



Diakrisis (Australia)

'But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern [diakrisis] both good and evil', (Heb.5:14)

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Editors Comment

Has anyone noticed that our society is becoming increasingly secularised and hardened toward Biblical Christianity at an accelerated rate lately? Not that Christianity is alone in being mocked and ridiculed - anyone who dares to take a moral stand or object to evil behaviours is now subjected to serious spleen venting by an increasingly evil human race.

Here's an example - intolerable just a few years ago; Tony Jones, media personality and the moderator of the Australian ABC's popular Q&A television programme often sees fit to scoff at anyone who dares to reference the Bible. Recently He challenged a somewhat liberal 'Christian' on the panel - said he - '*you don't really believe in the Genesis account of Adam and Eve...do you?*'. No one seemed to object to this being asked. Australia's public broadcaster has developed a crude anti-Christian bias over the years which appears to be the want of their viewers today. It takes a brave politician to publicly stand against the same-sex marriage LGBT agenda too - in just a few short years what was once an indictable offence is now so accepted by such a large majority of Australian citizens as to almost appear normal?

This year on the show when a heterosexual senator debated a lesbian senator on the issues involved with same-sex marriage, and the resulting rights of the children in such cases, the heterosexual member of the Senate was vilified and slandered - the objections scoffed at and ridiculed to the delight of the studio audience. Similarly, the behaviour during question time in the parliament reflects the national decline. If you have the stomach for it, watch the televised 'Question Time'. It is an absolute disgrace. The personal abuse, childish behaviour, and bile spewing from this chamber is beyond comprehension. How can such people appropriately pass intelligent judgements on issues vital to this country? Well, they can't - and the declension in the moral fabric of this nation is proof of that.

This is all helped along, (and probably the very cause?), by well paid 'ministers' so called, charged with preaching the Christian Gospel, being asleep on the job?

Why has society become so secularised and anti Christian? Could it be because the religious leaders of our denominations simply do not preach the Gospel? A majority did so once. Can society therefore be held responsible for rejecting the Christian Gospel? What it sees and hears today is outrageous! The antics, tax free money-making schemes and prosperity promises, the ungodly party atmosphere of the worship falsely so-called, the immorality, paedophilia, fornication, theft, and mayhem in the churches today is staggering. Visions of angels, gold dust falling from the heavens, babbling in unknown tongues, the utterance of wildly impossible 'prophecies', divination, people rolling around barking and in hysterics...this is what the unbelieving world is witnessing now.

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Of course, this is not true Christianity. Not a salvific Christianity at all! Yet how would anyone know what that was today? It certainly isn't being presented in the majority of churches anymore. The televangelists, mega-churches and Hillsong have swamped the ground once held by bible teaching assemblies - and washed them away in a tsunami of filth and decadence. When a founder of one of the world's largest churches can write a book titled '*Want More Money?*' and his 'pastor' wife can cut CD's on her ravings on just how '*Kingdom Women Love Sex*' (which have sold in their millions), you know the end must be very near?

These ministries have literally altered biblical worship and turned it into a rock concert. Strobe lighting, smoke machines, mosh pits, screaming guitars, pounding drums - it's insane! The worst reprobates of the entertainment world join in on all this mayhem and declare themselves to be 'Christian'. The problem is that it is a Christianity unrecognisable in biblical terms.

Astounded and amused secular journalists write often of these 'concerts' and the money raked in from books, DVD and CD sales. It just seems to increase the popularity of those churning them out. The Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) industry is HUGE, global and extremely wealthy. Its gleeful acceptance in the modern church scene is a tragedy. It was once said that when the church attempts to imitate the world she always did it so badly it was laughable...Not anymore! Hillsong and CCM are now imitated by secular bands because their presentations are superior to professional groups playing international stadiums. Their conferences and glittering stage shows are the envy of the entertainment world. They are more raunchy vaudeville than the worship of a holy God!

Spurgeon in his day saw the beginnings of the secularisation of the churches in his area following earlier centuries of revivals. Pastors were wanting to please the world. He began writing to the Baptist Union asking them to adopt more definitive views in their statement of faith. Such a need for a new 'creed' was not new. In history 'creeds' and statements of faith were developed to defend the church against attacks on its doctrines. Many early creeds were written to protect the church from a widening secularisation. Today such creeds have largely been declared worthless.

What can we take away from these alarming developments?

'This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be 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, Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth' (2Tim.3:1-7).

These ARE the last days - of that we can now be assured?

Mike Claydon and Terry Arnold

Former Hillsong Preacher Pat Mesiti Charged With Assault



Motivational and prosperity preacher, Pat Mesiti, admitted to, and was charged with, assaulting his wife. He is to remain on bail until sentencing but is barred from approaching his wife within 12 hours of consuming alcohol. Prosecutors have agreed to drop a more serious charge of assault occasioning actual bodily harm. The judge warned Mesiti that if he breached the order he could spend up to two years behind bars.

(Apostasy Alert, March/2016)

Editor's comment: In early years we warned of the moral declension, as well as the music, in Assemblies of God and Hillsong. We were at times castigated for exposing men and naming names such as Mesiti. But the declension continued unabated with many leaders falling, including Brian Houston's own father finally being exposed as a paedophile.

Pat Mesiti was in the original music band with Darlene Zschech which took Hillsong to fame under the direction of Geoff Bullock. Mesiti was formerly Director of the Australian Christian Churches (ACC), AOG Youth Alive Director and Executive Director of Teen Challenge NSW. In 2002 Pastor Mesiti was asked to leave the ministry during a highly publicised exposé of his adultery. In 2006 he held a Conference at Phil Pringle's Oxford Falls (NSW) Church. He was advertised as *'Speaker-Motivator-Entrepreneur...Developing the Millionaire Mindset...Pat is one of the world's most celebrated speakers. He is a highly effective communicator and most notably an income acceleration coach. His passion is to Equip and Empower individuals and businesses to experience growth and prosperity to its fullest potential...This is a breakfast not to be missed...Cost \$30.00'*. Pat Mesiti is now mostly a secular motivational speaker on how to make money.



Wycliffe Bible Translators Murdered

March 18, 2016. Four Bible translators have been murdered by terrorists in the Middle East, Bible translating ministry Wycliffe Associates, reports. According to Wycliffe, a raid took place on the translators' office. Two of the translators were shot and killed...Another two died of wounds from being beaten. These last two managed to protect and save the lead translator by lying on top of him while the terrorists beat them with their now-empty weapons.

The terrorists destroyed translating equipment...However, Wycliffe says the 'computer hard drives containing translation work for eight language projects' were not destroyed. *(Apostasy Alert, March 18, 2016)*

Pope Francis Sends ‘Super Confessors’ To Forgive Sins



Pope Francis has sent more than 1,000 ‘super confessor’ priests on a global mission to forgive grave sins that normally only he, or a top Church official, may pardon.

One of the greatest spiritual crimes ever committed by men on this earth was the creation of a Roman system of pagan idolatry that fools people into thinking that some black or white coloured robe wearing ‘holy father’, who is neither holy nor anyone’s father, has the power to forgive you of your sins. We are talking of course about the Roman Catholic religion...created in 325 AD, the Roman-Vatican-Harlot system mentioned in Revelation 17 and 18...

...The Missionaries of Mercy, nicknamed the super-confessors, were given the special license for the Vatican’s Jubilee year, which ends in November. Grave sins to be forgiven include defiling consecrated bread and wine, violating confessional secrecy, and plotting to kill a pope...In all, 1142 priests have been selected to be Missionaries of Mercy...

At a Vatican ceremony on Tuesday, the Pope addressed some 700 of the chosen priests...The grave sins that the priests can temporarily forgive may usually only be pardoned by senior bishops, Vatican officials or the Pope himself...The Missionaries are to be: ‘A living sign of the Father’s welcome to all those in search of his forgiveness...a source of liberation, rich with responsibility for overcoming obstacles and taking up the new life of Baptism again...’

Nowhere in the list of qualification to be a ‘super confessor’ is any knowledge or application of the Bible listed.

(Apostasy Alert, Feb.12th, 2016)

Editor’s comment: Catholic confession (now ‘reconciliation’) was not heard of till about the 3rd century onwards, and even then it was not a secret confession but an open public confession for grave sins only. Secret and private confessions came much later as a practice of the Roman Church. Early Church Fathers such as John Chrysostom, (fourth century), and Bishop Basil, (A.D.329-379) wrote strongly about confessing sins to God only. The Catholic Church admits that ‘Christ’s words do not indeed mention secrecy...’ (1)

The Bible does say ‘Confess your faults one to another’ (James 5:16). Some versions have this as ‘Confess your sins one to another’. However, the Greek word is ‘*paraptoma*’, not the normal ‘*harmartia*’ used for ‘sin’. ‘*Paraptoma*’ is often translated ‘trespasses’. It refers to a falling by the wayside including error, wrong doing, a lapse rather than willful sin. Arguably this a lesser word than ‘*harmartia*’. Even if we were to translate ‘*paraptoma*’ as ‘sin’ then this is still not to a ‘priest’ but ‘one to another’ .

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The Scriptures are clear - only God can forgive sins (Mk.2:5-11;1Jn.1:9; Matt.9:60). When Simon of Samaria sinned after being baptised he was told to pray to God for forgiveness (Acts 8:22). The apostles never heard confessions (Acts 10:43), or forgave sins. Peter never forgave the sins of Cornelius (Acts 10) and Paul never forgave the sins of the Phillipian jailer (Acts 16). When Peter himself sinned, he confessed to God and was forgiven. Contrast this with Judas, who after sinning, confessed to a group of priests and committed suicide! (Matt.27:3-5).

Despite all these scriptures and no history of priestly confessions in the first few centuries, the Catholic religion states that the priest has power to forgive sins (Canon Law 870 and 888), and confession to a priest (at least once a year) is '*necessary unto salvation*'. (2)

The Bible tells us that if we repent and 'confess' Jesus as our saviour and believe His word, our transgressions can be forgiven. Jesus is our mediator and through Him we can '*come boldly unto the throne of grace*' (Heb.4:16), and our sins are forgiven. The priest, as a mediator in confessing and forgiving sins, is a counterfeit of Jesus Christ.

That the Catholic religion believes that priests have power to forgive sins is clear in their teachings: '*One who desires to obtain reconciliation with God and with the Church, must confess to a priest all the unconfessed grave sins he remembers...*' (Catechism of the Catholic Church Paragraph 1493). The Catholic Church teaches: '*There is no offence, however serious, that the Church cannot forgive*' (Catechism Paragraph 982). Without this forgiveness of sins, future salvation is in jeopardy: '*Priests have received from God a power that He has given neither to angels nor to archangels...God above confirms what priests do here below. Were there no forgiveness of sins in the Church, there would be no hope of life to come or eternal liberation*' (Catechism Paragraph 983).

This obviously takes the place of God himself who says: '*I, even I, am he that blots out your transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember your sins*' (Isaiah 43:25). The pronoun '*I*' is repeated to make it emphatic that He *alone* can forgive sins.

The Apostle Paul preached, '*Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins*' (Acts 13:38). In believing on the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, a person has both the forgiveness of sins and a perfect right standing with God credited (imputed) to him (Rom.3:21; Eph.1:7).

Men, in ignorance *attempt to obtain forgiveness through the mediation of sinful priests* instead of the '*one mediator*', Jesus Christ (1Tim.2:5).

(1) Canon George D. Smith, '*The Teaching Of The Catholic Church - A Summary of Catholic Doctrine*', P.972)

(2) Canon VI - Council of Trent. '*The Catholic Encyclopedia*', Vol.17, P.625

Prophecy Fulfilled

No other book but the Bible accurately foretells specific events, even pronounced centuries before their fulfillment. Thousands of such prophecies are spread throughout the pages of the Bible. The majority of these have already come to pass with absolute accuracy. The probability for any one of these prophecies to be fulfilled is in itself worthy of study, yet for *all to be fulfilled* would require incalculable odds.

Satan attempts to counterfeit this with his clairvoyants and fortune tellers of one kind or another. It all comes down to guessing - and therefore very vague and impossible to be precise. Nostradamus, Cayce and others are held today to be 'prophets' yet their writings are so mysterious as to be indecipherable. Biblical prophecies are detailed, speak of actual locations and people by name.

Biblically, one false prophecy uttered renders the prophet 'false' (Dt.18:21,22) - which determines that most secular divinations to be just that.

Below is a list of some of the Bible prophecies and estimated fulfillment probabilities:

Daniel's prophecy:

Before 500 B.C. the prophet Daniel proclaimed that Israel's Messiah would begin his public ministry 483 years after the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Dan.9:25-26); that the Messiah would be 'cut off', killed and prior to a second destruction of Jerusalem and a subsequent world-wide dispersion of the Jews. Jesus Christ fulfilled this prophecy perfectly. The decree regarding the restoration of Jerusalem was issued by Persia's King Artaxerxes to the Hebrew priest Ezra in 458 B.C. Then 483 years later the ministry of Jesus Christ began in Galilee. (Due to calendar changes, the start of Christ's ministry is set at about 26 A.D.) Jesus' crucifixion occurred a few years later, and four decades later, in 70 A.D., Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman general Titus.

Estimated probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 100000

Micah's prophecy:

In approximately 700 B.C. the prophet Micah named Bethlehem as the birthplace of Israel's Messiah (Mic.5:2). This prophecy was fulfilled in person and historically.

Estimated probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 100000

Zechariah's prophecy:

In the 5th century B.C. the prophet Zechariah declared *the Messiah would be betrayed for the price of thirty pieces of silver* and that this money would be used to buy a burial ground (Zech.11:12-13). More than 500 years later Judas

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Iscariot betrayed Jesus and the money purchased a 'potter's field' (Matt.27:3-10).

Estimated probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 100000000000

Messiah's crucifixion:

There are literally dozens of stand alone prophecies fulfilled concerning the crucifixion of Jesus. These predictions were often made 1,000 years before Christ and before Roman crucifixion was even used. The probability of all being fulfilled accurately is again a massive figure.

400 years *before crucifixion was common*, Israel's King David and the prophet Zechariah described the Messiah's death in medical terms, that the body would be pierced but no bones would be broken, contrary to normal crucifixions (Ps.22 and 34:20; Zech.12:10). Historians and Biblical writers confirm these facts. As well, these medical evidences (not understood at the time) confirmed the death of crucifixion, would produce both water and blood flowing from the Messiah's side (Jn.19:34).

Estimated probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 10000000000000

Isaiah's prophesy:

Isaiah foretold that a conqueror named Cyrus would destroy Babylon and subdue Egypt. This man would let Jewish exiles go free (Is.44:28; 45:1,13). This prophecy was made 150 years before Cyrus was born.

Estimated probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 100000000000000

Prophecies of Babylon:

There are several prophecies concerning Babylon. Babylon was considered impenetrable with double thick walls and a moat, yet two Biblical prophets declared its fall (Is.13:17-22; Jer.51:26,43).

Estimated probability of chance fulfillment = 1 in 1000000000

Many prophecies have also been fulfilled in the most intricate detail. The Messiah born of a virgin (Is.7:13,14) and born in Bethlehem (Mic.5:2); He would be rejected by Jews (Is.53:3); be silent when accused (Is.53:7,8); would be buried with the rich (Is.53:9); betrayed by a friend (Ps.41:9); sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zech.11:12); and would have His hands and feet pierced (Ps.22:16-18).

Numerous other prophecies concerning Jerusalem have and are being fulfilled exactly. Writers predicted Israel would become a great nation (Gen.12:1-3); would split into two groups of ten tribes and two tribes (1Kgs.11:31); would be taken captive in Babylon (Jer.25:11-14); and would reject and kill her Messiah, (Is.53:3; Dan.9:26).

The destruction of Tyre was foretold in Ezekiel 26. In Daniel chapter 2, four kingdoms are described in the interpretation of the dream of king

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Nebuchadnezzar (Dan.2:39-43). These four kingdoms came into being just as prophesied.

For space, the above are only some of the many more prophecies that could be cited. The probability of chance occurrence for *all* the prophecies are a number too large to put here...And we have not even got to the end time prophecies. Given that these prophecies above were 100% accurate, why would we not assume that end time prophecies would not be the same?

End times:

The Bible states that Israel will prevail over its enemies, even if nearly defeated. God would help Israel (Isaiah 41:12-14). The famous 'six day war' and other modern wars have seen Israel completely outnumbered and out manoeuvred, yet each time Israel has miraculously survived and even defeated her enemies.

The Bible states that the ruins of Israel would be rebuilt (Amos 9:11,13). Israel was destroyed by the Babylonians, Assyrians and the Romans. But during the past century the Jews have returned to the land in large numbers and the land is now plentiful in planting and harvesting and is productive, supplying many nations with food (Ezek.36:11). The Bible also stated that Israel's deserts would bloom '*like Eden*' (Is.51:3). This is being fulfilled in modern times with millions of trees being planted in arid areas.

The Bible stated that Egypt would never again rule over other nations (Ezek.29:15). Up until when this was written, Egypt was a force to be reckoned with, but later was controlled by other nations and today it no longer rules over any nation.

The Bible states that the Jews would return to their homeland (Zech.8:7,8; Is.43:5,6; Ez.17:11; Dt.30:3). This has been fulfilled more than once with the Jews returning from the Babylonian captivity, and in our day. In 1967 the Jews recaptured Jerusalem after the Six Day War.

In 1948, Israel became an independent nation for the first time since the Babylonian victory in 606 BC (more than 2,500 years). In the 1990's around half a million Jews have returned to Israel from the former Soviet Union.

Today there are around 5 million Jews in the land of Israel, about one third of the estimated total number in the world. There are still about 5 million in the United States and about another 5 million scattered around the rest of the world, but mostly in the former Soviet Union, where there is still a steady stream of Russian Jews returning to Israel.

But there are more prophecies not yet fulfilled. Matthew 24:22 describes world conditions in the end, that unless the Lord comes back the world would destroy itself. Only in the last 50 years has this been a possibility with weapons of mass destruction. Some of the weapons today would easily destroy most if not all humans on planet earth. It is now not just a few nations that have these

weapons but many smaller nations have the capability to destroy whole countries. And this is apart from new forces like ISIS and other terrorist groups who could one day soon use these weapons without any moral restraint.

There are many prophecies for future Israel that have not been fulfilled. The Bible does give many details of a future Israel and the focus is usually Jerusalem. Geopolitically we are seeing this now. Prophets have foretold Jerusalem being surrounded by armies and desolation pending. Zechariah spoke specifically about these times: *'Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it...And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem'* (Zech.12:2-9).

These events are shown in Zechariah chapter 14 to be in the future and before Christ's return: *'Behold, the day of the Lord comes, and your spoil shall be divided in the midst of you. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south'* (Zech.14:1-4).

Clearly much of this history and geography remains unfulfilled.

Over 1,600 years 40 writers wrote 66 books that make up the 'canon' of scripture we call the Bible. They came from different parts of the earth and wrote at different times yet they agreed without any contradictions. After 2,000 years no expert has ever disproved the Bible. The very unity of its doctrine and the completeness of all its parts show its divine origin. Compare this book with other books of other faiths and I would argue for its *uniqueness!*

The Bible is like no other book. It is accurate because it is written by who it claims to be written by - the omniscient God of the universe.

This book often corrects science even before the science is known...

The Bible stated the stars in the heavens could not be numbered except by God (Jer.33:22; Ps.147:4), contrary to early scientists who thought they already had the stars counted. The Bible stated the earth was a sphere long before men discovered this (Is.40:22; Pr.8:27). The Bible stated there were fountains and springs beneath the sea (Job 38:16; Pr.8:28); that light is parted into the spectrum of the colours of the rainbow (Job 38:24); and that the wind travels in

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circuits (Ecc.1:6) - all long before men discovered these things!

Assuming that the Bible is Divinely inspired, and given that it claims a 100% accuracy rate 100% of the time, it is only reasonable to conclude that it should be completely accurate also in every scientific and *medical detail*...

Medical:

The bulk of the medical information in Scripture is found among its first five Books, the Pentateuch, and they are generally accepted as being written by Moses. An interesting anomaly here is that Moses was Egyptian trained and yet much of the medical information in his writings are clearly different to Egyptian practises. In fact some of the Egyptian practises would be considered deadly today rather than as cures. (Many of the Egyptian cures used animal dung).

Moses simply penned the most advanced, flawless medical prescriptions that had ever been recorded. Moses taught the Israelites to practice sanitation to prevent the spread of disease. The information that Moses wrote on hygiene and medicine could be used today and is accurate in regard to germ spreading, epidemic disease control, communal sanitation, and a host of other medical and scientific discoveries.

For thousands of years up until the 20th Century, medical 'science' recommended 'blood-letting' as a way to allow diseases to leave the body. Blood letting is now been proven to be the wrong treatment. Today it is the opposite - blood transfusion, which saves people. Yet 3,500 years before God had already said that blood was the key to life. In Leviticus 17:11, Moses wrote: ***'For the life of the flesh is in the blood'***.

In 1847, a German doctor, noted that medical students would perform autopsies in the morning, then go directly from the morgue to the hospital wards without washing their hands. He ordered everyone in his ward to wash his or her hands thoroughly in a chlorine solution after every examination. In three months, the death rate in the hospitals where these doctors worked fell from 18% to 1%. But thousands of years before God had told the ancient Israelites to do just this practise: ***'He who touches the dead body of anyone shall be unclean seven days. He shall purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; then he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean'*** (Nu.19:13)

Moses also ordered anti bacterial solutions long before they were invented. In Numbers 19:17 ingredients listed sound like ancient superstition yet they produce antibacterial soap. (Lye soap is made by pouring water through ashes). Hyssop's medicinal properties include expectorants, carminatives, (which relaxes peripheral blood vessels, promotes sweating), anti-inflammatory's, anti-catarrhal's and antispasmodic's. Its active constituents are volatile oil, flavonoids, tannins and bitter substance (marrubiin). A tea made from the hyssop leaves and flowering tops is used in lung, nose and throat congestion. Externally it can be applied to bruises, to reduce the swelling and discoloration.

Added to the long lists of ancient cures pronounced by Moses is the use of Cedar. In oil form, applied to humans, it is *'an antiseptic, astringent, expectorant (removes mucus from respiratory system), anti-fungal, sedative and insecticide'* ('Spa Essential Oils', 2005). Cedar leaves and twigs are also rich in vitamin C, and it was their effectiveness in preventing or treating scurvy that led to the trees being called 'arbor vitae' or 'tree of life'.

The book of Leviticus lists a number of diseases and outlines ways by which an Israelite would come in contact with germs. Those with such diseases as leprosy were instructed to 'dwell alone' 'outside the camp' (Lev.13:46). Today isolations wards for various germs are common practise.

The ancient Israelites were instructed in peculiar dietary habits such as avoiding certain animals, birds and fish as sources of food (Lev.11:1-3). In the mid 20th Century scientists did tests on various so called 'clean' and 'unclean' animals and found distinct differences between the groups of animals in toxicity and other tests. How did Moses know all this?

The Bible has the unity of a book written by one author. The unity of scripture despite a diversity of writers is evidence of divine authorship. ***'I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done'*** (Is.46:9-10).

The 'inerrancy' of the Bible follows if the Bible is 'inspired'. Prophecies are just one of the proofs of divine authorship. But the Bible itself claims to be perfect. ***'The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times'*** (Ps.12:6); ***'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple'*** (Ps.19:7); ***'Every word of God is pure'*** (Pr.30:5).

Even the quantity, quality and preservation of the Biblical manuscripts is not found in any other secular works. Even the copying errors are actually astonishingly minor, being mostly found in numbers, spelling and some punctuation.

What person or what book can produce hundreds of prophecies that are 100% accurate? What of the probabilities of all of the fulfilled prophecies being so? The mathematical odds are staggering and humanly incomprehensible.

The study of prophecy should greatly encourage the saints that all that God has moved men to write in the Bible is divine and inspired. God's promises, including the prophecies, are there for the layman as well as the scholar to study.

Terry Arnold

Much of the material and the prophecies in this article are taken or adapted from various 'Apostasy Alert' [apostasyalert@hotmail.net.au] and 'Israel Report' [israelreport@hotmail.net.au] which included the following article: <http://www.reasons.org/articles/articles/fulfilled-prophecy-evidence-for-the-reliability-of-the-bible>.

‘Evangelical’; ‘Denominational’ - What Are They?

‘Evangelical’

The word ‘evangelical’ was a term coined in the 18th and 19th centuries largely to delineate Protestant churches from Roman Catholic. The distinctives were the belief in the sole authority of the literal Bible, a salvation only through regeneration, or rebirth, salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ’s atonement and the Gospel needing to be spread worldwide...

There are now hundreds of millions of so called ‘Evangelicals’ worldwide. However, the defining differences between ‘Evangelicals’ and other religions is now increasingly thin and vague. The ‘Evangelical Theological Society’ Statement of Faith is 43 words long and affirms only the Bibles inerrancy in the autographs and the doctrine of the Trinity. The ‘Evangelical’ term today could well include some Roman Catholics and even some cults. Added to this, Charismatic/Pentecostals do also include themselves in this, despite the fact they do not teach a true view of Sola Scriptura when they endorse extra biblical revelations in different forms such as prophesies, unknown tongues, visions, etc. The boundaries between ‘Evangelical’ and Roman Catholicism today are almost non existent. New groups such as the ‘Emergent Church’ also blur any boundaries by their aberrant views on such issues as homosexuality and gay marriage, issues which all early ‘Evangelical’ churches would have vehemently opposed as unscriptural.

Many churches today have no Statement of Faith. Even the ones that do, have a very broad short statement which could be accepted by many groups that would have once have been not considered ‘Evangelical’. Inclusiveness is rampant. It’s now conversation and dialogue time rather than objective truth and content. And the latter will today be seen as ‘legalistic’ and ‘narrow’.

My contention is that the term ‘Evangelical’ has no identity today. It has been diluted, bastardised and re-shaped to an ecumenical mixture that knows nothing of the original sentiment. Conferences that are advertised to be ‘evangelical’ have a variety of speakers who do not agree on current issues of the day. Yet all might claim to be ‘Evangelical’.

Enter into many of the mainline ‘Protestant’ denominational churches today in various towns and you will find a huge variation in beliefs and practises in the same denomination. All at some time claimed to be ‘Evangelical’. Most have given up the ‘protesting’ of the original Protestantism and joined Rome! If the term ‘Evangelical’ does exist today it is far from looking like ‘Protestant’!

‘Denominational’

Denominationalism was defined by churches having distinctives in doctrine and practises. I say ‘was’ because this is no longer the case. The different denominations were born out of the Reformation after Martin Luther opposed

the corruption in the Roman Catholic religion in 1517 and then he began to pursue Sola Scriptura. Other theologians Zwingli and John Calvin also sought to reform existing problems in doctrine and practice. Various denominations later followed these doctrines and the traditions of such leaders.

Most denominations originally had doctrines they stressed and with distinctive practises in communion, baptism, church government, etc. Baptist churches originally emphasised baptism; Presbyterian churches emphasised Reformed doctrines (including sovereign election, etc) as well as a certain church government style; Pentecostal churches (such as Assemblies of God) emphasised a 'Baptism with the Holy Spirit' as a subsequent experience to salvation and this with the 'evidence' of speaking in unknown tongues.

All denominations have a bias, a tradition in at least one area.

But as with the term 'Evangelical', the term 'denomination' has changed dramatically in the last few decades. Today many denominations are now Charismatic when they used to be decidedly opposed to such. It is a fact also that most denominations simply do not teach what they used to teach decades ago. In several denominations there has been a wholesale turn around on issues such as same-sex marriage, homosexuality and women in ministry.

Denominationalism is not what it used to be. Most have moved rapidly towards a liberal ecumenical agenda. Most movements no longer teach the doctrines of their founders. For example, most 'Brethren' churches do not teach what Darby and Mueller taught on several points. One example is the 'Doctrines of Grace' - Darby and Mueller were strong advocates for predestination and sovereign unconditional election. They would today be branded with the nickname 'Calvinists'. Today most Brethren churches are closer to Arminius (Arminianism) than Darby and Mueller. Similarly, most Baptist churches do not teach and even will oppose what the Baptist Charles Spurgeon taught on these same doctrines. Yet they love to quote him. (Most early denominations, including Baptists, were in fact 'Calvinistic' rather than 'Arminian').

The Lutheran church is now readily moving away from its foundational teaching of Luther's 'faith alone' doctrines and actually aligning with Luther's adversary, Rome! Almost every denomination fulfils the very definition of 'apostasy' within it own ranks - a 'falling away' from what was once held.

Although there are churches within each denomination that have remained true to their original charters, they are now but a remnant. As with 'Evangelical' the term 'denomination' has lost its identity and meaning.

The 'tags' of denominations, the terms 'evangelical' and 'protestant', are all but distant relics. The real question is - are we biblical? Have we been Born Again, regenerated in nature? Do we believe Sola Scriptura - the Bible as 66 books being the all sufficient closed word of God for doctrine and the spiritual life...But then this perhaps leads us back to some of what 'Evangelical' and 'denominations' used to be?

Terry Arnold

The Hypocrisy Files

Religious leaders and the Gospel...

Have you ever wondered why a ‘minister’ does not preach the Gospel? Is he not a ‘minister of the Gospel’? If their charter is to proclaim the Gospel then why is it that at Easter and Christmas times most of our religious leaders do NOT preach the Gospel. They preach the political or social flavour of the day, the postmodern ideas of inclusiveness, love, tolerance, etc. But why do they not preach ‘Christ crucified’ and that man is a sinner under the judgement of God?

Is this not hypocrisy?

Charismatic/Pentecostal faith healers...

Have you ever wondered how Charismatic/Pentecostal ‘faith healers’ can teach healing is available to all if there is enough faith; that healing in this life is written into the atonement and that God wants to heal all who have faith...yet children who often would have a simple faith, don’t get healed? Why is it that people dying every day who have begged for healing and with faith, don’t get healed? Why do the faith healers have healing campaigns and have deaf people given sign languages at these meetings? Why are the Faith healers wearing glasses and dying of cancer and other diseases themselves?

Is this not hypocrisy?

If not, then allow a Christian author to express this in more succinct terms: *‘I here put a challenge to all those who lay claim to a personal ongoing ‘healing ministry’ today: Don’t just tarry in your tent meetings waiting for all those poor people to line up in front of you. Instead, go out into the casualty departments of your local hospitals on a Saturday night and bring instantaneous organic healing to the battered and broken victims of the brawls and accidents that present themselves here for treatment. Then nip up to the surgical wards and lay your hands on the amputees and hopeless cases, so that their truncated limbs and diseased entrails will be returned to them. When those places have been emptied, find your local ‘institute for the blind’ and bring some colour into their lives for the first time with your remarkable healing powers. Then buzz over to the offices of the ‘spastic society’ and get them to take you out to their many training centres, where you can restore those withered limbs on the spot...make that Downs Syndrome melt away from those little faces...take a taxi across to the local mortuary and bring some of it’s frigid occupants out with you for a breath of fresh air...While we’re on the subject, isn’t it about time you discarded those eye glasses?...Why wait? For those are the kinds of healings which the Lord Jesus and the Apostles carried out in the course of their ministry (eg. Lk.22:50,51; Mk.3:1-5; Lk.8:43,44; Jn.9: 1-11; 11:43,44)...Do not make the false claim you are doing the works of Jesus...’* (Diakrisis Jan/Feb/2001)

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

What laws are we meant to keep? What laws do we dispense with?
(J.W., Qld)

Editor's reply:

Hypothetically, to get to Heaven one would have to keep all the laws of God in old and new covenants! Yet, anyone born of Adam cannot do this. But we have a substitute in Jesus Christ who kept the Law without sin.

We are now not under the law of Moses or any other old covenant but now under the '*law of Christ*' (Gal.6:2) which arguably could be summarised in two commandments '*...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is none other commandment greater than these...*' (Mk.12:28-31).

These two commands are the core of the OT Law.

Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament Law, bringing it to completion and conclusion (Rom.10:4; Gal.3:23-25; Eph.2:15). In place of the Old Testament (600+) Laws, Christians are to obey the '*law of Christ*'. The OT law is not done away with, but '*fulfilled*' in Christ.

As for the 'ten commandments' - nine of the ten commandments are repeated in the New Testament and at least a moral obligation to keep them. But if we could keep the 10 Commandments perfectly then why have a Saviour? God says we have all broken the Law. Only Christ kept it to be accepted by God. God will not save anyone by the law *or the keeping of it* (Rom.3:20; 2:12; Acts 13:39; Gal.3:11).

We are not under the law of Moses but under the '*law of Christ*'. '*Bear you one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ*' (Gal.6:2; 1Cor.9:21).

The law that we keep is Jesus, the word of God and his commandments as we see by the Holy Spirit and in the word of God. If we break the law or his word, we have a substitute, an advocate, Jesus Christ. '*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*' (1Jn.1:9).

In summary: We are meant to keep the '*law of Christ*' - all that Jesus shows us through the Holy Spirit and arguably summarised in '*...love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength...You shall love your neighbor as yourself*'.

The Old Testament law is not dispensed with (at least nine out of 10 are repeated in the New Testament) but they are *fulfilled* in Christ.

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

Where did we get our Bible from? Who put the books together and what guidelines were used? How do we know they (66 books) are the only inspired books?

(T.S., Q1d)

Editor's Reply:

The gospels and epistles were circulated in the first century but in the 2nd century events led up to a 'canon' ('*kanon*' - rule) of 66 books. Part of the reason for this was that there were being introduced forgeries and many apocryphal ('doubtful') books and epistles which some could be read in churches. One Marcion rejected Luke and the Pauline epistles and arguably triggered the necessity to establish a 'canon'.

By 200 AD the New Testament was recognised in a definitive 'canon' (initially some discussion remained concerning Hebrews, 1&2 Peter and 3 John).

By the 3rd century all 27 NT books were accepted and circulated. In 367 AD Althanasius set out 27 books as being canonical. Two synods that followed ratified this canon (Hippo Regius 395 AD and Carthage 397 AD).

The 'tests' of canonicity were: *The internal evidence of divine inspiration* in that there was 1. *Apostolicity - Credentials of apostles* 2. *Contents were Consistent* with their teaching 3. *Universality in church - the wide acceptance, usage (by church Fathers).*

The proofs of inspiration are also internal: '*Thus says the Lord*' and '*It is written*' - are written over 2,000 times. And what of the hundreds of prophecies fulfilled - Messianic and otherwise?

For 1,800 years we have had these books as is in the 'canon'. There are no contradictions (the apocryphal books are full of contradictions).

Are the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts accurate?: *The copying & preservation* of the copies of the Bible dating to the 14th century A.D. are nearly identical in content to copies from the 3rd century A.D. Textually only 1 part in 1,000 passages in the Bible has any textual 'variation' in the copies. Almost 99% of the copies of the texts are the same. There are as many as 5,700 manuscripts and plenty enough to ensure that the Bible is consistent and accurate.

Proofs of Inspiration?: The Bible stated stars in the heavens could not be numbered except by God (Jer.33:22; Ps.147:4), contrary to early Scientists who thought they had them counted. The Bible stated the earth was a sphere long before men discovered this (Is.40:22; Pr.8:27). The Bible stated there were fountains and springs beneath the sea (Job 38:16; Pr.8:28); that light is parted into the spectrum of the colours of the rainbow

(Job 38:24); and that the wind travels in circuits (Ecc.1:6) - all long before men discovered these things! Matthew Maury was reading Psalm 8:8 and that there were 'paths of the seas'. This led him to produce maps of sea lanes and currents. A statue of him exists in Virginia with charts of the sea in one hand and a Bible in the other.

For 1,800 years we have had these books as is in the canon of 66 books. No contradictions have ever been successfully proven. But ultimately God has to give us a faith in His word and that he has faithfully preserved it for us by His grace. 'The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. You shall keep them, O Lord, You shall preserve them from this generation forever' (Ps.12:6,7).

Further study on this can be had by reading our booklet '*The Battle For The Bible*'.

'Lucifer' - Satan?

Hi Terry, can you comment on the validity of the use of the Latin origin name Lucifer in the KJV translation of Isaiah 14. Is it Satan or not? Some believe it refers only to the Babylonian king. Also, when did Satan fall?

(A.S., Sydney)

Editor's Reply: 'Lucifer' is only mentioned once (Is.14). It is of Latin derivation. The Bible in many places has words untranslated from original languages (eg. 'Hades', and 'Baptizo' are untranslated). It is believed the word 'Lucifer' originally meant 'shining one' or 'son of the morning'.

It is best to look at the *context* and see who is referred to here. I believe Isaiah 14 is a 'dual prophesy'. It begins by referring to a Babylonian king but then turns to another - Satan (and the real power behind the king?). The switch begins in verse 12.

Commentators believe Jesus also spoke of the same person in Luke 10:18-20 and Revelation 12:7-12. In Ezekiel 28 it also mentions a 'prince' or 'cherub' who was 'in the garden of Eden' (vs.13). Whether we call him Lucifer, Devil, etc (there are many names), it is the same person. I read Isaiah 14 as referring to more than just a Babylonian king?

The Bible does not say when Satan fell but it is usually assumed that it was before creation. It is mentioned in Job which is considered the oldest book.

Terry, I would like to receive the 'Diakrisis' Newsletters via e-mail. Thank you for your ministry. You are bringing truth to a lot of people. Many thanks,
(A.H.)

Logical Musings...

Editor's reply in **bold** and brackets:

Dear Terry, in Genesis 1:26 'Let us make man in our image according to our likeness; let them have dominion over the [animals]...'God intended other forms of life be subject to man as part of an extraordinary higher purpose for man. Did God tell Adam and Eve about this power they had? [This 'dominion' was a 'stewardship' to care for the creation, not a 'power' over the animals] If he did then Adam and Eve should have challenged the snake (Satan) in the garden, told him to depart...for they believed God's word?...Obviously Adam and Eve intended to sin in the beginning? [Satan was sent into the garden to challenge Adam & Eve - to test their obedience. Nowhere is it suggested in Scripture they 'intended' to sin? They simply 'doubted' God and His word when they were challenged and then they sinned]

If they did they purposely brought sin on mankind? Should they not have been sent to Hell? [We all should have been sent to Hell for our sins! By the grace of God He chose to redeem us. God sought out Adam and Eve and an animal was killed arguably signalling forgiveness and showing it possible for God to cover the future sin of the world, pointing to a Saviour to come]

Only mankind was created in God's image? Humans are unique...in their godlike abilities to make decisions, to create...[This in no way makes them 'godlike'. Man was created capable of communicating with the creator]

(R.M., Qld)

Thankyou so much for your 'Diakrisis' newsletter. It is a pleasure to see your stand for the Word in this present increasing darkness. We are to be salt and light to show the Father's glory. Please send the sermon 'Marriage or Same-sex...'. Looking to our Lord's return...

C.V. (Sth Aust)

As a young Christian myself and my brother in law also...we would like to express our most genuine and heartfelt thanks to your ministries. We are truly blessed to have access to your resources, and to be guided through our more sure word of prophecy, in an honest and untainted manner.

I want you to know Peter and Terry, that we share your material with people the world over through news comment threads, in sermon audio...Thankyou for your time and please pass our love to the beloved in your ministries. We feel so connected through your DVD's and monthly sermons. Lord bless, praise be to Jesus.

(D.C., Vict.)

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

Aping Art?

A painting at an art show caused an 'art expert' to 'shiver with excitement'. Its worth? The expert said 'We're talking thousands of dollars, rather than hundreds', she said. Unbeknown to the 'expert' the painting was actually done by a chimpanzee!

Art has declined as people have more absorbed Darwinian thinking (chance is the creator - there are no absolute values). The exquisite paintings of nature in the post Reformation period reflected the intricate handiwork of the creator.

As to the painting done by the chimpanzee, newspaper art critic Robert Simon said: 'To tell the truth it looks as good or as bad as 90 percent of the paintings hanging in some of the trendy galleries in London'.

(*Creation - ex nihilo* Sept/Nov/97, P.56)

Praise/Prayer Points

- Praise the Lord for the donations which faithfully cover the newsletter each bi-monthly edition, despite a recent substantial rise in postage costs.
- Praise God for recent baptisms and a wedding in Hervey Bay Bible church.
- Pray that information and articles continually sent out from this ministry are used for the informing, teaching, equipping and edification of many saints.

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