

Truth To Wonder



March 2023 - Volume 3 Issue 12

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.

-Revelation 21:1 KJV



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Contents

Melting With Fervent Heat
Page 2

What Purpose Is There In Empty Praise?
Page 3

An Old Promise Remembered
Page 5

He Was Crucified. The Tomb Was Empty.
He Did Appear. Part Two - The Tomb
Was Empty

Page 6

A Clear Warning Given
Page 7

Vexed By Vegetation
Page 8

Assinari - The Donkey People
Page 9

A History of *He Shall Hold Me Fast*
Page 10

Resource Corner
Page 11

Melting With Fervent Heat

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

2 Peter 3:10

This end of days prophecy given unto us through the Apostle Peter reveals what shall take place come the day of the Lord. The language is clear and arresting, finding it's most potent and truthful revelation in the supreme A.V/KJV Bible.

The revelation is one of unsurpassed purging of all sin and evil from Creation, a necessary action for as Scripture states, "the whole of creation groaneth" (Romans 8:22) under the weight of sin and the affects of the Curse placed upon it through the fall of Man. Such is the poison of sin and the burden of the Curse upon all Creation that the only remedy is for it to be completely destroyed with the most raging of fires.

To the believer in Christ this is a sobering but hopeful promise. Sobering because of the extent of destruction ahead but hopeful to the heart in that come the day of the Lord, He shall set about removing in totality all things that have plagued us throughout our existence. Come this fearful day, sin and evil shall be demolished in complete finality and at long last the fears and sorrows that trouble us so greatly now shall vanish from existence. What a blessed day that shall be!

Yet to the unbeliever, it's words are a terrifying warning of what awaits them. It is the death knell for the mighty works of man, who since the days of Cain, sought to make a name unto themselves and establish it's testimony of self in the monuments of their own might. In but a day the Lord will smash down and burn up every last great monument to the proud and rebellious heart of the wicked. They shall be eradicated from existence and the memory of them shall not even trouble the minds of the righteous who shall dwell with God in peace and glory in the New Heavens and Earth (Revelation 21).

Conversely those who have spent their lives in rebellion against the Almighty God, those whose sweat and strength was exercised in determining to have the world remember and celebrate them shall wail and gnash their teeth in hellfire forevermore. They shall scream in bitterness against the might of God as they lament the wiping out of their wicked endeavours.



All the monuments of men shall be burnt up come the day of the Lord

This is the singular warning to all who would listen to it's terrifying alarm. A great many souls have sought to defy the demise of their lives by etching themselves into the pages of history. Men have murdered, stolen and blasphemed their way into a position where they believed they had ascended to the immortal heavens

themselves. Yet the way to heaven is but through One, the Lord Jesus. As Jacob saw in his dream of a ladder ascending to heaven with angels ascending and descending, the only way to glory everlasting is through Christ Jesus. However the proud heart will not acknowledge such a vibrant and certain truth. It will run to and fro like their restless master that is Satan, searching in all vanity for another avenue to everlasting glory.

Gaze upon the great monuments of man. See the mighty Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Wall of China, the skyscrapers of the world, the towering obelisks in bustling cities the world over. Look on the ancient bricks of once mighty men of renown, whose names they had desperately carved deep in the stone so that history might adore them. All of these shall be destroyed with a heat that will consume even the greatest mountains of stone Creation can offer as a monument to the might of man. The Lord of Hosts Christ Jesus, shall descend upon these bastions of rebellious deeds and burn them up until not even the memory of their glory shall linger. Surely all is vanity. The Lord's Word is true indeed and it shall be the only thing that shall remain.

The eternal power of the Word shall stretch forth forevermore and with His great right arm He shall take with it those sealed up in the blood of the Word Himself.

Whilst all things, even the very elements themselves shall be utterly consumed, those sheltered by the Immortal God shall be carried through to peace everlasting, where we shall put on the incorruptible (1 Corinthians 15:53), inheriting all things in His eternal grace (Revelation 21:7). The humble of heart do not lay claim to any great work done in their own name and so they hold no fear of what will transpire come the day of the Lord. No, instead they long for it! For come this awesome day, they shall rest forevermore in the declaration of their Saviour that, "It is done." Evil vanquished at last. (Revelation 21:6). We shall sing glory everlasting to the Lord Jesus, for He sits in all power and glory at the right hand of the Father. He sits for His work is done and His name shall stand alone, supreme in all existence and we shall praise Him, for He alone is worthy of this rapturous praise that shall make the very halls of the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem quake with joy and thanksgiving!

I had long dreamed of carving my name into the pages of history. To be adored by others and heralded as a mighty man. Blessed by the Lord God for smashing down my proud heart so that the fear of His Word pierced my heart. Blessed be the Lord God that in His stunning grace I was shown to cease from labouring to secure my own testament. Blessed be the Lord God that He showed me that all these things I once longed for shall be stripped away in all totality and that all that shall remain will be the truth of His Word. Blessed be

the Lord God that my eyes were opened to see that it is through this very Word that my salvation is held. Blessed be the Lord God that through His Word the monument for my days is Christ everlasting. Blessed be the Lord God forevermore. Amen.

By Jonathan Badger

What Purpose Is There In Empty Praise?

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

Isaiah 1:11

Speaking to an old friend just a few weeks ago revealed another dear soul infected by the most rampant illness in western Christendom today, vacuous churches. This once eager heart in Christ looked devoid of the joyful passion that once coursed through them not that long ago. Swept up in a new life having surrounded themselves with worldly souls and confused minds, their determination to seek after the Lord had slipped into the well filled trap of good intentions. The intention to bring others away from their errors by living amongst them and hoping to gently nudge them in the way to Christ. A commendable hope in many ways but naïve. Not long before this decline they had themselves warned another dear to them of such a folly and yet human nature dictates that we so often fall into the error of which we warned others.

So compromises were made hoping to aid the lost and confused. A simple but oh so easy and costly error to make. For it is the strength of the stand that convicts the heart of the truth of Christ's Word, not the conforming of ways to suit the sensitivities of the blind of heart. The compromise grew with each passing month until they were pulled away into gatherings that though they have the outward show of faith and adherence to the Word of God, the substance is dried up and lifeless. They are now living in a world that presents itself as devoted and sincere but in actuality is empty of steadfastness, knowledge, passion, wisdom and unshakeable hope in Christ.

Once partaking in fellowship with faithful souls who endure much in the name of Christ, they now fellowship with those who cannot even be certain in their convictions that Jesus Christ is the **only** way to the Father. It has been a heart shattering thing to witness and the tragedy is that this is repeated over and over again in our modern life of diluted faith and apologetic Christianity. Once these shores housed gatherings that were filled with souls eager to hear the Word of God

preached. Their hearts and minds cried out for this sustenance that can be found nowhere else in all existence. Yet now if the churches are well attended, it is for the most part because those gathered are seeking community interaction, life affirming messages (regardless of the life being lived), emotional outbursts and entertainment from music that teaches nothing of Christ but merely repeats a vague sense of praise to some ambiguous version of God.



If I find such a sight a tragedy and burdensome to the heart then how much more so does it break the heart of God?! He who gave His only begotten Son to rescue those who were lost; He who provides each heartbeat to every life and sustains their daily needs in His goodness and

grace; He who moved all history so that we might know Him in a depth of communion that not even the angels know; how deeply is He wounded by such a sight?!

Consider the words of Isaiah 1:11 and see the lament of God towards those who pose as righteous and yet are unrepentant of heart. This heavy verse reveals that God looked on the sacrifices of His people the Jews and found nothing pleasing in them. Yes they were adhering to the requirements of the sacrificial Law but it was all conducted in emptiness of heart. To this God speaks through the prophet Isaiah, that such actions have no purpose and are thus worthless. Think on when you have laid out your heart to another you hold dear and yes they are there in the flesh but they are distracted by something meaningless like their phone, the tv or thoughts about some trivial nonsense. Think on how you've poured out your heart to them and all that is returned is a vacant expression and some cobbled together response that does not acknowledge the crux of your petition to them. It shatters the spirit doesn't it. It drains the bond of it's strength and it's purpose and you are left doubting the very love of their heart. This is a poor and weak reflection of the heartbreak that God feels each time praise is offered so insincerely unto Him.

Moving forward to today and humanity has not changed. As the Israelites had known and enjoyed the great blessings of God's provision for centuries so has this nation. Yet as the Israelites drifted away from faithful devotion to God, so the removal of His blessing befell them (Isaiah 1:7). So it is with our own land, a once mighty nation now becoming the sick man of the western world. As the Israelites went about the outward

fulfilment of the commands of God so too does the Church today. Yet as the hearts of the Israelites were absent from their sacrifices and praise, so too the hearts of many in churches today is absent from their praise. What praise and thanksgiving there is is pointed towards each other and not the Living God.

Often I hear the justification that people attend compromised churches because of the music and the sense of 'community'. A strong pull no doubt and it is the same pull that many will give as the reason why they go to clubs and pubs etc. Many attend churches today because they desire that 'community' bond but have no desire to have that bond be utterly based in faithful devotion to Christ. Once this bond was held in the joyful recognition in the assembled hearts that each was as devoted to Christ and His Word as the next. This is the hope and desire that fed the gathering of the followers of Christ in the upper room before Pentecost (Acts chapters 1-2). It was in this gathering of "one accord" that the Holy Ghost entered and set fire to gathered hearts and thus changed the world! It is this very gifting of the Holy Ghost that the modern church is obsessed with, however it refuses to abide by the written way of how to gain such a wondrous blessing, faithful devotion to Christ through a repentant heart and earnest adherence to Christ's commands as revealed in His Word!

Even though the instructions on what manner of service and praise pleases God is clear and oft repeated in Holy Scripture (sincere repentance of sin and faithful devotion to **all** the Word of God), this is not noted by modern Christianity for it is blind of spirit and dead of heart. It's outward show of religiosity is lifeless and empty. Even the secular world sees it! So many newspaper articles have been penned in this past year commenting on the demise and purposeless nature of much of the Church today that it beggars belief!

When the world can see that many Christian's faith and displays of religious practice is devoid of real belief and the Church can't see it, then we are to weep as a nation for the judgment of God is at hand. As the Israelites were taken from power, peace and prosperity under David and Solomon and into misery, oppression and poverty under the Babylonians, because of their fall away from God, so shall this nation crumble and fall. Those who do not know history are doomed to repeat it.

So we are to pray, and pray with the utmost earnestness that God would be merciful to this land and hear the pleas of the faithful remnant that remains (as seen in Isaiah 1:9) so that He might send valiant men who tremble before no man, but fear only God. Pray that these men might set this nation of fire for God once more; that He might once again have pity on this wicked land as He did in age of Whitefield and Wesley. Appeal to the mercy of God that He will guard His remnant and keep them steadfast in the faith, so that

His Word is not just spoken but lived. Pray that this then would make the praise of our churches true and sincere once more. Amen.

By Jonathan Badger

An Old Promise Remembered

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

Isaiah 65:17

We return to the Book of Isaiah to receive this glorious promise from Our Lord God. It is a beautiful vision of what awaits the faithful servant of Christ who overcomes all In His precious name (Revelation 21:7).

Our Lord shall destroy our present heavens and earth for they are poisoned by sin and the affects of the Curse placed upon Creation at the fall of Adam (Genesis 3). Then in His stunning goodness and grace He will create a *new heavens and a new earth* in which the righteous shall dwell in His presence forevermore (Revelation 21:3).

The Greek word for this revealing of a *new heavens and a new earth* is not *neos*, meaning “young” or “novel”, but is actually *kainos*, meaning “fresh” or “renewed”. In this wondrous revelation we can bear witness that Christ shall create a world that is completely fresh, a Creation totally renewed and restored as it was in Genesis, where Our Lord said that all was “very good”. Come this triumphant day the Lord will fulfil His tender promise to us that He shall indeed make all things beautiful in His time (Ecclesiastes 3:11). What could be more beautiful than perfection restored and then that we would be gifted this blissful existence for all eternity?! He certainly shall make all things beautiful in His time.

Whilst this is a most wondrous promise yet to be fulfilled, there are a great many dear believers who struggle with loss. Their joyful walk with the Lord is sometimes made hard and sorrowful as a heavy thought burdens them. This thought is that loved ones who died outside of Christ shall not know this awesome eternity. It is a terrible burden no doubt and a faithful servant of Christ can be so very frequently troubled by it that it may threaten to derail their very walk with God. Yet this is where as always the remedy to the pain of the human condition is in the Word of God. Our Lord promises us directly that the *former* (this world full of pain and sorrow) *shall not be remembered*. Our Gracious God by the power of His Word, shall remove all traces of this fallen world and the misery endured whilst walking in it. The brilliant use of the word *shall* renders the depth of His promise assuredly as it's full significance means that it is a full legal declaration that is spoken with absolute certainty of coming to pass. Here we read

the very words of Our Lord God that He will ensure with all legal finality and completion that His elect shall not be troubled by the pain of this current world nor even it's memory.

The assurance is further emphasised in this comforting verse as He confirms that even the memories of the pain of loss and wounding from this life shall not *come into mind*. What a peaceful but powerful declaration this is to all who would hear it's promise! The grief and loss, the terrible hours spent weeping over those though loved are outside of Christ shall never again trouble our minds. When one considers this then of course this is how it shall be in the new heavens and new earth. All will be made *new*; untouched by even the merest drop of evil. It shall remain pure and undefiled by even the weakest hint of the poison of sadness, loss and grief. For if such memories could enter the minds of the righteous in paradise then it's perfection has been marred. This cannot be so for the Word of God has spoken that He shall make *all things new* (Revelation 21:5). What could be more ‘new’, what could be more ‘novel’ to us than to have a mind completely untroubled by pain, suffering, sadness, depression, anxiety or even loss. This will be a most beautiful *new* thing to the righteous in Christ.

If you are one so plagued by heavy thoughts of those who you love being lost to the Lord then be comforted by His Word. He knows you're

heartbreak and has felt it so much deeper than any of us can ever imagine for His heart breaks over each who turn away from His free gift of grace. Yet by the power of His Word these tears shall indeed be wiped away and not even the memory of the watery trail of those tears on the cheek shall trouble your mind.

In closing I recall a neighbour that my grandparents had many years ago. She was a widow of many years and they had witnessed to her consistently throughout, hoping that she would come to Christ. Yet her greatest objection in doing so was that her husband did not know Christ and so she wanted to be with her husband for eternity over Christ Jesus. She denied the very source of love that is Christ Jesus for a form that dimly reflects the love God held for her. If you are similar in your thoughts as you read this then hear the promise of God. Though you may be heartbroken in grief now, come to Christ Jesus in your sadness and call on Him to cleanse you of your sins and heal your wounds. Trust His promise that through faith in Him He shall lead to an eternal existence beyond the reach of even the memory of your sadness and loss. Do not shun the greatest love that shall last forever for a dim reflection of



it that shall not walk on golden streets in paradise forevermore.

By Jonathan Badger

He Was Crucified. The Tomb Was Empty. He Did Appear.

Part Two - The Tomb Was Empty

Joseph of Arimathea gave away his tomb but it wasn't occupied for long. It was in use for three days, it was quiet and undisturbed. The emptiness of that tomb is a fact of history and the preaching of the resurrection could not have been presented in Jerusalem five minutes if that tomb's emptiness couldn't be seen by friends and enemies. There is no evidence anywhere in literature or archaeology that refutes the empty tomb.

When scholars try to argue that people went to the wrong tomb we have to ask is that the best they have? Didn't the Pharisees even think to ask Joseph of Arimathea? I bet he saw it empty. Look, the same old arguments have been put forward by scholars. For example, the women went to the wrong tomb, the men did because they went to check their story. Did the guards go to the wrong tomb? Look, don't be daft, don't you think the Pharisees and Sadducees wouldn't have quickly got the body from the right tomb? They couldn't produce a body. Unbelievers can yell all night and scholars can witter and gibber all they want (I have heard them all for fifty years), but they have nothing.

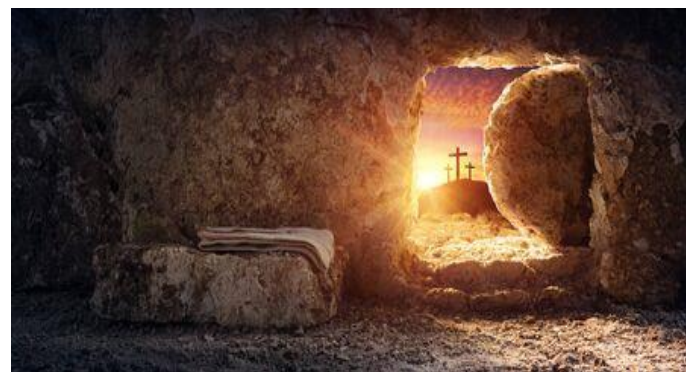
So, they say well the disciples stole it, really, are you serious? Well for a start the cowardice of the disciples is a serious barrier against this argument. Listen to the words of J.N.D. Anderson, professor and Dean of Law at London University and chairman of the Department of Oriental Law and Director of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. With reference to the body being supposedly stolen he states, 'This would run totally contrary to all we know of them: their ethical teaching, the quality of their lives, their steadfastness in suffering and persecution. Nor would it begin to explain their dramatic transformation from dejected and dispirited escapists into witnesses whom no opposition could muzzle.'

Anyway, let's ask some more questions of these smart-aleck scholars. How did they get past the guards to pinch the body? Here's something really stupid, these 'thieves' are barmy enough to waste time stripping the body and then not just barmy but certifiable, folding up the clothes in a neat pile. Imagine going with some buddies to steal a body which could carry the death penalty and tidying up. How did they move the stone? Who broke the seal? If the seal was a Roman one then it carried the death penalty to break it. Further Joseph

of Arimathea was a rich man, and important man, the tomb that had been prepared for his body would not be obscure, it would be easy to find. So where was the body? Why wasn't it produced?

Well let's consider some further 'scholarly' arguments. It has been suggested that Jesus didn't die, he fainted from loss of blood and exhaustion, everybody thought him dead (really)? Then he revived in the tomb and his disciples thought He had risen. No-one explains how he got out. Actually a famous sceptic David Friedrich Strauss who didn't believe in the resurrection actually attacked the fainting argument. He wrote, 'It is impossible that a being who had stolen half-dead out of the sepulchre, who crept about weak and ill, wanting medical treatment, who required bandaging, yielded to his sufferings, could have given to the disciples the impression that he was a conqueror over death and the grave, the Prince of Life, an impression which lay at the bottom of their future ministry. Such a resuscitation could only have weakened the impression which he had made upon them in life and in death'. Well there's an unbeliever with at least an ounce of sense.

However, let's go further with this 'scholarly' 'fainted'



argument. The Lord had faced trial, flogging, and physical abuse before He ever got to Calvary. We have spoken in Part One of the nails, the gangrene, blood loss, heat, dehydration, difficulty in breathing etc. There is the spear thrust which Roman soldiers were expert with. He is wrapped in a tight shroud and His face covered. He is sealed in a pitch black tomb which could soon have been airless and you can't get out of. A tomb stone could weigh two ton. He also 'supposedly' folds His grave clothes in the pitch black, why? How? Then we have to assume He walked naked or at best with a loin cloth around outside and was only seen when He chose to be.

Anyway, let's go back to someone stealing the body. How did the guards know who stole it if they were asleep? Yet they are told to say the disciples took it. If the authorities had evidence of this why didn't they seek their execution? Some 'scholars' have argued the Jews or Romans took it. That is as stupid as arguing the disciples did. If the authorities took it, why didn't they produce it? The disciples were causing chaos preaching the resurrection. If the Jews or Romans had the Lord's body they could have paraded it through Jerusalem.

They could have ended Christianity stone dead. Listen to Professor John Warwick Montgomery who holds nine earned degrees from leading universities. He says, 'It passes the bounds of credibility that the early Christians could have manufactured such a tale and then preached it among those who might easily have refuted it simply by producing the body of Jesus'.

Look, between the Resurrection and forty years later in 70A.D when the Jewish Nation, City and Temple were destroyed by the Romans, no-one produced any evidence against the truth of the Resurrection. Paul refers to five hundred witnesses, the majority who were still alive to testify. Further, I have never read a book, article or heard a sermon after 50 years in the ministry where anyone has ever spoken of the dead who also appeared alive in Jerusalem at the Lord's resurrection.

Lets continue, some have come along and said people had an hallucination. Well that tripe goes right through the floor on the grounds of all modern psychological principles which govern hallucinations. This argument of hallucination does not fit with the historical facts, neither with the apostles mental state. Look, the disciples were devastated, they didn't even believe the women, to Jews, the Messiah couldn't die. They had seen Jesus die. Their whole mental faculties were set against seeing Him alive. Medically it is said that there are certain kinds of people that tend to hallucinations, these being, 'Highly strung' and 'Imaginative people'. However, those who saw the Risen Lord are a total cross-section. Again, when they see Him they are in very different size groups, from two to five hundred. They also see Him at different times in the day, and at various places. Further, they are not expecting these meetings, they never expected the Lord to meet with them in the locked room, He had never done so before. There is no ground prepared for hallucinations.

Look, for two thousand years the only 'serious' arguments presented by scholars against the Resurrection are,

1. The Wrong Tomb,
2. Fainted,
3. Body Stolen,
4. Jews or Romans Took It, and
5. Hallucination

The only recent modern one is that Jesus was a spaceman.

Friend, Christ was not Crucified in the back-end of a box, He was nailed publicly at the Capital of the Land. The Christian Church is founded on the Resurrection of Him who was nailed and died. If the Resurrection is denied, then the Origin of the Church becomes an insoluble problem. The Church is a witness to the Resurrection. The Church came into being because of that Resurrection. So, if the Resurrection is a FACT

then clearly JESUS OF NAZARETH was no mere man.

By Dr David Badger

A Clear Warning Given

The vision of the New Jerusalem as witnessed by the Apostle John in Revelation 21 and 22 is an awesome one and is the hope of Abraham finally realised (Hebrews). The description of a massive, cubical (some suggest a mountain or pyramid shape but this does not work Scripturally) city with enormous walls of crystal like Jasper, streets of translucent gold and foundations made up of twelve differing gemstones cannot help but overwhelm the mortal mind.

The stunning beauty of the Holy City in it's visible beauty finds it's loving companion in the beautiful existence that shall surround it's inhabitants (the redeemed in Christ, both Jew and Gentile). The righteous in Christ shall know only peace and glory forevermore as all pain, sorrow and death shall be eradicated for all eternity by the power of the Word of God.

This glorious hope of both the Old and New Testament saints, along with all those washed clean by the blood of Christ since and to the close of history, will not be enjoyed by all however. In unmistakable contrast to the teachings of Universalism (everyone will go to heaven regardless of any personal faith in Christ Jesus), we read in verse 8 of Revelation 21,

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 burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

The warning from the Lord Jesus, He who had just verses before revealed Himself as the *Alpha and Omega* (the beginning and the end as corresponding to the first and last letters of the Ancient Greek alphabet), declares with all authority that those who *fearful and unbelieving* shall not enter this city.

The reference to the *fearful* does not refer to those who are afraid of taking their place in such a glorious city but rather those who were fearful or ashamed of standing for Christ Jesus in this life. The stark warning to those who tremble at the opinion of man over the judgement of God is spoken of in the same terms of angering God as those who do not believe in Jesus Christ (*unbelieving*). It is a sobering statement and one that should be heeded with all alertness by the Church today! We look upon much of Christendom today and

witness a Church that is ashamed to stand and defend the Revealed Word of God against the attacks of man and Satan. Whether this is witnessed in the grovelling to LGBTQ+ activists, fear of the militant atheists of the day; acceptance of diluted Bible versions that happily omit crucial passages on fundamental Christian doctrine or the allowance of women to lead church services, a fear or shame of what Christ has decreed to be *true and faithful* (that is His Word) is rife in our Laodicean age.

For any who still desire to diminish the intensity of warning given by Christ Jesus, one only need look at the rest of verse 8 of Revelation 21. All those that are abominable to the Lord such as murderers, idolators, liars, sexually perverse, practitioners of Occultic magic will share the same eternal fate, no place in the Holy City that is the New Jerusalem.



No place in the New Jerusalem for those ashamed of Christ

No doubt the compiling of those ashamed to stand and name Christ as their Saviour and defend His Word in all it's revelation and purity, along with such obvious proponents of wickedness will cause many to choke in shock. However this is what the Lord Himself has said will take place. To apply these words as they read is sobering indeed but it is consistent with the very nature of Christ. For to be ashamed or fearful of standing for what Christ has declared to be true and everlasting is to deny the very validity of His claim that His Word is eternal. It is to demote the authority of His decree and have the opinion of man supersede Him. Thus it is akin to accusing God a liar for if you believed all of God's Word to be truth then you wouldn't be at all concerned what the world had to say about it. This is the heart of faith, to believe that what Christ has said is truth, all of it!

To continue with this thought, to call God a liar, whether overtly or secretly in the heart is to do exactly what Satan did in Eden, namely challenge the validity and authority of God! This challenge is seen in the actions of the murderers, sorcerers, perverse of this world as they all engage in vile actions that God has decreed to be evil as they submit it is permissible. So the root of all these deeds is in darkest evil and must therefore be destroyed in the *lake which burneth with fire and brimstone*.

So heed the warning of Christ Jesus and be not ashamed or fearful of naming Him as your Saviour and Redeemer, nor of defending His Pure Word. For His Word is of Him and reveals His own love for you. Modern Christians are quick to claim the love of Christ but equally quick to dismiss the application of returned love which is to defend it from attack. Christ is His Word and so all those who overcome the trials and battles of this life, being unashamed to boldly declare Him to be their Lord and God and delight in all His commands and precepts, they will take their place in this most beautiful of eternal dwellings that is the New Jerusalem, the eternal tabernacle of God.

By Jonathan Badger

Vexed By Vegetation

'Living fossils' are quite the problem for the evolutionist. The existence of creatures such as the much discussed Coelacanth fish in oceans today makes a mockery of the long held assertion that these aquatic creatures died out millions of years ago. Yet in reality there are a great many 'living fossils' in nature today. Crocodiles, octopuses, dragonflies, butterflies, giraffes, etc, etc are all creatures we are familiar with in our world today. Yet all these creatures are found in the fossil record and bear little to no difference in how we know them today. They have not evolved to be any different to how they appear in rock layers that are supposedly many millions of years old. Technically then the vast majority of living creatures are 'living fossils' as they are next to identical as to what they were 'tens of millions of years ago' according to evolutionary theory.



spot the difference: fossilised Ginkgo leaves and modern counterpart - 'hundreds of millions of years' separation but no difference

This evidence based proof against Evolution is not confined to the animal world however for it is also seen in the realm of plant life. Fossils of the Ginkgo tree have regularly been unearthed and thus were considered to be consigned to the pages of history as it's existence today was not known. However the humble Ginkgo tree was found growing happily in the Australian jungles in the 20th century. Furthermore it's structure and appearance is no different to the fossilised Ginkgo trees of the ancient world. These simple trees are meant to

be hundreds of millions of years old and lost to history, yet they grow merrily in Australia without any alteration from their 'primeval' ancestor.

The puzzling similarity of 'primeval' plants and creatures in today's world to their modern counterparts is a massive problem for evolutionists, yet the problem does not stop there. Continuing with the Ginkgo tree, the sheer fact that we have fossils of the leaves of the Ginkgo tree is also problematic for evolutionary theory. Fauna, or plant life is extremely delicate and is easily broken down (just ask any gardener!) and so for any plant life to be fossilised it **must** happen rapidly. Fossils are made by minerals (mostly silica compounds) chemically reacting with the original living material to then produce a hard crystalline substance in it's place. This reaction must take place quickly and even more so with plant life as once the plant is separated from it's roots, it soon withers in the air. If it were submerged in water for even hours it would soon lose it's robust leaf structure. Yet the fossils we have of such plants as the Ginkgo tree show us leaves that appear to be frozen in a state of vitality and structural health. It's as though they were ripped up from their roots and buried within a matter to seconds/minutes. Such fossil material is found the world over, meaning that such rapid fossilisation of delicate organic materials happened universally over the globe. If only there was an event that could cause such conditions....oh yes, The Book of Genesis covers that one doesn't it (Noah's Flood for any who remain perplexed).

By Jonathan Badger

Assinari - The Donkey People

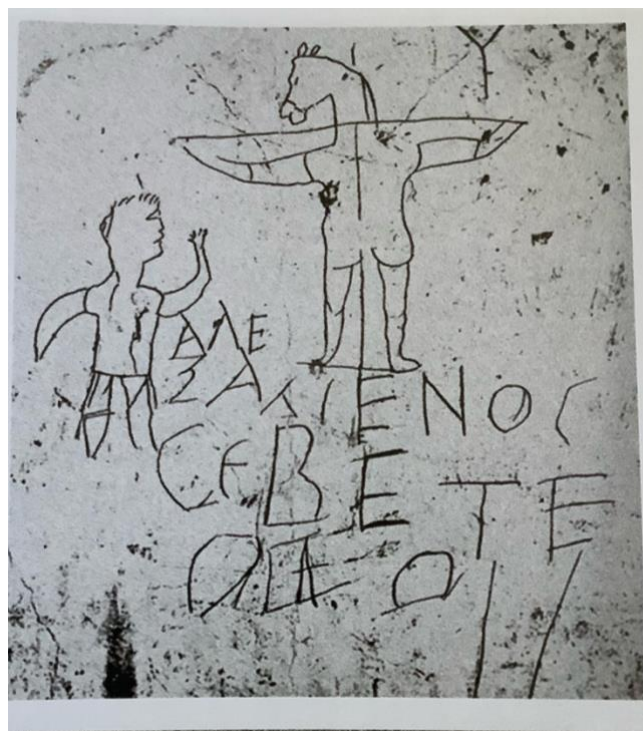
As we've seen this month, the fear of mockery from the world is a sizeable problem for many Christians today. Yet this is far from being a modern problem. In the days of the early Church, those centuries where it caught fire under the ministry of the Holy Spirit and spread with speed and intensity throughout the Roman Empire and beyond, early Christians suffered great mockery (and enormous persecution) for their faith.

The Roman Empire was at the height of it's power and the cruelty of the application of this power was evident in the brutal form of execution that was crucifixion. After the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, those who followed Christ Jesus were derogatorily referred to as *Assinari* (*donkey people*). This insult was the combination of mocking Christ having entered Jerusalem on a donkey as king and then being crucified outside the city walls.

The mockery of early Christians as *Assinari* was so common and widespread that crudely engraved graffiti from the Roman era near the Palatine Hill in Rome has been discovered. The graffiti depicts a man with a donkey's head being crucified as an onlooker looks up

in worship. Alongside this insult a message was carved saying, 'Alexamenos worships his god'. Interestingly close to this inscription is a response that reads, 'Alexamenos is faithful'.

The regularity of this insult towards early Christians was even noted by the early Church leader Tertullian (A.D 155-220) He wrote, "Some of you have entertained the dream that our god is actually the head of an ass." With stinging sarcasm he continued, "You in fact worship the ass in it's entirety, not just the head. And then you throw in Epona, the patron saint of donkeys and all the beasts of burden, cattle, and wild animals. You even worship their stables. Perhaps this is your charge against us that in the midst of all these indiscriminate animal lovers, we save our devotion for asses alone!" (Tertullian *To The Nations*).



Ancient graffiti mocking the donkey people (Assinari) - early Christians

The faith shown by humble Alexamenos in his probable response to public mockery for his faith in not compromising it but standing by his Lord is exactly the type of steadfastness of faith that will be rewarded by Our Lord forevermore, with a place in the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. So my Christian friends, see that your trials are no different to those endured by those who have gone on before. Christ Jesus led them home to glory everlasting in the faithfulness of His Word and He shall see you through as well. So be of good courage and defend the faith and look forward to the coming reward.

By Jonathan Badger

A History of *He Shall Hold Me Fast*

A hymn that has enjoyed a resurgence in recent years thanks in some part to the musical qualities of singers such as Keith and Kristen Getty, is the stirring *He Shall Hold Me Fast*. The lyrics are as follows:

When I fear my faith will fail
Christ will hold me fast
When the tempter would prevail
He will hold me fast
I could never keep my hold
Through life's fearful path
For my love is often cold
He must hold me fast

He will hold me fast
He will hold me fast
For my Saviour loves me so
He will hold me fast

Those He saves are His delight
Christ will hold me fast
Precious in His holy sight
He will hold me fast
He'll not let my soul be lost
His promises shall last
Bought by Him at such a cost
He will hold me fast

For my life He bled and died
Christ will hold me fast
Justice has been satisfied
He will hold me fast
Raised with Him to endless life
He will hold me fast
Till our faith is turned to sight
When he comes at last

(Version sung by the aforementioned Getty's)

Though a simple hymn, the oft felt experience of many believers as seen in the lyrics above are a moving remembrance that it is through the faithfulness of Christ that each of His elect is taken home to glory. This deliverance to glory everlasting is 'held fast' by Christ Jesus even when we feel distant from God and that our faith is being greatly troubled by the devil. This troubling of the spirit has been seen and felt by so many of God's children and is witnessed within even what is believed to be the oldest book of the Holy Bible that is the Book of Job.

Penned by Miss Ada R Habershon in 1905, Miss Habershon was already a well respected songstress and campaign worker within the American Evangelist Dr Torrey's ministry. During her attendance at one of Dr Torrey's meetings, she was moved by his sermon on the Second Coming of Christ. She went home and wrote the lyrics to the said hymn but under a different initial title, *Oh What A Change!*

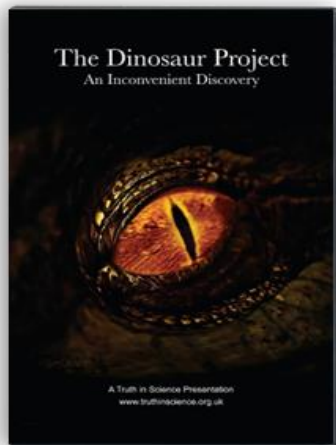
Miss Habershon then gave the newly written words to a Mr Harkness, the pianist for Dr Torrey's meetings, who in turn was inspired by another one of the Dr Torrey's sermons and composed an initial melody to accompany the lyrics of Miss Habershon.

The hymn quickly became popular amongst the revival meetings of the early 20th century in America as led by Dr Torrey and others such as Billy Sunday. It was during one of these meetings in 1906 in Philadelphia, that Mr Harkness was approached by a young convert who, "feared he would not be able to hold out", in the face of trial and temptation of faith. Mr Harkness wrote to Miss Abershon (himself a young convert) asking for some texts to assist this young man. She responded with some Bible verses along with the line, "He will hold me fast". Later Mr Harkness took out the response from Miss Abershon and was struck by that line, 'He will hold me fast' and composed the melody that we know today.

The following summer of 1907 saw the hymn used at the Moody Bible Conference, where it acted as a strong evangelistic tool. It's words on the faithfulness of Christ Jesus assured many hesitant souls that it is by the strength and faith of Christ that we are brought to salvation and preserved unto eternity. Herein is the marker for a useful song of worship. As A.W Tozer observed, if the words of a hymn are revealing of the nature of Christ, teaching us of His wondrous love and glorious attributes; if it stirs us to know more of Him and search the Scriptures to come ever closer to Him; if it upholds Christian doctrine and delights in it, then it is fitting to be sung as praise unto God. This is where so much of Christian music today is sorely lacking. It teaches nothing of Christ; it stirs emotion only and gives no desire for study of His Word; it's praise is often vague and unnamed; it's message is repetitive and without adherence to fundamental Christian doctrine. Thus it is not fit to be offered up as praise unto Our Thrice Holy God.

By Jonathan Badger

Resource Corner



The Dinosaur Project

How were the dinosaurs wiped out? How do fossils form instead of just rotting away? And how can we know how old they really are? This documentary featuring paleobiologist Joseph Hubbard shares

astounding new finds

that could have a significant bearing on the beliefs we have about the past.

Available from Answers In Genesis

Borderland - Israel in the time of Jesus

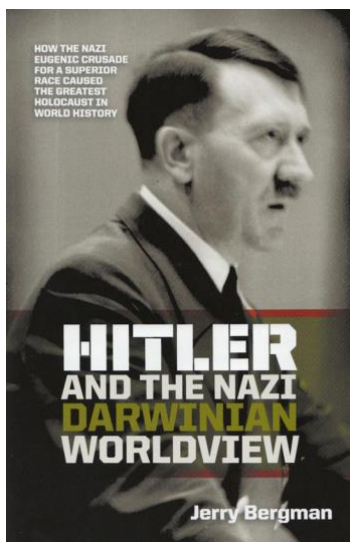
This very detailed and extremely fascinating book, based on the exhibit at the Creation Museum, unpacks the world that Jesus was born into, bridges the gap between the Old and New

Testament and provides helpful context for the people and events of Jesus' lifetime.



Available from Answers in Genesis

Hitler and the Nazi Darwinian Worldview



This book takes a fresh look at Germany's most influential Nazi leaders, examining their backgrounds, education and convictions. It provides compelling evidence that the rising influence of Darwinism, eugenics and race theory in early twentieth-century society set the foundation for the Nazi pursuit of engineering a German "master race"—and

exterminating European Jews, Gypsies, Blacks, most Slavs and the Christian religion in the ensuing madness of the Holocaust of World War II.

The effect of social Darwinism, eugenics and anti-Semitism, and their relative acceptance in the scientific and medical communities of Germany and many other countries worldwide, opened the door to mass murder, medical experimentation and military conquest. This title examines the roots of Nazi ideology and unmasks the Darwinian "survival of the fittest" theory behind it.

Available from Creation Ministries International

Join us at Truth To Wonder Church

We are a family run church that focuses on the study of Holy Scripture and how His revealed Word is just as applicable to us all today as it has been throughout history.

Learn how good and unbiased scientific practice supports the Genesis account of world history.

See how archaeological discoveries uphold the Bible's claim to be recording of history and not just a collection of moral teachings and virtue filled myths.

Enjoy fellowship with other believers who love the God of the Bible and delight in His commands and precepts (Psalm 119:97).

Join us and be strengthened knowing that there are others who seek to glorify Our Lord God by sharing the Gospel with others so that they might know the love of God (Romans 1:16, 2 Timothy 4:2, Mark 16:15, John 3:16).

**Sundays at 11am, Iford Scout Hut,
Iford Lane, Bournemouth, BH6 5NE
– for more information visit**

truthtowonder.org

Check out the Truth To Wonder website as well!

Find out about TTW Church, access our back catalogue of TTW Magazine, enjoy fun kids activity ideas, discover useful resources to aid your Biblical studies, keep up to date with the article of the month and more!