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## Should You NOT be a Christian? (Part II)

**1 Corinthians 3:20-21:** (NASB) <sup>20</sup>...*The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are useless.* <sup>21</sup>*So then let no one boast in men...*

**Please see the CQ Rewind Full Edition for many more details from today's program!**

Several weeks ago, we began working on a response to a YouTube video sent to us by a college student entitled, "Why I am no longer a Christian," a 1½ hour step-by-step presentation of how another young man went from devoted Christian to atheist. It was a well done, non-inflammatory treatise on why the author now believed Christianity to be just a story. Today is Part II of this three-part series, and we will primarily focus on the portion of the video that spells out specific issues that the video's producer encountered with the Bible itself.

### Apparent discord between science and the Bible, *Why I am no Longer a Christian, YouTube.com*

- *One thing that always bothered me as a Christian was the apparent discord between science and the Bible. The story of Genesis, for example, seemed to be completely at odds with important scientific concepts like the Big Bang, evolution and even the age of the universe. It was a great comfort to me in college when I discovered the book, The Science of God, by the physicist Gerald Schroeder. The Bible, Schroeder explained, was actually not at odds with science at all. Evolution is easy: God had used evolution as a way to create us. The Big Bang was also easy: That was simply what God had used to create the universe.*

While the Bible does contain many scientific facts and secrets, the Bible is *not* a science textbook. It is *not* meant to teach us the principles and secrets of science just the way a science textbook is *not* meant to teach us history, prophecy or ethical living. While the Bible is scientifically verifiable, one does not go to the Bible to learn science.

### Einstein - time is relative, *Why I am no Longer a Christian, YouTube.com*

- *The hardest part for me was the timeline, and this is where Schroeder's book really shined. Secular and liberal people who criticize the Bible for not providing the right time frames for the creation of the universe, as well as Young Earth Creationists, who think the Bible has the right time and the science is wrong, are both admitting from their reasoning one of the most important discoveries that Einstein introduced through his theory of relativity: Time is relative. The time experienced by a person in one gravitation or velocity reference frame is different from the time experienced by someone in another. There is no absolute time.*

The Bible does not label the periods of creation in *hours*, rather it labels them as *stages*. It uses the word *days*, but in the Bible it is not always a 24-hour day. 2 Peter 3:8: This text is an example that time - in this case, a day - is in fact related to its context. It is relative. Those creative days were not necessarily 1,000 years. The word "day" here does not mean a period from sunrise to sunset. Here is an example: "Back in my grandfather's day..."

According to the Bible, could the "Big Bang" have really happened? Yes, because there is no biblical evidence for or against it, as the biblical account simply addresses the Earth's beginning for habitation. According to the Bible, could man have evolved from lower forms of God's creation? NO!! Genesis 1:26-28: Notice all of the differences when it came to man, who was given a completely different role on the earth than the other animals:

- Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;
- and let them rule over all the earth;
- God blessed them;
- God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it."

Genesis is written from the standpoint of a human being looking around their environment. This marked difference of being created in God's image plays a critical role in this discussion.

**Could all human languages have really started at the tower of Babel?**

### Tower of Babel is monumentally preposterous, *Why I am no Longer a Christian, YouTube.com*

- *To call the scientific debate a myth is truly astonishing. Among educated people, the doctrinal underpinnings of the Bible have been known to be mythological for centuries. Have you read Robert Ingersoll's, "Some Mistakes of Moses," as one example? The Tower of Babel story alone to anyone with knowledge of historical linguistics is monumentally preposterous!*

**Here is the basic pre-context of the Tower of Babel: Genesis 9:1 Here is what happened: Genesis 11:1-9: Man wanted to elevate himself and disobey the command given to Noah to fill the earth. Man decided to do things out of harmony with the expressed will of God. God confused their language and therefore confused their effort, and man was scattered over the earth as a result - just as God wanted them to be! Okay, HOW did this happen? Did God**



miraculously implant new languages into peoples' brains? Edenics ([www.edenics.org](http://www.edenics.org)) is the study of language with the thinking that a) all language came from one language; b) the words formed were not random sounds and grunts that turned into words, but were formed because of meanings; c) the original language was an ancient form of Hebrew; d) this original language was pre-programmed into the human mind in the brain, similar to a software package that comes with your computer.

**))) Origin of the word Babel, *The Origin of Speeches, Edenics on YouTube.com***

- *Maybe you are delighted, even inspired to discover that language comes from a Creator and not accidentally evolved from chattering chimps. The Edenics deniers try to say that our 23,000 bits of evidence so far are a bunch of "borrowings." Take a moment to read what the prestigious Oxford Dictionary says about the word Babel, which means "incomprehensible speech." They are clearly upset that the Bible's Babel is the likely source. Even as a mere borrowing, this upsets them. If the tower of Babel were a Greek or Celtic fable, they would embrace it as a logical source.*

Since the source is Jewish Scripture, it is automatically looked down upon. Edenics has established 23,000+ bits of evidence that clearly link this ancient Hebrew dialect to most other languages in the world. Could this possibly have anything to do with being created in God's image? When God created Adam and Eve, He did so in His likeness, in a different way than the rest of the animals. They were given the ability to reason and likely they were given the "language program" that they needed to learn how to use, just like small children who learn how to speak. If evolution were true and everyone started with one language, what are the chances that all languages developed simultaneously around different parts of the world and made sense? We believe there is design and not merely chance.

**Could languages really be "built in" to the human mind, just like a software package for a computer?** First, let's diverge into a seemingly completely unrelated subject:

**))) Accidental Math Genius, Introduction, *YouTube.com***

- *I'm looking and I'm seeing trees and leaves and clouds. What do you see?*
- *I see bits and pieces of the Pythagorean Theorem everywhere. Every single little curve, every single spiral, every tree is part of that equation.*
- *Amazingly, Jason doesn't have a PhD, a college degree, or even a background in math. Ten years ago, he was only interested in two things: working out and partying.*
- *He was walking out of this place - what used to be a karaoke club - when he was brutally attacked by thieves who beat and kicked him in the head repeatedly.*
- *All I saw was a bright flash of light, and the next thing I knew I was on my knees on the ground and I thought, I'm gonna get killed.*

He suddenly developed an incredible ability for math, even though he was never taught. We will come back to this in a short while.

**))) Accidental math genius, an acquired savant, *YouTube.com***

- *To understand Jason, neurologists took him to Finland for a series of tests. A scan of his brain showed damage that was forcing his brain to overcompensate in certain areas that most people don't have access to. The result - Jason was now an "acquired savant," brilliant in a very specific area.*

How could he have become a math genius without studying? We do not use most of our brains. **If we were created in God's image... Genesis 1:27: ...to be able to have dominion over the earth, then we were created with not only language pre-programmed, but math, science, music, and more.** That is way more powerful than any evolutionary thought! Ask yourself - is it more palatable to believe that languages, in all of their complexity of meaning and syntax, (at least 70 languages are known to have begun after Babel) all developed essentially simultaneously throughout the world by the pure chance of evolution - or - that Intelligent Design planted them into the human mind and simply activated the proper switch at the proper time? Our Atheist friend continued on his quest to read the Bible all the way through as he continued in Genesis:

**))) Problem - Abraham lied and Pharaoh was punished, *Why I am no Longer a Christian, YouTube.com***

- *I started in Genesis, immediately following the verses that had been validated by "The Science of God." These chapters were about Noah, Lot, Abraham, Jacob and Joseph. One thing I learned that bothered me was that Abraham asks his wife Sarah to lie to the Egyptians in Genesis. He did this because Sarah was very attractive and Abraham was afraid the Egyptians would kill him so they could take her. This seemed like immoral behavior in and of itself for a servant of the One True God. Why would Abraham lie when he had God on his side? But what was worse was that after the Egyptians believed Sarah and took Sarah to Pharaoh as a wife, God punished Pharaoh with diseases because he had taken Sarah for his wife. This seemed completely backwards to me. Shouldn't God have punished Sarah and Abraham for lying?*



But is that the actual context? Let's review a few key points from Genesis 20: God PROTECTED Pharaoh by warning him through a dream, which also tested Abimelech's integrity. So, Abraham told a partial truth and not an outright lie. Sarah was actually his half-sister. We do not actually know what consequence Abraham had for his lack of faith. Having a moral discussion based on a partial truth is different from that of an outright lie.

### Did God really use Pharaoh as a puppet?



**Problem - God hardened Pharaoh's heart - that's unfair, *Why I am no Longer a Christian, YouTube.com***

*I encountered other behaviors from the God of the Old Testament that didn't make sense. One was when Moses had asked Pharaoh to let the Hebrews leave Egypt in Exodus and God had hardened Pharaoh's heart - why did God do that? Didn't that violate Pharaoh's free will? Didn't that defeat the purpose of God telling Moses to ask? Didn't that just keep the Hebrews enslaved longer? Wasn't that unfair to the Egyptians, too? God killed all their first born sons and inflicted them with plagues because of this. Wasn't this unfair if God was just using Pharaoh as a puppet? After trying to answer these questions for a few minutes, I decided that I just didn't understand what God was trying to do and reminded myself not to lean on my own understanding.*

God hardened Pharaoh's heart - why would He do that? A question before we answer - what do you envision "God hardening his heart" actually means? Probably that God changed Pharaoh and made him stubborn and unmovable against his will. But what actually happened? Exodus 4:21: (NASB) *The LORD said to Moses, When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but I will **harden** his heart so that he will not let the people go.*

Hebrew Lexicon: #2388 qzx chazaq khaw-zak' to strengthen, prevail, harden, be strong, become strong, be courageous, be firm, grow firm, be resolute, be sore

Sounds like a fortifying, a strengthening, a firming action of what already is, but NOT a poisoning or polluting...God took what was already there and made it stronger. It was already within Pharaoh. God honored what Pharaoh really wanted, giving him courage to carry out what was there. **Pharaoh also did the same with his own heart:** Exodus 8:19: *Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was **hardened <2388>**, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.* He was getting firm in what he wanted. So, it could be that God was simply putting the will of Pharaoh in the center of the event. Exodus 7:13-14: (NASB) <sup>13</sup>*Yet Pharaoh's heart was **hardened <2388>**, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.* <sup>14</sup>*Then the LORD said to Moses, Pharaoh's heart is stubborn; he refuses to let the people go.* Nowhere does it say that God made his heart *more* stubborn! God did not make Pharaoh act against his own will. Contrarily, he allowed Pharaoh to act in accordance with his own will. There is another word used in the whole picture:

**Hardened:** Strongs #3513 kabad (kaw-bad'); or kabad (kaw-bade'); to be heavy, i.e. in a bad sense (burdensome, severe, dull) or in a good sense (numerous, rich, honorable; causatively, to make weighty (in the same two senses)

**Here are some uses of this word:** Exodus 8:15: (KJV) *But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he **hardened <3513>** his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.* So, Pharaoh made his heart weighty - he paid attention to what he truly desired. He gave his heart the weight of the matter. Exodus 10:1: (KJV) *And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have **hardened <3513>** his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him: So God made Pharaoh's heart weighty - God paid attention to what Pharaoh truly desired. Deuteronomy 5:16: (KJV) **Honour <3513>** thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. What does that have to do with anything? The word for *honour* here is the exact same word for *hardened*! In the same way we should make our parents weighty - give honor to - pay attention to their desires. God honored Pharaoh's heart, allowing it to be what drove the circumstance. Did God make Pharaoh act against his will? Absolutely not. On the contrary, God honored Pharaoh's will. **Why all the "useless details" about sacrifices and rituals in the books of the Law?** First, let's cite a New Testament verse which we will come back to: 1 Corinthians 5:7*



**The mundane details of Leviticus, *Why I am no Longer a Christian, YouTube.com***

*After finishing Exodus, I moved onto Leviticus. I was dismayed to find that the book was filled almost entirely with rules about how to do sacrifices. What overwhelmed me was the amount of detail God put into explaining how to do the sacrifices and offerings. One set of verses from the second chapter of Leviticus reads:*



Leviticus 2:1-2,4-5,11 *Why would God care about such mundane details?*

(Source: Biblical commentator C.T. Russell)

Overall: This is a picture of setting forth Christ's perfect human character and conduct. (Our ears should now be on high alert that if this is a New Testament picture, we would expect the details to be rich and important!) This is probably representing offerings of praise and worship. Fine flour: There was no roughness or unevenness in Jesus' character.

Frankincense: Representing praise, heart adoration.

Leaven: represents sin, so we would not want leaven mixed with the flour.

This is a picture of Christ - unleavened (without sin); mixed with oil (the Holy Spirit); baked in an oven (the heat of trial), and so on. All of a sudden, we see a highly impactful spiritual reason for this detail. There are lessons in the Old Testament that are understood by God's children but it takes a lifetime to learn. Every week we at Christian Questions learn something new in study, and that is the glory of all of this.



**Old Testament and New Testament didn't seem connected, *Why I am no Longer a Christian, YouTube.com***

- *When I had started reading the Bible from cover to cover, I expected to see the lessons of the Holy Spirit that had been taught to me confirmed through Scripture. Instead I was finding the Old Testament to be, at best, almost completely unrelated to them, and at worst, antithetical to them.*

Hebrews 10:1-4: Hebrews tells us that they had those sacrifices that atoned for their sins each and every year. Those sacrifices could not actually take away sin, but the sacrifice of Jesus did. So they were a picture of what was coming. You cannot teach the end of a lesson at the beginning, for all of the details are missing.

**What about Judas? Was he truly sorry for his treachery against Jesus?**



**Judas in Acts 1-18, *Why I am no Longer a Christian, YouTube.com***

*One of my favorite verses from Acts 1:18 was the reward he got for his wickedness. Judas bought a field. There he fell headlong, his body burst open, and all his intestines spilled out. While it was violent and horrible, the greed and total lack of remorse that he expressed in the passage showed that Judas deserved this death. The Holy Spirit had given me an image of his death, of Judas walking into the field and falling forward suddenly, his intestines gruesomely exploding from his abdomen. This was evidence of God's justice and palpable wrath against the wicked. Judas had thought he had gotten away, but God had tangibly and forcefully struck him down. After a few evenings of reading, I finally reached the end of Matthew where Judas betrayed Jesus. I looked forward to reading Matthew's account of God's wrath against the wicked and remorseless Judas. I finally reached the point where I expected that to happen in Matthew 27:5. "So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself."*

In reality, it did not contradict the account in Acts. Rather, it contradicted his emotional picture that he painted around the verse in Acts. The uncomfortable intestine part, we believe, happened after he hung himself, so there is no contradiction. Acts says he bought a field with the money from his wickedness, but in the Matthew verse, it says he gave the 30 pieces of silver to the chief priests. Matthew 27:3-5 **Repent:** Strong's #3338 *metamelomai* (*met-am-el'-lom-ahee*); to care afterwards, i.e. regret:

To care afterwards is not to actually repent of what you did; it just didn't work out the way you wanted it to. This is in contrast to another type of "repentance:" **Repent:** Strong's #3340; to think differently or afterwards, i.e. reconsider (morally, feel compunction):  
1) to change one's mind, i.e. to repent 2) to change one's mind for better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins

There is a difference between regretting what you did and to change one's mind for better. It is a totally different word. The word used for Judas showed that he regretted the action but was not actually repentant. **An example of this "fuller" repentance:** Acts 17:30-31: Judas was humiliated and regretted the way it turned out, so he committed suicide.

The Bible is complicated and that is what makes it valuable! There is a value at learning and mastering a craft. The Scriptures are very deep. We need to look at the context, the symbols, and the details. Part III will be coming in a few more weeks! When you have questions about the Scriptures, we need to think, how can we learn? How is the Bible right?

***Should you NOT be a Christian?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!***