting Yeshua as their Lord and Savior. The message of salvation is being received worldwide, even as our evil and corrupt world aligns itself to Armageddon.

My (author) instinct tells me that America has to collapse first, more than likely due to a religious falling away; and the wrath of God via a natural disaster, like the eruption of the Yellowstone Super Volcano. If man survives, nothing will stop the forces of Satan from surrounding Israel for the well-prophesied end-time battle. Satan's time is running short and the time of sinful man is coming to an end, book me one ticket to paradise, thank you.

REPENTANCE

This, sadly, is something I know a lot about. Over the years I've walked off the straight and narrow path many times, usually because of the sensual pleasures, and I'm not proud about that. Not to mention a daily battle with pride, arrogance, envy and at times lack of faith.

Thankfully, with God's grace and Jesus's sacrifice, and staying on the path, my name will be listed, called and my deeds read, good and bad, before the judgment seat of God.

In all sincerity repenting is necessary for us to survive Judgment Day, the second death and to serve God.

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, says the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby you have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dies, says the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live. (Ezekiel 18:30-32)

I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repents, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. (Luke 15:7)

THE SOUL

As a child I always imagined the soul was some type of vessel, only very small, probably the size of a pinhead, hidden away in the deepest recesses of my body recording every moment of my life, in living color. A soul has to be cherished, maintained and protected on a daily basis. If we sin to the point of losing our soul we will be banished to Hell with the sinners—not a bright future.

In my naive youth there was always the concern of keeping your soul balanced between good and questionable while fulfilling lustful desires, carnal or not. Once I matured though I began to see how lucky I was not to have died in that state of mind.

By the age of twenty I could have died in three accidents, and between the three, I received only a broken nose, a scratch and the wind knocked out of

me. Guardian angels saved my friends and me with only minor injuries. As an adult my guardian angel has helped me through a few more episodes that make me scratch my head and give thanks.

I'm trying to honor, at the age of seventy-one, all the times I've been rescued, known and unknown, and redeem my soul as I walk the walk that will lead me down the straight and narrow path, acceptable in the eyes of our Lord and Savior, Jesus.

Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sins shall die. (Ezekiel 18:4)

Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body. (Matthew 10:28)

THE TRINITY

In a book called Josiah's Fire, an autistic boy, Josiah Cullen, who doesn't talk, only communicates via a specialized computer iPad and software for autistic kids. He was never taught how to spell and was considered illiterate.

To make a long story short, Josiah began typing out many profound messages via the iPad, and was asked by his mother how he learned to spell? He typed out. "Jesus taught me the order of sounds."

One evening, Josiah woke his mother up to tell her about the Trinity. His messages read; "In the Trinity, the Father is the manager, the Son is the lover of operations, and the Holy Spirit is the worker. He is Papa, He is Healer, He is Helper. The world was created by three functions that went like this: Father thought it, Son loved it, Holy Spirit carried out the plans." Wow, out of the iPads of babes.

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And has made us kings and

priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 1:5-6)

To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sitting with my Father in his throne. (Revelation 3:21)

GOD'S APPOINTED HEIR

I always thought I'd have a son to carry on the family name, but to my father's disappointment, my brother Charlie and I didn't produce a male heir to carry his name forward. I look back at it now and realize: 'Our Father who art in heaven,' is how we should concern ourselves. We should carry His name forward, casting male and female seed on good soil, growing the Kingdom—just as His son Jesus did.

God, who many times and in diverse manners spoke in the past to the fathers by the prophets, and in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: being made so much better than the angels, as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

For unto which of the angels said he at any time, You are my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he brings in the first begotten into the world, he said, let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he says, who made his angel's spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire?

But unto the Son he said, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. You have loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

And, you, Lord, in the beginning has laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of your hands: they shall perish; but you remain; and they all shall wax old as does a garment; and as a vesture shall you fold them up, and they shall be changed: you are the same, and your years shall not fail.

But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make your enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?(Hebrews 1:1-14)

ONE MAN'S SACRIFICE

Believers know that Jesus was and is, the atonement blood sacrifice for 'Original Sin,' required by God. Many Jews today are still waiting for their messiah, sadly refusing to consider the possibility that Jesus is He.

There are many scriptures in the Old and New Testaments that bear witness to that, a few of which are listed below.

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul. (Leviticus 17:11)

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)

And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:2)

Who his own self bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes we are healed. (1 Peter 2:24)

PASSING JUDGMENT

How many arguments, fights, battles and world wars, could have been avoided if people didn't jump to an unyielding and biased conclusion when confronted with any of life's challenges? Search your heart and present an altruistic tolerance, wisdom and love of brother and sister in your home, community, country and world. As Professor Jordan B. Peterson states in his book '12 Rules for Life,' "cleanup your own room and life before you attempt to cure the ills of the world." Checkout the professor's life-fulfilling and profound lecture videos and books, you and your family we never be the same.

Judge not, that you not be judged. For with what judgment you judge, it shall be measured to you. And why do you see the speck in your brother's eye, and not the beam in your own eye?(Matthew 7:1-3)

For the time is coming that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begins with us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?(1 Peter 4:17)

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

When you live in the Spirit it feels as if there is an invisible force that surrounds and protects you from Satan. And having a guardian angel by your side allows you the comfort and ease to display a godly love, and patience to take on the day as it presents itself.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23)

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. You shall know them by their fruits [....] every good tree brings forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. (Matthew 7:15-17)

Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. (1 John 4:8)

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. (Hebrews 13:15)

ANTI-SEMITISM ON THE RISE

New Year's day 2020 I was watching a video of Eric Metaxas interviewing his good friend Dr. Michael L. Brown, PhD. about his book called; "Our Hands are Stained with Blood: The Church and the Jewish People." In his book Dr. Brown exposes the faulty theological roots that led to anti-Semitism in Church history; from the fourth century to the horrors of the Holocaust; and the Israel-bashing in today's press and from the pulpit.

I haven't read this book yet but I have read "*The Real Kosher Jesus*," by Dr. Brown and know this messianic Rabbi is a warrior for Yeshua (Jesus). During their conversation Dr. Brown said that there is an increase in world-wide anti-Semitism coming from multiple countries and religions, even in today's America sad to say. Check out his books on his website and for more information pertaining to the rise in anti-Semitism at: askdrbrown.org.

MERRY XMAS

Every time I see the "X" used like that I am sure Satan chuckles to himself and smirks in satisfaction. Taking Christ out of a word, especially, Christmas is tantamount to not acknowledging Him or His sacrifice for humanity. Satan uses every ploy to slight Jesus and has through the ages. So if you've find yourself using the "X" word please consider yourself warned—every idle word will be accounted for in the Book of Deeds.

WAGES OF SIN

If God offered you a million dollars for every sin in your life and a worry-free 500-year lifespan verses the gift of forgiveness of all your sins and eternal life, which would you choose? Your answer will say a lot about you, and what you can expect on judgment day.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

If I asked you to make a list of people that lived over the last 100 years that exemplified what Christianity represents and advocates, would you be surprised if your list differed from mine, of course not. We are not 'all knowing' Christians we are 'all growing' Christians who can't comprehend, but appreciate, the infinite glory of God's grace.

Just the fact that there are so many Bible translations and Christian denominations worldwide, should give you pause. Even if there was only one united body, do you think that one hundred percent will be heaven bound? Jesus is the final abettor, the only one that will sort the wheat from the chaff.

We are not to judge, that is why the scripture tells us there are books to be opened and names to be read; and everyone will be judged by their deeds—good and bad.

In my humble opinion, this is my alphabetical list of Christians and messianic Jews that were and are warriors for God. The criteria I used to evaluate each person were; their Christlike persona and love of God; Biblical and personal integrity; humility and stewardship of the Word; and by their fruit.

My Top 42:

| | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Pat Boone | Dr. Michael L. Brown | Todd & Sonja Burp |
| Kirk Cameron | Ray Comfort | Jonathan Cahn |
| Bob Cornuke | Dr. James Dawson | Jerry Falwell |
| Pope Francis | Ken Ham | Ray Hermann |
| Kent Hovind | Marty Goetz | Reverend Billy Graham |
| Franklin Graham | Dr. Alveda King | Martin Luther King |
| Pastor Walter Lang | Richard Land | C.S. Lewis |
| Hal Lindsey | Nelson Mandela | Eric Metaxas |

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Josh McDowell | Chuck Missler | Joel Osteen |
| Jordan Peterson | Rabbi Rev Porat | Dennis Prager |
| Dave Ramsey | Ralph Reed | Pat Robertson |
| Phil Robertson | Sid Roth | Jay Sekulow |
| Erez Soref | Chuck Swindoll | Mother Teresa |
| J. Warner Wallace | Rick Warren | Ravi Zacharias |

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ. (2 Corinthians 2:17)

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

For some reason people have a hard time with this commandment. We are born into this world preprogrammed to love and trust as an adolescent and after twenty or thirty years on the planet battling life, many have become jaded and mistrustful. I realize many children and adults have experienced physical and mental abuse, and we can't take that lightly, but lets see what Jesus teaches us.

There is no fear in love; perfect love casts out fear: because fear has torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love. (1 John 4:18)

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loves me, and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

Jesus said to him, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:37-39)

WILL SODOM AND GOMORRA HAVE A THE SEQUEL

A couple of years back I saw a movie that portrayed southerner's as a group of religious, inbred bigots. Movies have been doing this for years and it's now blatantly obvious and getting worse. I watched another movie on TV that had a church full of worshipers gunned down by one man, killing them all, and a few years ago a white supremacist sicko, in a copycat type killing, went into a black church, open fired and killed nine innocent people.

The media won't admit or doesn't make the connection to anything they produce, subliminally warping eager young minds that may recreate bloody scenes from a movie. Many computer war games have played into this as well.

A large segment of society, Hollywood elites, academia, far left liberals and white supremacists also, both here and abroad, think they are the enlightened folks and anyone who does not believe as they do are ignorant Neanderthals. They parade themselves off as open minded and unbiased, all the while shutting down discourse on college campuses, boycotting businesses and intimidating anyone who isn't in lock-step with them or their beliefs.

America's socialists and fascists are multi-generational and homegrown. They have infiltrated Hollywood, the universities and many freely admit their affiliations; and openly indoctrinate elementary school kids on up with their PC woke language, and group think, ultra-left politics—not to mention micro aggression or safe spaces. "Love not Hate" is one of their slogans while adhering to the opposite.

When these kids mature and realized they have been duped, there will be a day of reckoning for all evolved, left and right.

HOMOSEXUALITY

Where do I start with this topic? I'm not gay and never had any doubts of which sex I was attracted to. I'm a traditionalist and believe marriage should be between a man and a woman. As in my last subject of interest states, we are not to judge and I will gladly relinquish that obligation to Jesus.

I AM YOUR FRIEND

We all have friends, a few are best friends and a few are of the fair-weather variety. If you found yourself in a situation that required sacrificing yourself for the safety of your best friend, regardless of whether it was physically or not, would you do it?

You may say it would depend on the circumstances. Maybe so, but what if it was someone you did not know? I would venture to guess that 15% of the people on earth would try to save a stranger.

But, if they were told the life they saved would be at the expense of their own, you would be hard pressed to find one.

Of course the numbers would change dramatically once you introduce love into the equation. If it were a mother, father, child or an immediate family member, I would guess 90% would sacrifice themselves, depending how close a family member they are.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knows not what his lord does: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. (John 15:15)

And the scripture was fulfilled which says, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. (James 2:23)

PRESENT YOURSELVES AS A LIVING SACRIFICE

Satan presents himself in a variety of ways so be on your guard. If your faith is strong you will face the daily challenges without fear. Our guardian angels are by our side at all times, ready to lend a hand if we stumble.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Romans 12:1-2)

What? Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and you are not your own? For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

You also, as living stones, are building a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus. (1 Peter 2:5)

JUSTIFIED BY WORKS AND NOT FAITH ALONE?

Now this is another contentious topic in the Christian world: Faith verses works. Of course faith in Jesus, is a must and tops the list. I'm sure everyone agrees with that. The next questions should be; does works play a role in your salvation? And are the Old Testament "works of the law" different from the New Testament "works of faith?" Well let's see...

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Galatians 2:16)

What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he has faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, are you warmed and filled; if you give them not those things which are needful to the body; what does it profit? Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone. Yes, a man may say, you have faith, and I have works: show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. (James 2:14-18)

But will you know, vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? See you how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which said, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. You see then how by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. (James 2:20-24)

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (James 2:26)

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace where we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (Romans 5:1-2)

For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:8-1

Then said they unto him, what shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent. (John 6:28-29)

So what have we learned? Are we justified by faith without works, faith with works? Are works of the law different from works of faith? I think Galatians 3:24-26 points us in the correct direction:

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For you are all the children of God by faith in Jesus.

The law of the Old Testament was meant to keep the Jewish nation walking the straight and narrow, to be blessed by God, but not justified. They still carried the burden of "Original Sin," which required an atoning blood sacrifice that was and is Jesus, the messiah prophesied of in the *Tanakh*.

Now because of God's grace and the blood sacrifice of Jesus has been fulfilled, our faith in him and our baptism is all that is required to be saved and sinless. The works of faith manifests itself when the believer transforms from a sinner into a disciple. When a person commits their soul to Jesus and is baptized, at that moment their sins are washed clean and they are pure. If they start sinning again their purity begins to wane along with their works of faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit.

Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent, and do your first works; or else I will come unto you quickly, and will remove your candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. (Revelation 2:5)

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. (Revelation 20:12-13)

As disciples we are bound by all of Jesus' teachings, the most important are to love God with all your heart and to love one another. If we don't, do you

think that you will remain sinless, of course not? The works of faith are very important, keep your heart, mind and soul focused on Jesus and be a humble servant of God. Let your faith and works of faith guide everything you do.

BE A PROUD FOLLOWER OF JESUS

Whoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he comes in glory of his Father with the holy angels. (Mark 8:38)

The older I get the braver I am when discussing my religious beliefs. I've always liked bringing up politics and religion, whacking the proverbial hornet's nest, and driving my friends Jeff and Tom crazy.

Although I'm not afraid to discuss religion I still struggle when someone uses Jesus' name as a swear word. Sometimes, I'll tell the person I find that offensive, other times, I'll say they will not be going to heaven swearing like that. They stop for a while but it is so ingrained in today's vocabulary they say it without realizing it. Now, if I do not rebuke someone, I'll say a little prayer for them and put it in God's hands.

In the early 90's I ran newspaper ads in the Boston Globe sports section that read "Jesus Christ is not a swear word, please respect His name." That seemed to work for many years but now I'm starting to notice it again. Many Boston Christians seem to be unaware of the consequences.

BAPTISM, IMMersed OR SPRINKLED?

Baptism symbolizes our death, burial and resurrection to a new life in Jesus. The Greek word for baptism is 'Baptisma' and means complete submersion. Sprinkling probably came about because of the lack of water or for convenience.

I've been baptized three times; once by the Catholic Church as a baby, once as a born again believer by the Boston Church of Christ, in 1989, and once in 2019 in the Jordan River in Israel, on tour with a group of Baptists from

Ohio. I obviously don't remember my first time but the last two were very special to me. I've been blessed and feel honored that this off and on again follower of Jesus intends to stay on the straight and narrow until judgment day. My Jordan River baptism was a recommitment pledge of love.



2019 Baptism in the Jordan River, Israel

Then Peter said to them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13)

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (John 3:5)

I know we can discuss the doctrine and philosophy of baptism in scripture, until the second coming, but I'm going to wait until I hear it from Jesus.



Tour group exiting Hezekiah's Tunnel, Old Jerusalem, Israel

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN:

NEW COVENANT

CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART

In the first Covenant, Abraham, who loved and heeded the word of the Lord, was ninety-nine year's old when God promised him that his descendants would become a great nation protected and guided by him. Abraham would be given the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession and for doing what was promised, God commanded that the tribe of Abraham obey Him and offer a covenant of circumcision (flesh of the foreskin) of all males from the tribe of Abraham, as a sign of loyalty and devotion to God.

Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, said the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, said the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, said the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

The "New Covenant" is very simple to comprehend: Love God with all of your heart and love your neighbor. It is a "covenant of the circumcised heart." At first blush that sounds like a title from an Edgar Alan Poe novel, but God wants your love as a sign of the everlasting covenant He is offering.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (Romans 3:23-24)

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace. (Romans 6:14)

THE END DAYS

Are you ready to meet your maker? By the look of what is happening worldwide and what the scripture says about the end days, it should be sooner rather than later. It's very simple my fellow travelers, place God first in your heart, above everything else, including your family! When you do that, your myopic views of the world won't control your being. The spirit of God will infuse your soul with love and will free you of the fear of death, life's sins and challenges; and bless you, your family and your friends with an example of how we are meant to be in good times and bad.

Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him for a thousand years. (Revelation 20:6)

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. (Revelation 21:8)

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traders, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the powers thereof: from such turn away. (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then shall the end come. (Matthew 24:14)

REINCARNATION OR RESURRECTION

There are a few religions that believe in reincarnation of the soul like Hinduism and Buddhism where the soul is born again into another person or an animal. I saw a remarkable documentary of a young child who kept mentioning that in another life he was married and had a family in a nearby province in India. They contacted the family and the child knew the house, family members and talked of shared experiences. There are many unexplained happenings going on in this world, so let's leave it at that.

The Christian worldview is a form of reincarnation only we call it resurrection, where all of humanity will be resurrected and judged. There will be books opened, lives and deeds accessed and if you pass muster and believe in Jesus as your Lord and Savior your name will be listed and called to enter the realm of heaven. If not, you'll be cast into the fire of death—you won't be happy.

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:28-29)

Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?(John 11:24-26)

DAY OF JUDGMENT

If you are a Christian and you are still sinning you are headed for a rude awaking. When you are young and self-absorbed, death doesn't appear in your rear view mirror until you least expect it. If you are lucky and survive your wild and crazy days, you will hopefully begin to reevaluate your relationship with God. Many are unlucky and will never have that chance and we pray for their souls. The scripture below hopefully will open your eyes to what is ahead for all of us—regardless of religion, or lifestyle.

Jesus's twelve disciples will be judging the Jewish nation and in Revelation 7:5-8 it says that there will be only 12,000 sealed (saved) from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. That's only 144,000, not many—I think that will include the Old Testament sons and daughters.

The rest of the world, believers or not, will be judged and dealt with accordingly. The books will be opened, names will be read and their faith and deeds will be evaluated, pro and con, life or death, Heaven or Hell.

And Jesus said unto them, truly I say unto you, that which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
(Matthew 19:28)

And around the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. (Revelation 4:4)

But I say to you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account on the Day of Judgment. (Matthew 12:36)

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad. (2 Corinthians 5:10)

THE BOOK OF LIFE

The next two scriptures are very important for us to comprehend. According to scripture God keeps books...He keeps track of our life, works and everything we say. On the Day of Judgment the books will be opened and if you're not listed in the Book of Life you won't be called. If you're not called...you are not going to like where you end up. It's called the second death and you'll be tossed into the lake of fire or cast into the outer darkness.

If your name is called, you will be acknowledged by Jesus, and there will be an accounting of your life and deeds—good and bad. Your life will flash before you, probably like a video, and you'll see and remember everything you've done, down to the first and last embarrassing detail.

He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. (Revelation 3:5)

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. (Revelation 20:12)

SECOND DEATH: THE LAKE OF FIRE

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. (Revelation 21:8)

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. (Revelation 20:10)

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:15)

This doesn't sound good, whether it's an immediate death or eternal torture, I don't want any part of it. Listen to what your subconscious is telling you, swallow your pride and ask Jesus to come into your heart.

HELL, EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

He that believes on the Son has everlasting life: and he that believes not in the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him. (John 3:36)

But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 8:12)

And the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name. (Revelation 14:11)

NEW JERUSALEM

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. (Revelation 21:1-7)

Revelation tells us that the New Jerusalem foundation walls will be garnished with twelve precious jewels radiating all the colors of a rainbow with

anisotropic colors, which means they'll reflect the rainbow colors when exposed to pure light.

In Revelation 21:16-17 we are told the height of the wall is 144 cubits (210') tall and the length and width will be 12,000 furlongs (1380 miles) square. That's almost half the width of the USA.

And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.
(Revelation 21:12-13)

And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it was transparent glass.
(Revelation 21:21)

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. (Revelation 21:23-24)

The Tree of Life will stand tall, yielding twelve varieties of fruit, once a month, year round; and its leaves are for the healing of the nations. And the pure waters of the River of Life will overflow along the sides of the thrones of God and Jesus.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, or crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (Revelation 21:4)

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN:

JERUSALEM BIBLE SITES

THEN AND NOW

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER

This is the traditional site of the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus. It was built in 335 A.D., demolished in 1009 and rebuilt in 1048 A.D. It is one of the most holy sites in Christianity. There are six Christian denominations that share its ownership: Roman Catholic, Coptic Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Syriac Orthodox, Armenian Apostolic and Ethiopian Orthodox.



Church of The Holy Sepulcher, Old Jerusalem, Israel

Since the seventh century the Muslim family of Nuseibel has been responsible for opening the door as an impartial party to the church's denominations. In 1187 Saladin took the church from the Crusaders and entrusted the Jouden Al-Goudia family with the 12' long iron key. The Nuseibels still remain the church doorkeepers. (Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Wikipedia)

I took a photo of the keeper of the door, see page 166. He was a humble soul that seemed to enjoy his families' historical responsibilities.

As weird as it sounds, there has been a repairman's wooden ladder under one of the church windows overlooking the entrance since 1728. Due to a variety of reasons, none of which makes any sense to me, it can't be moved; even though twice it was moved and both times they put it back.

TEMPLE MOUNT: HARAM ASH-SHARIF AND NOBLE SANCTUARY

The Temple Mount has been a holy site for thousands of years and is historically significant for the major Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It is considered one of the three holiest sites in Islam and is revered as the location of Muhammad's journey to Jerusalem and where he ascended to heaven.



The Temple Mount, Old Jerusalem, Israel

This, along with the Western Wall, is the holiest site in Judaism and the traditional location of the First and Second Temples, and Mount Moriah where Abraham nearly sacrificed his son Isaac. King David bought the site and used it as a threshing area forty years later.

The First Temple was built by King Solomon in 950 B.C. and was destroyed less than four hundred years later by the Babylonians. The Second Temple was built in 516 B.C., and destroyed by the Roman Empire quelling a Jewish revolt in 70 A.D.

In the New Testament, the Second Temple was the site of several events in the life of Jesus, from rebuking the coin changers and Pharisees to appearing before Caiaphas before being crucified. Nearly four hundred years after the destruction of the Temple by the Romans, early Christian worshipers built the Church of the Holy Sepulture where it is believed to be the location of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. (Temple Mount, See the Holy Land, seetheholyland.net)

MOUNT ZION: CITY OF DAVID

The original inhabitants of Jerusalem lived on a narrow ridge descending south for the present Temple Mount. This is where King David captured the fortress of a Canaanite tribe, 1,000 years before Christ. On this spur of land David established his capital and pitched a tent to house the Ark of the Covenant. The site provided the natural defenses of sitting high on the hill and being surrounded by three valleys and was blessed with the Gihon Spring which gushed fresh sweet water. (City of David, See the Holy Land, seetheholyland.net)

Located just outside of the southern end of the Old City walls, archaeologists are exposing and potentially rewriting the City of David's history. Over the past 10 years they've uncovered what is to be believed the original location of David's Temple. Their theory is that the present Temple Mount was a Roman fort called Fort Antonia, and the First and Second Temples were located in the City of David where they are digging—and the Western Wall is just a fort wall. I think that may shake up things a bit.

THE WESTERN WALL

With that in mind, King Herod built the Western Wall in 20 B.C. during an expansion of the Second Temple. The Romans destroyed the temple in 70

A.D. down to the foundation and Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, in 1536 A.D. ordered the construction of the walls we see today around the city and issued a degree that allowed the Jews access to the Western Wall to pray and hold services.

For hundreds of years Jews have prayed at the Western Wall and have placed prayer notes between its stones. Following the Six Day War, in 1967, Israelis regained control of all of Old Jerusalem and removed houses adjacent to the Western Wall making a large plaza capable of holding thousands of worshipers. They also began archaeological digs along and the Wall exposing lower levels and excavations have been going on ever since. (The Western Wall: History and Overview, Jewish Virtual Library)



Praying at the Western Wall, Old Jerusalem, Israel

OLD TEMPLE, NEW LOCATION?

King Solomon's Temple was built in 957 B.C. on the mountain peak called Mt. Moriah, the traditional location where Abraham was told by God to sacrifice his son Isaac. Solomon's temple was destroyed in 586 B.C. by the Babylonians when they conquered Jerusalem. In 515 B.C., King Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylonia and allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Second Temple. In 20 B.C. King Herod renovated and expanded what is now called Herod's Temple. In 70 A.D. the Romans crushed a Jewish rebellion and destroyed the temple for the second time.

Biblical explorer Bob Cornuke, has a theory of where the true location of the First and Second Temples were located. And it's based on his reading of Matthew 24, where Jesus tells his apostles "not one stone of the temple will remain on another; every one will be thrown down" and the Jewish historian Josephus' account which reads: "it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was nothing left to believe it was ever inhabited."

Bob wondered why the Western and the Temple Mount foundation walls were still intact. He also wondered why there is no evidence of a Roman fort large enough for 6,000 plus soldiers and support staff. There is an account of a Fort Antonia but that building could never hold more than 300 soldiers.

Bob's theory is the 36 acre Temple Mount is where the Romans built their fort, using the displaced stone from the Second Temple. That area can easily hold a legion of 6,000 men and support staff.

And the Western Wall is just a wall and was never part of the temple, which he believes was 600 feet south of the southern Temple Mount wall.

For a full account of Bob's exciting theories look up Bob Cornuke at (KHouse.org or on his YouTube video).



Jesus waits for Judas on Mount of Olives, painted by Richard Pierro

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE CHURCH, MOUNT OF OLIVES

Approximately 400 yards from the Temple Mount, the Church of Gethsemane is located over the spot that Jesus prayed and waited as the soldiers and Pharisees approached to arrest him.

The Mount of Olives is where the celebrated and prophesied Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem. This is where Jesus wept and sweat blood the evening he was captured by the Roman soldiers—after Judas sold him out for 30 pieces of silver.

VIA DOLOROSA

Latin for Sorrowful Way, the Via Dolorosa is a processional route in the Old City of Jerusalem, believed to be the path that Jesus walked to his crucifixion. A 2,000 foot winding route from Fort Antonia to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher—marked by fourteen Stations of the Cross.

Recent archaeological excavations suggest that the actual route maybe located near the Tower of David and many feet below the present walkway, which was built over for the better part of 2,000 years. (The Underground Street of Via Dolorosa, Sergio and Rhoda)



Jews pray in tunnel, which is part of the Western Wall, Old Jerusalem

CHAPTER NINETEEN:

CHRISTIANITY VS. OTHER RELIGIONS

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WHAT DISTINGUISHES CHRISTIANITY FROM OTHER RELIGIONS?

When investigating Christianity vs. other religions, we see that Christianity is unique among the religions of the world for several reasons.

First, unlike other religions, Christianity is rooted in history and evidence. Jesus of Nazareth was born in Bethlehem in Judea during the reign of Caesar Augustus and was put to death by Pontius Pilate, a first century Roman Governor. The testimony of his life, death and resurrection is not only validated by credible eyewitness testimony but by credible extra-biblical evidence as well. No other religion can legitimately claim this kind of support from history and evidence.

Furthermore, of all the great religious leaders of the world (Buddha, Moses, Zoroaster, Lao Tzu, Muhammad), only Jesus claimed to be God in human flesh (Mark 14:62). And this was not an empty boast. For through the historically verifiable fact of resurrection Christ vindicated His claim to deity (Romans 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8). Other religions, such as Buddhism and Islam, claim miracles in support of their faith, however, unlike Christianity, such miracles lack historical validation.

Finally, Christianity is unique in that it is a coherent belief structure. Some Christian doctrines may transcend comprehension, however, unlike the claims of other religions, they are never irrational or contradictory. Christianity is also unique in that it cogently accounts for the vast array of phenomena we encounter in everyday life: the human mind, laws of science, laws of logic, ethical norms, justice, love, meaning in life, the problem of evil and suffering, and truth. In other words, Christianity corresponds with the reality of our present condition.

We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. (2 Peter 1:16)



Symbols of Christian Faith, mixed-media by Richard Pierro

CHAPTER TWENTY:

PARADE OF KNOWLEDGE

SMILE AND WAVE

The subjects of religion, myths, ancient civilizations and their historical relevance, and in some cases proof of existence, will never fully be answered to everyone's satisfaction.

It will take time, hundreds, maybe thousands of years. Archaeologists need time to uncover artifacts and Biblical locations; historians need to expound on their theories of who did what when; and theologians need to present their revelations and interpretations of scripture and verse to the best of their ability.

As far as I'm concerned, all of the above is very interesting from a layman's perspective. God's plan, must be like a twelve-tier, ethereal, chess game of good versus evil. So, being a simple man of faith, limited in knowledge and a short time left to comprehend life's mysteries, I'm going to lean back on my imaginary well padded rocking chair on the front porch of life and smile and wave as the "Parade of Knowledge" saunters by. Just me and my guardian angel, nibbling on the Word and inviting everyone over for a tall, cool, "Spirit of Grace" smoothie.

And as God's angels suit up for their final mission, I can't help but wonder what Heaven will be like...and how long I'll be cleaning toilets?

Thank you for taking the time to read this book, I have enjoyed writing it and hope you have enjoyed reading it. Very few of us retain all that we read, especially after the age of seventy, but that's why God blesses us with spiritual trails of manna to follow throughout our lives. So stroll down as many trails as you can, gather some manna, eat your fill and share the rest.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE:

HYMNS, SONGS AND PRAYERS OF PRAISE

Other than church, the holidays bring out the best in Christian hymns and songs of praise. A few days before Christmas, of 2019, I was watching videos on the history the Christian world's favorites and how their authors came to write them. A few were written by priests, one by an ex-slave trading sea captain, many were written in the 19th century by people of faith taught in childhood, and because of their love of God or misfortune they came to write songs like: Amazing Grace, How Great thou Art, What a friend I have in Jesus and Silent Night, Holy Night.

(Amazing Grace, the Story behind the song, Oxivision Films Asburg University 2011 and Amazing Grace–5 Hymns that Changed the World, Questar Entertainment)



Garden Tomb, considered by some Christians to be the burial and resurrection site of Jesus, a quarter mile north of Damascus Gate, Jerusalem, Israel

And then there is my all-time favorite poem: Footprints in the Sand, by Margaret Fishback (Powers). The first time I read Footprints it brought tears to my eyes. I was forty years old and had never heard or read it before. Christians are doing a poor job of getting the word out. Poems like these are very special and should be taught along with scripture.

FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND

One night I had a dream...

I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord, and across the sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; one belonged to me, and the other to the Lord. When the last scene of my life flashed before us, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that many times along the path of my life, there was only one set of footprints.

I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in my life.

This really bothered me, and I questioned the Lord about it.

"Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you,

You would walk with me all the way;

But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life,

There is only one set of footprints.

I don't understand why in times when I needed you the most, you should leave me.

The Lord replied, "My precious, precious child. I love you, and I would never, never leave you during your times of trial and suffering.

When you saw only one set of footprints, It was then that I carried you.

If that doesn't bring a tear to your eye you may want to see if you're down a quart of "Olio di Spirito."

THE LORD'S PRAYER

A few years ago I wrote two additional verses of praise for *The Lord's Prayer*, hope you like them.

Our Father, Who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name;
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

VERSE #2

Precious Lord, Who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name;
Thy only son,
The lamb of God,
from Heaven to earth Jesus came.
Your prophecies have been fulfilled;
on the cross Christ died for our sins,
to rise in three days a living covenant;
and by grace gift eternal life,
to those born again in Jesus.

VERSE #3

Prince of Peace, Who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name,
Thy sacrifice,
and love of man,
unlocked Heaven's gate and golden path.
Guide our heart dear Lord, mind and soul,

fore judgment day will come to all.
Cloak us with your grace and robes of glory;
so when the Book of Life is opened,
our name will be listed and called.

Verse #2 & #3 © 2018 Rick Pierro



Keeper of the door, Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Old Jerusalem, Israel

SOURCES:

Because I've never done this before and really don't know the proper procedures, I've listed many of the books that I have read over the years, some of which have influenced my religious beliefs and knowledge of the Bible. I have also accredited sources in many of the topics and received permission from authors when articles were used verbatim.

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King James Bible (KJV)
Little Talks with God, St. Catherine of Siena
Refuting Rabbinic Objections to Christianity and Messianic Prophecies, Eitan Bar
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The Age of Adventure, Giorgio De Santillana
The Bible Code, Michael Drosnin
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The Story of the Bible, Four Editions, WM. Wise & Co.
The Worlds Greatest Religions, Time Incorporated
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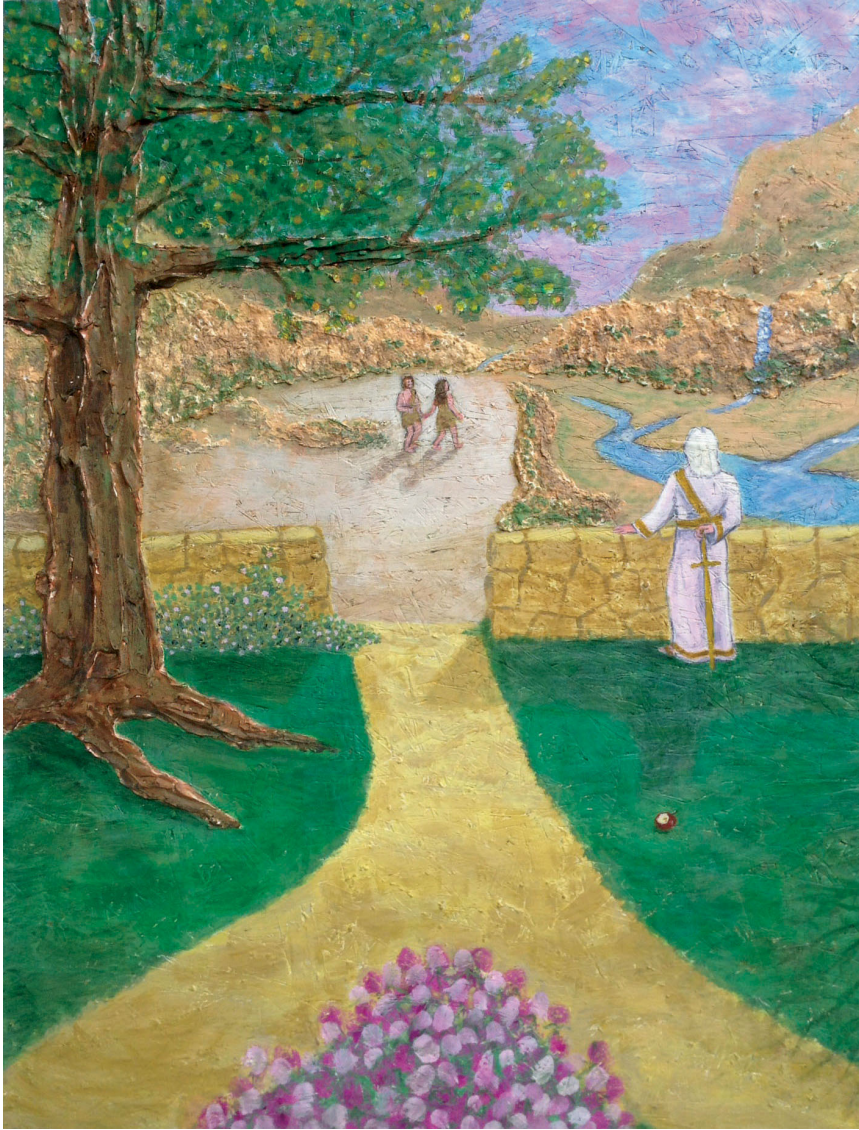
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