

Occasionally I read some work by a secular Bible scholar. It isn't that they don't have anything to add, but just that we see through such different eyes. We can look at the same text and read something totally different. Evangelicals see the Bible as God's inspired word, God breathed. (2Timothy 3:16) We try to see God's big picture. They see a man in a specific culture influenced by the world around him trying to convey something because of a certain agenda or mindset. ¹⁴ *The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.* 1Corinthians 2:14 (ESV)

The more I look at the Scriptures the more I see the wonder of Jesus and the hand of God throughout history pointing us to Him. Those secular scholars would think I was reading into the text something that isn't there. I believe they are missing a magnificent masterpiece.

Francis Crick, the co-discoverer of DNA and Nobel Prize winner was not known to be a believer, but in one of his presentations showed a slide of a magnificent stained glass window. The colors and symmetry were stunning. Then he showed a slide of a cross section of DNA and a gasp of wonder went up from the crowd. The believer sees the handiwork of God. The secular scientist sees a great accident. One of us is fooling our self. The more we discover of the complexity of life, the more obstinate and unreasonable the materialist becomes. (Romans 1:21-23)

The Scriptures are just as incredible as the natural world. 40 men from all walks of life over a period of 1500 years wrote 66 books that tell one story. According to Bible chronology, the story began about 4000 B.C. God created man in His image. The image is marred by man's choice to rebel against God's one command. God promised that a male seed of the woman will one day crush the head of the Tempter but in the process have His heel wounded. (Genesis 3:15) The battle began.

The story is a multi-generational story of trying to stop the seed from being born. From the first murder of the good son Abel, to the depraved world of Noah's day, man's fallen condition threatened to stop the line of the seed. (Matthew 24:22) There was the barren womb of Sarai (Genesis 17:15-16) that eventually, miraculously conceived. There was the miracle conception and battle within the womb of Rebecca. (Genesis 25:21) There was a famine that threatened to destroy the family of Jacob/Israel. (Genesis 42:2) There was enslavement and the death of the males as Egypt threw them in the Nile River as the battle intensified. (Exodus 1:22) How many nations fought with Israel once it was established and continued to attempt to wipe it out? (Joshua

Commented [Paul1]: 2 Timothy 3:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

Commented [Paul2]: Romans 1:21-23 (ESV)

²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Commented [Paul3]: Genesis 3:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

Commented [Paul4]: Matthew 24:22 (ESV)

²² And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.

Commented [Paul5]: Genesis 17:15-16 (ESV)

¹⁵ And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name.

¹⁶ I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her. E

Commented [Paul6]: Genesis 25:21 (ESV)

²¹ And Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren. And the LORD granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

Commented [Paul7]: Genesis 42:2 (ESV)

² And he said, "Behold, I have heard that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die.

Commented [Paul8]: Exodus 1:22 (ESV)

²² Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live.

7:9) But God would not allow the line of the seed to perish. Nothing could stop this One from being born. (Galatians 4:4)

Abraham was told his seed would bless the world, and so the importance of the One that would come became clearer. (Genesis 22:18) Isaac and Jacob also heard the confirmation that the seed coming through their line would bless the world. (Genesis 26:4) Judah was promised his line would produce the one to whom tribute would rightfully belong. David was told this One that would come from him would reign forever. (Jeremiah 33:17) The expectations grew. Even the Jewish Scriptures were arranged in such a way as to focus on the expectation of the coming of the seed.¹³ Prophets predicted the place of His birth and the time of His death. (Micah 5:2; Daniel 9:25-26) They said He would be called Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace and Immanuel, God with us. (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6)

How could any one individual fill these expectations? And so man began to speculate. Perhaps He was the second King David, a magnificent ruler that would bring Israel back to its days of glory. Sounds logical to the mind of man. Maybe He would be a teacher with such wisdom that all the world would submit to His wise rule. But those who thought this way were thinking as men and forgot that He was also predicted to be the Suffering Servant who would be crushed for our iniquities. (Isaiah 53:10)

They did know that He would be like Moses, just as Moses predicted. (Deuteronomy 18:15) God was going to raise up from among them one like Moses to whom they must listen. Moses went into the wilderness. Jesus went into the wilderness. (Matthew 4:1) They returned with a mission from God to set the people of God free. They did the miraculous. They challenged the system. They invited all who would follow them out of bondage and through the baptism waters. They delivered the Word of God. They were often rejected, but they continued to lead the people like a shepherd as they followed God's leading. They fed the multitudes. (John 6:10) Moses brought living water from the rock. Jesus said if anyone was thirsty they could come to Him and drink. (John 7:37) When Moses died, no one could find his body. (Deuteronomy 34:6) When Jesus died, His body was raised.

Moses alone couldn't picture it all; Joshua had to finish the example. The Aramaic name for Joshua is Jesus, the salvation of God. Joshua led the people across the Jordan into the Promised Land just as Jesus leads us across the river of death and into the Promised Land of heaven. But all this is just coincidence right?

Joseph foreshadowed Jesus, loved by his father, rejected by His brothers (John 1:11), a faithful servant, unjustly imprisoned, a revealer of secrets, gave a starving world bread, raised to the right hand of the ruler, and finally revealed Himself to His brothers inviting

Commented [Paul9]: Joshua 7:9 (ESV)

⁹ For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it and will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. And what will you do for your great name?

Commented [Paul10]: Galatians 4:4 (ESV)

⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,

Commented [Paul11]: Genesis 22:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice..

Commented [Paul12]: Genesis 26:4 (ESV)

⁴ I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,

Commented [Paul13]: Jeremiah 33:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ "For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel,

Commented [Paul14]: See Michael Rydelink's book *The Messianic Hope*

Commented [Paul15]: Micah 5:2 (ESV)

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

Commented [Paul16]: Daniel 9:25-26 (ESV)

²⁵ Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.

²⁶ And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.

Commented [Paul17]: Isaiah 7:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Commented [Paul18]: Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Commented [Paul19]: Isaiah 53:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see h... [1]

Commented [Paul20]: Deuteronomy 18:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen. E

Commented [Paul21]: Matthew 4:1 (ESV)

¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Commented [Paul22]: John 6:10 (ESV) ... [2]

Commented [Paul23]: John 7:37 (ESV)

³⁷ On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

Commented [Paul24]: Deuteronomy 34:6 (ESV)

⁶ and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day. ... [3]

Commented [Paul25]: John 1:11 (ESV)

¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

them to come to live with Him, and forgave them of their sin against Him. (Genesis 50:20-21) But perhaps all the details are just a coincidence.

Isaac foreshadowed Jesus as another beloved son. His birth was a miracle. He climbed the same mountain, Mount Moriah, with the wood on which He was to be sacrificed. (Genesis 22:6) God spared Him, but not in the same way Isaac was spared. He disappeared from the scene until we see Him coming for His bride. (Genesis 24:64-65) But perhaps it's just another series of coincidences.

Let us go back and look at the pictures of Messiah's first coming. Like Noah floated away from his culture, like Abraham left Ur, like Moses left the palace, Jesus came down from heaven, left His throne to be incarnated to deliver us. (John 6:38) These foreshadows left corrupt societies, the only world they knew. Jesus left the perfect presence of God, which is a much greater sacrifice. The seed would be born as the "second Adam" that would restore the damage done by the disobedience of the first Adam. (1Corinthians 15:22)

As a human, Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the promised one from the line of David, born in Bethlehem, brought up out of Egypt, opened the eyes of the blind, made the paralyzed to walk, (Isaiah 35:5-6) raised the dead, was a friend of sinners, gave a new interpretation of the Scriptures, proclaimed Himself to be the bread of life and the water for our thirst, the source of life, was unjustly condemned, died upon Mount Moriah as, in His own words, "a ransom for many". (Matthew 20:28) He conquered death and hell and rose again. He appeared to over 500 people (1Corinthians 15:6), promised to return, commissioned us to disciple the whole world, and then ascended to heaven. Hallelujah! What a Savior!

And now 2000 years later that Gospel has spread just as Jesus said to the uttermost parts of the earth. The Gospel has now in this age of population explosion reached the ends of the earth in almost every language (all by 2025). Millions of lives and entire nations have been transformed by this Man that came from an insignificant city, who never wrote a book, and never led an army. He submitted to the authorities and refused to flee from death and yet faith in Him has covered the planet. Could it be mere coincidence?

If the critics argued about the details of a few prophecies it would be one thing, but there are dozens. If His life never had such an effect on His followers you might wonder about the truth of His words. If Jesus' own prophecies did not come to pass certainly we could doubt Him. (Matthew 24:2) But all these things happened. So the skeptic that does not want to believe must say that the writings were made up later to match the prophecies. They have to ignore the overwhelming evidence and do so while appearing

Commented [Paul26]: Genesis 50:20-21 (ESV)

²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.

²¹ So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones. E Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Commented [Paul27]: Genesis 22:6 (ESV)

⁶ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together.

Commented [Paul28]: Genesis 24:64-65 (ESV)

⁶⁴ And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she dismounted from the camel
⁶⁵ and said to the servant, "Who is that man, walking in the field to meet us? The servant said, "It is my master. So she took her veil and covered herself.

Commented [Paul29]: John 6:38 (ESV)

³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.

Commented [Paul30]: 1 Corinthians 15:22 (ESV)

²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

Commented [Paul31]: Isaiah 35:5-6 (ESV)

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

⁶ then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;

Commented [Paul32]: Matthew 20:28 (ESV)

²⁸ even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Commented [Paul33]: 1 Corinthians 15:6 (ESV)

⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

Commented [Paul34]: Matthew 24:2 (ESV)

² But he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.

to be intellectually honest. But their arguments don't add up. Could it be that they are taking a greater leap of faith than believers?

Our nation, the United States, was built mostly on Biblical principles to honor Jesus Christ and give men freedom to worship. God richly blessed us. We became the most prosperous nation in the history of the world. But then the intellectuals who had no desire to bow their knee to Jesus began to attack Christianity. After conquering the European educational system, they were eventually able to influence the majority of our education system. Our great universities that were formed as seminaries to train pastors, began to deny the existence of objective truth, even though it is their institution's motto.³⁴

Those who teach our children shape the future of the nation. And we wonder why we find our nation is in crisis with one natural disaster after another. How we need to help and support our Christian students and few remaining truly faithful schools!

Our decline doesn't change who Jesus is! Denial of truth doesn't change the fact that there is truth. It doesn't change the evidence that shouts at our conscience.

Jesus is still the Word of God incarnate. (John 1:14) He still went from a humble birth and a dishonorable death to conquer death itself and redeem us from our sins. His kingdom is still sweeping the earth. He is still the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Every skeptic's knee will bow and their tongues will confess He is Lord. (Philippians 2:10-11) Just as His prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and the spread of His gospel to the corners of the world has come to pass, the promise of His return will come to pass as well. (Matthew 24:14)

He will come on the clouds and every eye will see Him! The nations of the earth will mourn. They rejected His invitation and they will to the end.

But for us that long for His appearing, what a glorious day our rendezvous will be. (1Thessalonians 4:17) He is the lover of our soul. He is what we've longed for our whole life. Every love has been but a shadow of His. Every earthly joy is just a taste of joy in His presence. (Psalm 16:11) We have been strangers in a strange land, but then we will finally be home. (Hebrews 11:16)

What makes heaven home is His presence. Home is where the heart is and He will so capture our hearts that we will know we are home. The Scriptures say that when we see Him we will be like Him for we will see Him as He is. (1John 3:2) One glimpse of His glory and we will be changed, transformed. We'll see the ultimate beauty, the Creator of beauty, and our soul will be filled with rapturous delight.

Commented [Paul35]: The motto of Harvard is veritas – meaning "truth".

Commented [Paul36]: John 1:14 (ESV)
¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Commented [Paul37]: Philippians 2:10-11 (ESV)
¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Commented [Paul38]: Matthew 24:14 (ESV)
¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Commented [Paul39]: 1 Thessalonians 4:17 (ESV)
¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

Commented [Paul40]: Psalm 16:11 (ESV)
¹¹ You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Commented [Paul41]: Hebrews 11:16 (ESV)
¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

Commented [Paul42]: 1 John 3:2 (ESV)
² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

So what are we doing here? What is this shadow land in which we only get a glimpse of glory? What purpose does it serve? **We live in a land of decision.** We've seen the beauty of the Lord in the life of Jesus. While we were yet sinners He died for us. (Romans 5:8) The friend of sinners became our friend by faith. We've seen the greatness of His love on the cross. We've experienced His loving concern guiding our lives and seen the consequences of going our own way.

Commented [Paul43]: Romans 5:8 (ESV)
⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

This is the land of wooing. This is where Jesus woos us to make us His. We have to decide if we want remain single so that we can live as we please or if we want to commit to be the helpmeet of this One who is so loving. In the end there will be only two groups of humanity. There will be those that surrender to God's love saying, "Thy will be done!", and those to whom God says, "Thy will be done!"⁴⁴

Commented [Paul44]: From C.S. Lewis

No wonder marriage is under attack. This kind of surrender in all out love is the last thing the enemy of your soul wants for you, (Ephesians 5:32) so he attacks the picture that represents it.

Commented [Paul45]: Ephesians 5:32 (ESV)
³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

You see, the battle is still raging. He couldn't stop the Seed from being born, so now he works to keep the Seed from the bride that the Seed came to redeem and claim as His own. One soul at a time, and one culture at a time, the enemy glorifies independence and selfishness. He couldn't stop the Seed before and he will not stop Him from claiming His bride.

Jesus promised that He was going to prepare a place for us, and that He would come again to receive us to Himself. (John 14:3) The Marriage Feast of the Lamb is as certain as His first coming. He stands over time and sees it even now. He sees you there, without stain, without wrinkle, pure and holy, adorned as a bride. (Ephesians 5:25-27)

Commented [Paul46]: John 14:3 (ESV)
³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

I've wondered about Jesus saying that there is no marriage in heaven. (Matthew 22:30) My marriage is so important to me, I can't imagine it being no more. But the more I see the wonder of our marriage to Christ, the less it concerns me. The best of my marriage now is just a glimpse of what it will be with Jesus. **We'll be so in love with Him that we will never look back.**

Commented [Paul47]: Ephesians 5:25-27 (ESV)
²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,
²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,
²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Commented [Paul48]: Matthew 22:30 (ESV)
³⁰ For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

And what will we do there? We'll be His helpmeet. We'll serve and worship Him. (Revelation 22:3) That is a letdown for those who don't know Him. But when you get to know Him, when you have discovered the joy of serving and worshipping Him, it sounds thrilling! And when you see Him face to face, you'll know it is exhilarating to do anything for Him. What high and holy service will He have for us then? It's that mysterious deep desire God has placed within the heart of man. What adventures await us on that day? We will sing our love songs to Him for sure, and He will sing over us

Commented [Paul49]: Revelation 22:3 (ESV)
³ No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.

(Zephaniah 3:17), but that is just a little part of heaven. One thing is certain, we won't be bored.

Skeptics only wish they had the excitement and anticipation that fills the soul of the mature believer. They would say it is our DNA longing for some distant past utopia. Maybe so. We call it the Garden of Eden. (Revelation 22:1-2)

Questions

- 1 Why is it so hard to accept the Bible?
- 2 What is the first promise of Messiah?
- 3 Describe the battle to stop the seed in Genesis?
- 4 In Exodus onward?
- 5 Follow the lineage promises.
- 6 What are the predictions?
- 7 What are the foreshadows?
- 8 What are the chances it's a coincidence?
- 9 What happened to the USA?
- 10 Where are you headed?

Commented [Paul50]: Zephaniah 3:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

Commented [Paul51]: Revelation 22:1-2 (ESV)

¹ Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb
² through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Isaiah 53:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

John 6:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ Jesus said, "Have the people sit down. ENow there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number.

Deuteronomy 34:6 (ESV)

⁶ and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day.