

FOURTEEN REASONS TO BELIEVE – Part I

Critics tell us that the Bible is nothing more than ancient mythology, with a sometimes confusing moral message mixed in. It is not based so much on historical fact as on the wishful folk tales of a much abused and abusing, ancient people. It is perhaps a record of that peoples' struggle to find meaning and purpose, but otherwise holds little value today. It is certainly of no more value than any of the other ancient 'sacred writings', such as the Koran or the Hindu Bhagavad-Gita. It is subjective, contradictory, - a fairy tale.

They would be wrong! In this series we will demonstrate why. What follows is a in no particular order is a countdown of fourteen reasons why I do, and you can, believe and trust in the Bible and what it teaches.

The Countdown

14. The Bible Itself –

- It's a book written over the span of 1100 BC to approximately 100 AD by about 40 different authors, on 3 continents, - in 3 languages. Through all that, it maintains thematic unity.¹
- The Dead Sea Scrolls found in 1947 prove that the Bible that we read today is the same as that used by the ancient Jews in Jesus day.²
- In all of its essentials, and over 99% of its details an accurate representation of the original work. By the standard objective tests applied by historians, the New Testament is by far the most reliable of any ancient historical writing. There are over 5000 copies just in the original Greek, over 24,600 copies or fragments of copies overall. More than 1700 copies of the Old Testament in Hebrew are in existence.³
- The gap between the copies we have and the original writings of the New Testament is between 60 and 90 years. Shorter than any other ancient work. A shorter span than it takes to produce legendary material, - because some of the people would still be alive to check its accuracy.
- Modern archaeology has confirmed many facts about the Old Testament that were formerly questioned. Scientists have found evidence for: The Hittites, Abraham's city of Ur, the existence of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Sumerian writings concerning the Flood.^{4 5}
- Research has confirmed the accuracy of Luke's Gospel and the Book of Acts; - from naming little known rulers down to down to the prevailing direction of winds and currents. Other finds confirming John's Gospel confirmed the Pool of Siloam, Pool of Bethesda and Jacob's well
- The ossuary of Caiphas, who played such a prominent role in the trial of Jesus, along with an inscription referring to Pontius Pilate, is on display at the Israeli Museum in Jerusalem. Inscriptions on Christian burial memorials referring to Jesus as Lord, and 'Jesus Christ the Redeemer' have been found dating back to as little as 10 years after the crucifixion. Finally, and most eerily perhaps, a discovery was made in a cave just off the Bethany road and near the site of that village. Again found on ossuaries, along with the sign of the cross were three very familiar names from the gospels; those of Martha, Mary and Lazarus whom Jesus called back to life.^{6 7}

13. Circumcision & Sanitary Laws – God's laws were way ahead of their time.

- Genesis 17:12 commanded that the Jews circumcise their sons on the eighth day after birth. Science has only recently found that two major elements in blood clotting, - Vitamin K & prothrombin, - are at their highest levels on that eighth day. Now, how did God know that? In

contrast the *advanced* Egyptian culture employed the use of such medical miracle drugs as donkey dung, snake skins, worms blood, and of course the ever-popular fly dung paste for ingestion by colicky infants.

- Numbers 31 prescribed purification by fire. This had the effect of killing off the germs. Neither the Egyptians nor the advanced Babylonians practiced any of sort of preventive medicine effective against germs.
- Numbers 19 outlined quarantine laws for certain diseases as well as touching a dead body. It also prescribed washing with the ashes of a red heifer combined with cedar and hyssop oil. Ceremonial mumbo-jumbo? Not hardly! Hyssop oil is a very effective anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and antiseptic agent. Carvacrol, an ingredient in the hyssop, is still used in medicine today.⁸

12. The Bible On Science – It doesn't say much...but what it says...

- In the oldest book in the Bible, Job 36:27-28 describes the complete hydrological cycle. **“For He draws up drops of water, Which distill as rain from the mist, Which the clouds drop down And pour abundantly on man.”**
- Job 28:24-26 describes how weather is determined by the relative weights of wind and water.
- Psalm 8:8 reveals the ocean currents, not discovered until the 18th century.
- The springs found in the oceans are described in Job 38:16
- In Job 38:29-30, the author, living in the Arabian desert, describes the frozen ocean areas found only the North and South Poles.
- Amos 5:8 reveals the 7 stars of Pleiades. Only 6 stars are visible to the naked eye. Scientists only became aware of the seventh star only after the advent of very sophisticated modern telescopes.

11. Mark of the Beast Technology – For nearly 2,000 years Bible scholars had no real idea of what that passage in Revelation 13 might refer to. Now with implantable micro-chips like Verichip, - and RFID (radio frequency technology), they do. Revelation 13:16-17 reads, **“He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”** The Verichip promises this and more: GPS tracking, electronic security, medical info as well as financial transactions.

10. Isaiah Talks About Cyrus By Name...Over 100 Years Before He Was Born – Written between 701 and 681 BC, the predictions of Isaiah regarding King Cyrus were fulfilled about 538 BC. Isaiah 45:1, **“Who says of Cyrus, ‘He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, “You shall be built,” And to the temple, “Your foundation shall be laid.”’** Isaiah 45:1, **““Thus says the LORD to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held— To subdue nations before him And loose the armor of kings, To open before him the double doors, So that the gates will not be shut”**

9. **The Jews Return to Palestine – Israel Born Again** – The return of the Jewish people and the establishment of Israel as a nation again, after over 1,800 years is the great miracle of history. No other people has ever survived more than a few hundred years out of their land. The astounding truth is: The Bible predicted, over and over, in passage after passage. God’s Word is true! Some places it can be found are; Jeremiah 38, Ezekiel 20, Jeremiah 32, Ezekiel 36:33-35. In Isaiah 43:5-7, God calls His people back to the Land. **“I will bring your descendants from the east, and gather you from the west; I will say to the north, ‘Give them up!’ And to the south, ‘Do not keep them back!’ Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth – Everyone who is called by My name”**.

Isaiah 66:8 describes May 14, 1948, - when modern Israel was born in a day, - as well as the war that followed. **“Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such things? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labor than she gives birth to her children.**

8. **The Condition of the Land** – When God gave the Promised Land to Israel, it was described as a **“land flowing with milk and honey”**. It was fertile and productive. But Deuteronomy 29:23 predicted a time when that would end. **“The whole land will be a burning waste of salt and sulfur—nothing planted, nothing sprouting, no vegetation growing on it. It will be like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah”**. That is indeed what occurred in the centuries after the Romans drove the Jews from the Land and scattered them among the nations. (That was also predicted.) In 1867 Mark Twain described it thus: “Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes...the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fields and fettered its energies...Palestine is desolate and unlovely...It is a hopeless, dreary, heartbroken land.”⁹

But the Bible also tells us that the Land would revive. Zechariah 8:12 prophesied a return to abundant fertility. Elsewhere the Scriptures predict a return of the rains. That is exactly what happened. Since Jews began returning in the late 19th century they have reclaimed the land and restored fertility until that little patch of erstwhile desert has become Europe’s largest supplier of vegetables. And since the 1890’s, rainfall has increased at rate of 10% a decade. Go God!¹⁰

FOURTEEN REASONS TO BELIEVE – Part II

We continue semi-random countdown of reasons that we can trust the Bible in everything it says. It is an amazingly accurate book, - in all its claims. Below are more examples of that accuracy.

The Countdown Continues

7. **Daniel's Outline of History** – In the Book of Daniel, we find that God revealed to that prophet, - the entire outline of human history. Daniel 2, describes in detail the rise and fall of all the major empires including Babylon, Greece, Rome and the rejuvenated Roman Empire of the last days that will rise out of the EU. Chapter 8 describes in detail, the rise of Alexander the Great, his defeat of the Persians, and his death and subsequent split of his empire into four parts. Daniel wrote it as prophecy. It was later fulfilled as history. So we can trust what he writes about the rise of the Antichrist at the end of chapter 8.
6. **Jesus Predicts The Temple Destroyed & The Destruction of Jerusalem** – As He neared the time of His crucifixion, Jesus warned His disciples of the judgments on Jerusalem that were to come. **Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. ‘Do you see all these things?’ he asked. ‘I tell you the truth, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.’** (Matthew 24:1-2) **“They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”** (Luke 21:24)

Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans about 40 years after Jesus was crucified. In AD 70, during the course of putting down a Jewish rebellion, Caesar's legions ravaged Jerusalem and killed over a million Jews. During the destruction, the Temple was set on fire. The heat from the flames caused the gold-leaf ornamentation and the other temple gold to melt. The melting gold flowed down the walls and settled into the crevices between the stones. Under orders to recover it, the Roman soldiers pried apart the stones to remove the gold. As Jesus predicted, **“Not one stone”** was left standing on another. After the destruction and slaughter, hundreds of thousands of Jews were taken as slaves and scattered among the nations. This fulfilled many other Biblical prophecies.

5. **The Resurrection Changed The Apostles** – While Jesus was with them during His ministry, the twelve Apostles would be evaluated on the world's standards as pretty much a bunch of losers. James and John tried to set aside for themselves the choice places of power and prestige in the Kingdom. [Mark 10:35-37, Matthew 20:20-21] Peter could walk on water and was the first to recognize that Jesus was **“the Christ, the Son of the living God”**. Yet just minutes later Peter sustained a stinging rebuke from Jesus for trying to divert Him from the purpose of His ministry; - our Lord saying **“Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me”** [Matthew 16:13-23] During Christ's trial, Peter denied Him three times. Most of the other's just ran away. In sum, Jesus' closest disciples were; weak, vacillating and scheming. They had been witnesses to His many signs and wonders, His healings, His mastery over nature. Still their faith failed. Then something changed. They saw the risen Christ!

They saw Jesus beaten, crucified and buried. But once they had Him, and touched Him, and eaten with Him, and later received the Holy Spirit, - they were transformed. The Truth was alive in them. Not even torture or the threat of death could shake their resolve. Save for John, who survived a boiling in oil, all the remaining Apostles went to their deaths proclaiming the reality of Jesus and His message. Peter was crucified in Rome, - upside down. Nathaniel was whipped to death in Armenia. Andrew hung on a cross for two days, preaching to his executioners all the while. Thomas was speared to death in India. Jesus brother James, (not an apostle but a major church leader), was thrown from the top of the Temple and then beaten to death with a club.¹¹ Matthew was martyred in Ethiopia, Gospel author Mark was dragged by horses through the streets of Alexandria, Egypt. Almost all could have saved their lives by recanting their Faith. None would. They knew that the Truth was even more powerful than death. Christ had vanquished that imposter.

4. **The Faith Grew Up In Jerusalem** – Christianity was born right there where Jesus conducted much of His ministry: Where if it wasn't true, - it could have easily been destroyed. After the claimed Resurrection the authorities could have produced the body and put an end to the young movement. They didn't: Because they couldn't! If the apostles were telling lies, the Christian Faith could have never got off the ground. It did!

Not two months after Christ's Resurrection, Peter relied on the very fact that Jesus' ministry and miracles were publicly performed in Jerusalem. **“Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.”** (Acts 2:22) The miracles of the recently crucified Christ could serve as a tool only because they were so widely known and accepted by the populace. **“As you yourselves know”**, said Peter in addressing the crowd. Jesus' miracles were not denied by His enemies because they could not be. Even non-believers had witnessed Christ's wide mastery over the forces of nature.

Paul later used the widely known and attested fact of Christ's rising as evidence to the skeptics of his day. In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul in effect challenges his readers to check out the evidence by naming some of those who witnessed the risen Christ. **“He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.”** (1Corinthians 15:5-7)

Next week in Part III, we'll look at the amazing prediction found in chapter 9 of the book of Daniel. Written over 500 years before Jesus was born, it gave the exact day that Messiah would come.

FOURTEEN REASONS TO BELIEVE – Part III

Now we get into some of the fun stuff; - The amazing and very specific prophesies of the Bible.

3. **Daniel Predicts The Exact Day** – In Daniel chapter 9, written just about 530 years or so before the birth of Christ, the prophet predicts Christ’s entry into his Kingdom to the very day. Check this out. Based on Daniel’s prophecy, 1st century rabbis, those writing when Jesus was alive, - expected the arrival of Messiah right around that time. The Magi arrived seeking Him partially informed by a detailed knowledge of Jewish Scripture which had been gained by Zoroastrian wise men and astrologers since the time of Daniel himself.¹² The Essenes, who produced the famous Dead Sea Scrolls, were another religious community that believed that the prophecy would shortly be fulfilled in first century Palestine.

Here’s the prophecy they were all excited about, Daniel 9:25-26: **“Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.”**

It sounds confusing, so lets start breaking it down. Sir Robert Anderson, a former head of Scotland Yard and a Christian scholar first researched the issue back in the 1890’s. He made an amazing discovery. So lets look at the timing: **“from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks”**.

Here’s what we know:

- History tells us that King Artaxerxes Longimanus issued a decree to rebuild Jerusalem on the 1st day of the Jewish month of Nisan in the 20th year of his reign.
- Sir Robert used the Encyclopedia Britannica to begin his research, finding out just when King Artaxerxes came to the throne. It was simple to calculate that the day the decree was issued was the 1st day of Nisan, 445 BC. That correlates with March 14th of that year.
- **“There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks”**. The Hebrew word used here is *Shabuim*, and means *weeks of years* or a 7-year period.
- Sixty-nine *weeks of years* multiplied by seven gives us 483 years. But these are Hebrew or prophetic years of 360 days each.
- So Anderson converted the years to days; multiplying the 483 years by the 360 days required by the Jewish calendar. That comes to exactly 173,880 days.
- He counted forward from the 1st of Nisan, 445 BC. Anderson and the scholars who checked his work all came up with the same answer: The 10th of Nisan, or April 6th, AD 32.
- We know from the Scripture that Jesus went up to the Temple to celebrate the Feast of Passover. Quoting Robert Anderson now: “In accordance with the Jewish custom, the Lord went up to Jerusalem on the 8th of Nisan, ‘six days before the Passover’”. Two days later,

on the 10th of Nisan, (the date the prophecy indicated), Jesus made His triumphal entry into the Holy City.

- That date was the original Palm Sunday. It was the day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a colt, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9. Now there had been more than one occasion that Jesus had refused the opportunity to be proclaimed King. This was the first and only time that Jesus the Messiah accepted his role of King.
- It occurred exactly 173,880 days from the day the decree was issued to rebuild Jerusalem; March 14, 445 BC.^{13 14 15}

Confirming Evidence: Historian, physician and Gospel writer Luke is a confirming witness. Luke is rated to be a scholar of impeccable historical accuracy. Here is his confirming testimony.

- In the 3rd chapter of Luke it states that Jesus was about 30 years of age when he was baptized by John in the Jordan River. Luke specifically identifies it as the “**fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar**”. (Luke 3:1) That’s an easily traceable time period on which scholars can agree. It puts Jesus Baptism in the autumn of AD 28.
- That puts the end of Jesus’ three-and-a-half year ministry in the spring of AD 32.
- Christ’s final Passover then was on April 10, 32 AD. The Sunday before that was April 6th. That’s the day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem to the acclamation of the crowds; proclaimed as King and Messiah. Again, that’s the very first Palm Sunday.
- Luke’s historical account lines up exactly with Daniel’s prophetic one.^{16 17}

FOURTEEN REASONS TO BELIEVE – Part IV

*We conclude this series of reasons to believe with some of the most compelling evidence for the Truth of the Christian Faith: The Messianic Prophecies of Jesus, and the working of God in the lives of individual believers. Often, no matter how compelling, it is not the evidence that convinces. The call to faith is not a call to intellectual belief. It is a call to the heart. As James tells us, “**You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe- and tremble.**” (James 2:19) It is a call to a complete, life changing, total commitment to the Truth, and the God of the Universe that is its source. In John 3:3, Jesus describes it as being “**born again**”. All of this evidence is marshaled so that we may see, - believe, - and commit ourselves to that one that is “**the way, the truth and the life**”; - Jesus our Messiah.*

2. The Messianic Prophecies – Throughout the Old Testament we find dozens of very specific prophecies that found their fulfillment in the person of Jesus at his first coming. These were all things that were revealed to the Old Testament Prophets and written down hundreds of years before Christ. There is no way to rank these. What follows however is a listing of some of the more significant ones.

- **The Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah.** – [Genesis 49:10] – Written: 1400 BC. Fulfilled: At Jesus’ birth. Even later 1st century AD Jewish authorities acknowledged that Jesus was from the tribe of Judah and the House of David. In other words they acknowledged that He was, in those respects, qualified to be their King.
- **The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.** – [Micah:5:2] – Written between 750-686 BC. Fulfilled: At Christ’s birth. Passage: **“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, *Yet* out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth *are* from of old, From everlasting.”**
- **Betrayed by a friend.** – [Psalm 41:9] – Written: Circa 1000 BC. Fulfilled: Most are familiar with the passages describing the last supper in Luke 22:3-4 & John 13:18, when his disciple Judas dipped the bread with Jesus before going out to betray Him. Passage: **“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up *his* heel against me.”**
- **Jesus to be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, and the money spent on a “potters” field.** – [Zechariah 11:12-13] – Written circa 520 BC. Fulfilled: Matthew 26:14-15 tells us: **“Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?” And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver”.** After Jesus was condemned to die, Judas brought the money back to the High Priests and threw it into the Temple. Matthew 26:6-7 describes what the Jewish authorities did with that blood money. **“And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.”** Here’s the prophecy that was fulfilled found in Zechariah 11:12-13: **“If it is agreeable to you, give *me* my wages; and if not, refrain.” So they weighed out for my wages thirty *pieces* of silver. And the LORD said to me, “Throw it to the potter”—that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty *pieces* of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter.”**
- **The Christ would enter Jerusalem on a donkey.** – [Zechariah 9:9] – Written about 500 years before Christ. Fulfilled by Jesus when He entered in triumph on Palm Sunday.
- **The disciples scatter when Jesus is taken.** – [Zechariah 13:7] – Fulfilled in the Garden of Gethsemane. The apostles ran off as Jesus was seized. The passage reads in part: **“Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered”.**
- **Jesus would be struck and spit on.** – [Isaiah 50:6] – Passage: **“I gave My back to those who strike *Me*, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.”** Matthew 27:30 records the fulfillment of that prophecy. **“I gave My back to those who strike *Me*, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.”**
- **His death by crucifixion; hundreds of years before that method of death was used.** – [Psalm 22:16] – Passage: **“They pierced My hands and My feet.”** Fulfillment: On the Cross.
- **They would divide and gamble for the rights to His clothing.** – [Psalm 22:18] – Passage: **“They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots.”** John

19:23-24 describes how after they hung Him on the Cross, the Roman soldiers divided his clothing and gambled for His seamless tunic.

- **Messiah's Mission: To suffer and die bearing the sins of all that would accept Him.** – [Isaiah 52:13-53:12] – Written around 700 BC – Fulfilled: In the details of the ministry, suffering and crucifixion of Christ. That passage tells us that he will bear the sin of “**many nations**” as he was “**wounded for our transgressions**” and “**bruised for our iniquities...And by His stripes we are healed**”. In Isaiah 53:7 it tells us “**He opened not His mouth, He was led as a lamb to the slaughter**”. Later we find that at His trial He was silent before Pilate, not attempting to defend Himself though it cost Him His life. It tells us also that he would be executed “**with the wicked**” (the 2 thieves on the cross), and buried “**with the rich at His death**”, which He was. The Christ would be “**numbered with the transgressors**” yet He “**bore the sins of many**”. That passage tells us that He would be rejected yet make “**His soul an offering for sin**”. In the end, God will raise Him up with “**the great**” because “**He poured out His soul unto death**”.
- **Others:** - Psalm 69:21 predicted that they would give Him vinegar to drink. They did. – Psalm 34:20 recorded how none of His bones would be broken. They weren't. – Zechariah 12:10 prophesied that he would be pierced. He was pierced by a Roman soldier to make sure he was dead. – Psalm 35:11 speaks of the false witnesses that would testify against Him. – Psalm 55:12-14 tells us that he would be betrayed by a friend. “**For it is not an enemy who reproaches me ... But it is you, a man my equal, My companion and my familiar friend. We who had sweet fellowship together, Walked in the house of God in the throng.**” There are others still.^{18 19}

1. **God At Work: In Me & Others.** – Not long ago I wrote a book that was in part comprised of the stories of what God had done in individual lives. There was a young man called back from the brink of suicide, - healed of his addictions to drugs and alcohol and porn. There was a Jewish man who experienced the almost palpable presence of Yeshua ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah. It changed his life. There was the miraculous rescue of a girl lost at sea and a young woman delivered from the complete paralysis of polio. There was more!²⁰ Outside of that book there were many such miracles I have seen for myself. I have seen people that I've known for many years, barely able to walk with back pain, suddenly dancing. My own mother was healed of acute ovarian cancer. I have seen lives changed; - my own included. I have witnessed drunks and addicts delivered. Recently I have seen an infant with 3 holes in her heart and a defective valve delivered by prayer. Most importantly, I have seen God saving souls.

Through it all I could see a recurring theme: The unrelenting love of God and the restorative power of divine mercy. Individuals were called, a decision was made, and from that time forward God never let go of them, no matter how they might fail to live up to his holy standard. With few exceptions, what I witnessed was evidence of the imperfectability of man, and the continuing mercy of God. I must confess my own journey fit that same pattern. And in looking back on my life, I can see the hand of God, continually saving me, for what ultimate purpose I cannot yet know.

There was one night I was called by an inaudible voice I later knew to be God. “Will you give your all to me?” That was its wordless question. There was no mistaking its implication. He wanted everything. My life! More! And there was a sense that to answer yes, meant I could not be sure if I would live or die. The commitment asked for was a total giving of my very being. The first time that question came, I hesitated, - I could not answer yes. And the voice went away. At first I was relieved, then disappointed at my cowardice, that missed opportunity. And perhaps dimly I recall wanting it to call again. Yet hard as I would try, I could not conjure it. This was no servant of imagination that I could call up at whim.

Then one night it did call again. This time I gave it my hesitant, - trembling, - determined - YES! And things were never the same. My spirit went somewhere I cannot describe. I was not prepared for what I experienced by Catholic education, or all the scriptures I had read and heard in church as an altar boy. This was the God of the universe that led me somewhere where love and peace flowed over and through my very being. I could not see as we see, - so I cannot describe where I was in human terms. And the name Jesus was never spoken. I did not see my Savior. But I was certain of who it was and what it meant. It may have lasted mere seconds, or several years. I cannot say. This was an existence unfettered by time. But then I was back, to where I had never left and I knew in the innermost chambers of my soul, that Jesus was God, - and that I was his. And I got down on my knees and I worshipped him. And I prayed in my feeble way to the Creator of everything.

It has not been a straight and narrow road I have taken since. Too often I was lost in the attempt to ‘make it’ in the music business and the temptations of that lifestyle. But my God has never forgotten me. Even when I was getting everything wrong I was always aware of his presence in my life. That tenuous connection remained somehow intact through all the partying and rebellion until it could act as the lifeline that would bring me back. Ultimately I could not inure my conscience to His persistent calls. He led me to see the meaninglessness of the life I was living. I had to seek Him out. I had to know Him better. And He opened to me windows of grace that I could not imagine possible. I can really say that now I seek to do His will, to further his cause, because that cause is the very TRUTH. There is no other reality. I asked for wisdom and he gave me knowledge of Himself. And as dimly I may perceive or understand that knowledge, I know that it is a gift to be both treasured and shared. That is the call on all believers.

I had my excuses for the way that I was living, for the decisions I made. They all seemed so reasonable at the time. I had my justifications. What are yours? There is an ultimate reality that governs this whole universe. That reality is Yeshua, the Son of God. You cannot hide from Him forever. The Scriptures tell us that **“EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”** (Philippians 2:10-11) You see, there is only Truth and it will be served. What is truth? Jesus answered that question when he said, **“I am the way and the truth and the life.”** (John 14:6) He is calling you now to serve that truth. Say yes!

Footnotes

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- ¹ Paul E Little, Know Why You Believe, 1999, pp 53-59
 - ² Grant Jeffrey, The Great Debate, 1999, pp 59-60
 - ³ How Do We Know Christianity is True, biblestudy.org
 - ⁴ Lee Strobel, The Case For Faith, 2000, pp 83-85
 - ⁵ Paul E Little, Know Why You Believe, 1999, pp 78-85
 - ⁶ Lee Strobel, The Case For Christ, 1998, pp 130-132
 - ⁷ Paul E Little, Know Why You Believe, 1999, pp 76-77
 - ⁸ Grant Jeffrey, The Great Debate, 1999
 - ⁹ Quotes taken from Mark Twain's Innocents Abroad, 1867
 - ¹⁰ Grant Jeffrey, The Great Debate, 1999
 - ¹¹ Various including, Grant Jeffrey The Signature of God, & Got Questions.org.
 - ¹² John MacArthur Study Bible, notes to Matthew 2:1, pg 1,394
 - ¹³ Sir Robert Anderson, The Coming Prince
 - ¹⁴ Chuck Missler, Confirming the Prophetic Date of 445 BC
 - ¹⁵ Dr Mark Eastman, Daniel's Prophecy Came True When Yeshua Entered Jerusalem, Messianic Times, April 1996
 - ¹⁶ Dr Mark Eastman, Daniel's Prophecy Came True When Yeshua Entered Jerusalem, Messianic Times, April 1996
 - ¹⁷ Chuck Missler, Confirming the Prophetic Date of 445 BC
 - ¹⁸ Bible.org
 - ¹⁹ Grant Jeffrey, The Great Debate, 1999
 - ²⁰ The book is By A Preponderance of the Evidence, Robert B Palaszewski,