

# *The Bible*

## *A Fascinating Love Story*

The following article was written in response to an article in our locally published paper, *The Common Ground* many years ago. It was an article denouncing the Bible, but I felt it had no scholarly merit, just a lot of unfounded personal jabs at people like me. My article was not a rebuttal but an attempt to give sound reasons for people who have thrown the Bible away, to reconsider their decision. The *Common Ground* article is not copied here but I will say that they graciously printed this article in their next issue. I have made a few references to that article, but a reader who is unfamiliar with it can still benefit from the content of mine. I am indebted to Armin Wolff who gathered some of the following scientific information and shared with our church family many years ago.

In a recent issue of *Common Grounds*\* an article was presented disclosing “facts” which set all things straight concerning the Bible. The Bible was merely written by men, some parts were plagiarized while the rest was full of inaccuracies and contradictions. And apparently those who read it and are guided by it have often suffered severe mental and emotional issues and need to be freed from its tyranny and its outdated ideas. The implication was that those who rely on the Bible are ignorant fools.

In all fairness, I'd like to also address some details about the Bible albeit from the point of an ignoramus and mentally disturbed guy with some pretty severe emotional issues. Others may be a better judge of that than I, and I submit to their judgment. But in all fairness, or possibly in the name of tolerance I would like to see if the playing field might be a little more level than was presented. This is not intended to be a rebuttal; that usually has no positive results. This is just another point of view, contending that the Bible may in fact be worth taking another look at.

Conceding, for the sake of conversation that the Bible is of human origin alone, I am amazed, even startled at what they were able to write. Beyond the obvious spiritual subjects those writers included facts from several schools of science that were not “discovered” till much more recent years. Let's consider a few, but by all means, not an exhaustive list.

The scientists of Isaiah's day (700 before common era) and even through Columbus' day believed that the earth was flat. But Isaiah himself used the Hebrew word *chwug* (*khoog*) to describe the earth as circular (Isa. 40:22). The Bible is also charged with declaring the world as flat because of speaking of “four corners of the earth” (Rev. 7:1). However, the English translation is poor. The Greek word *gonia* translated “corners” is actually a navigational term meaning extreme angle or quadrant. Navigators know that the earth is indeed divided into four quadrants, or shall we say, four compass points.

Along with a circular earth, have you heard of the *Terminator Line*? After the invention of high altitude rockets and subsequent journeys into space men saw a distinct line dividing light from darkness, and called it by that name. This line cannot be seen till one is very high above the earth's surface. It's interesting that the book of Job, one of the

oldest books in the Bible collection wrote of this line in Job 26:10 *“He inscribed a circle on the surface of the waters, at the boundary of light and darkness.”* –see additional note at the end.

The Bible also tells us what the earth rests on! The myths of ancient times educated the masses that the earth rested on the back of an elephant, a turtle, a feather, and in one case, on the shoulders of a fellow named Atlas. But the Bible just made a passing comment, again from the book of Job 26:7, *“He spreads out the northern skies over empty space; he suspends the earth over nothing.”* A small detail is that Job was written about 4000 years ago.

About 300 years ago two French scientists named Pierre Perrault and Edme Marriotte demonstrated that oceanic evaporation was the source of rain clouds and river waters. We all are taught this from early in life so we just assume that everyone knows it, but the Bible writers mentioned it long before science discovered this. Job 26:8 says, *“He wraps up the waters in His clouds, yet the clouds do not burst under their weight.”* Amos 9:6 (written 790-739 BCE) says, *“He who builds His lofty palace in the heavens and sets its foundation on the earth, who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out over the face of the land; the Lord is His name.* Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 1:6, *“The wind blows to the south then turning toward the north, the wind continues swirling along; and on its circular courses the wind returns. All the rivers flow into the sea, yet the sea is not full. To the place where the rivers go, there they go again.”* Solomon who wrote this, knew of the endless cycle of water nearly 2700 years before its discovery.

Modern Oceanographers such as Jacques Cousteau and the Scripps Howard Institute of La Jolla, CA among others have discovered that on the ocean bottom, thousands of feet below the surface there are hot and cold springs that provide unique environments for strange species of creatures found nowhere else. Some of these are in deep trenches, as much as 30,000 feet deep. In Job 38:16 Job asked one of his friends, *“Have you journeyed to the springs of the sea or walked in the recesses of the deep?”*

Job also spoke of dinosaurs, though not using that term he described some of the very creatures whose bones mystify us today. Some of these were apparently around in his day (cf. chapters 40-41).

Now before we discount any of this as merely coincidental or simply, lucky guesses, shouldn't we at least consider the likeliness of that? And if it was all plagiarized, what book(s) were these details plagiarized from? In fact, what other book from antiquity accurately mentions these or any other detail demonstrable in science today? As far as I have ever heard or read, not any other book can make this claim. The Bible does not bill itself as a book of science but it is sure interesting that simple, passing comments in it can be so profoundly accurate? Another profundity to me is that some of these biblical comments were probably even deemed absurd, till more modern times when they were discovered in science. And to think that the names of the discoverers of these facts are remembered and admired, but the original text where they were first recorded is never mentioned, and now, all but forgotten.

Concerning spiritual things, for myself, as a former student of Metaphysics and mysticism, as well as rejecter of any Bible based religion, what really arrested my attention about the Bible were not these types of things initially. We followed many psychics and mystics who made claims of higher knowledge and foreknowledge. We followed closely as they made their prophecies about what would happen in the future.

When their vague prophecy seemed to have fulfillment, though we'd have to close one eye and hold our tongue just right, discounting the inaccurate details within the prophecy, we were in awe. But someone of my past began showing me details of Bible prophecy, particularly concerning Jesus of Nazareth, written hundreds and even several thousand years before Jesus came. For instance, Psalm 22 was written approximately 1000 years before Jesus came, but includes details about a crucifixion that match what Jesus experienced as if someone had video taped it. Isaiah 53 speaks of Jesus' tortuous death and even His burial assignment, and it was fulfilled exactly. These sorts of prophecies were truly astounding to this 18-year-old seeker. More recently I have put together a collection of 48 prophecies, dates, descriptions and their fulfillment, and this is available for any interested students. But exact fulfillment of these things in the New Testament, in some cases affirmed in secular history, shook up my world. I began reconsidering some of the things I had been told demonstrating the discrepancies, inaccuracies and supposed plagiarisms of the Bible.

I discovered that there is a whole world of scholarship both Christian and non-Christian that was available to me to be able to search out places, dates, authenticity of manuscripts, historical claims, etc. For instance, the unscholarly explanation that these prophecies were inserted in the text after the fact was quieted in 1947 with the fascinating discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which opened the world of ancient biblical manuscript study beyond imagination. Of the forty thousand inscribed fragments, more than 500 books were reconstructed, some extra-biblical shedding light on the second century b.c.e. to the first century c.e. religious community of Qumran. But this discovery gave us one of the oldest, most complete texts of the Hebrew Old Testament, having been copied well before Jesus' birth. As the texts were compared to Hebrew texts we draw from even today, their accuracy is astounding. No other book from antiquity can demonstrate such conclusive accuracy and to my knowledge, none can boast of having original manuscripts either. Included in those texts were the very same prophecies about Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection as the texts we had previously relied upon.

I also discovered that some Archaeologists have actually used the Bible as a guide, a map to discover ancient ruins; places that skeptics said never existed, only to find a ruin. I realized that I did not have to believe what scale-tipping teachers said without investigating it on my own. For me, the sweeping statements and axioms against the credibility of the Bible became fully discredited. I discovered the agendas, dishonesty, and obvious misrepresentations and I became incensed at them and embarrassed that I had "swallowed the camel."

I, too work with people. I too have experienced many mentally disturbed, emotionally distraught people who have been both Christians, and non-Christians. In my estimation, some have been taught wrongly about the God of the Bible, some taught accurately and some were never exposed. I, myself have been at some emotionally difficult places, but I have found hope and healing from the God of the Bible where all that I ever had before turned out to be hopelessness; hypocrisy; vanishing smoke with no actualization. For instance, I knew so well (I and my family included) of the protestors for world peace who could not even achieve peace under their own roof; of the counselors of hope and life-changing solutions who themselves were addicted to tranquilizers and mind altering drugs so they could cope with life. As an honest concession, I quickly admit that each of these things can be said of some who claim to be

Christians today, even leaders and pastors, but also of many non-Christian leaders. So, I deem it to be a human plight, and not to be blamed on a book.

If I may I'd like to offer a different suggestion. Rethinking what we believe about the Bible, asking why we believe what we believe seems wise and should be done with integrity. And in all honesty, rather than blaming the Bible for our problems, it may be more helpful to take responsibility for personal choices that each of us make regarding our past, present and future, as well as offering forgiveness to those who have hurt us or ones we love. After all, the greatest message of the Bible is still the greatest calling in all of life, "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might.*" (Deut. 6:5) and, "*Love your neighbor as yourself;* (Lev. 19:18) and, "*Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life down for his friends.*" (John 15:3).

**Additional note from page 1:**

At this point I will include an editing addition to Job 26:10, which I have thought of over the years. The KJV translates the Hebrew words very awkwardly. Yet giving them grace, the English interpreters had to word it in a sensible fashion. Okay, so using what they came up with, the commentaries decided that the wording for "circle" combined with the concept of "boundary" meant the "horizon." That is sensible though you have to work with funny words from KJV English to make it mean that. I would also ask the question of the passage, "Okay, so what are you trying to say, Job? What's the point?"

However, flowing with the natural Hebrew words and now knowing what we do from being at very high altitudes, the sense of it seems to be a circle (or a line that is circular) on the waters (ocean) where light and darkness begins or ends. That seems to describe what is actually seen from space but otherwise unknown from any lower position. It was also unknown, or thought to be non-sensible before we learned what we have from our trips into space. The Bible proves to be accurate one more time.

Sincerely,

Dan Robinson, a pastor and fellow community member

Daniel L. Robinson  
P.O. Box 159  
Cave Junction OR 97523

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