

Exposing Some Myths Surrounding The Bible

‘Do not pay attention to myths and legends and endless genealogies, which promote useless speculations, rather than acceptance in faith of God’s administration and the divine training that is in faith’ (1 Timothy 1:4).

The Bible is a very complex, spiritual book that can only be fully understood by those who have a spiritual mind. ‘God is a Spirit; a Spiritual Being and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth’ (John 4:24). To the unbeliever, the fact of Jesus’ divine birth, the cross and His resurrection from death all seem absurd and foolish. ‘For the message of the cross is sheer absurdity and foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the manifestation of the power of God’ (1 Corinthians 1:18).

Most certainly the Bible is for everyone, and anyone who is able to read, can read the Bible. The simple things in the Bible can be understood by anyone who reads it, but the deep spiritual meanings are hidden from unbelievers unless God Himself opens their spiritual eyes so they can understand. ‘Then He opened up their minds to understand the Scriptures’ (Luke 24:45). Unless God opens our spiritual eyes and ears we can’t fully understand what is written. Many Christians have trouble understanding what God is really saying, as did the twelve apostles. ‘But they understood nothing of these things; His words were a mystery and were hidden from them, and they did not comprehend what He was telling them’ (Luke 18:34). As a consequence of their inability to comprehend the spiritual meanings hidden deep within the pages of the Bible, many non-believers and lay-preachers have written stories, legends and myths about the Bible that are logical in their unspiritual minds, but are so silly, God Himself laughs at them. So-called ‘experts’ write stories that undermine the scriptures to ‘prove’ that the Bible is just a nice ‘story book’, but every Word written in the Bible was spoken by God to the writers, who were told to write everything down for future generations. Every Word was ‘God-breathed’ (2 Timothy 3:16). The Lord is completely unimpressed by the attitudes of the people who refuse to accept Him and listen to His Word. ‘He Who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord has them in deep derision, and in supreme contempt He mocks them. He speaks to them in His deep anger, and troubles them in His fury’ (Psalm 2:4 & 5). ‘Behold, they speak insults and lies with their mouths, for they think, “Who hears us?” But You Lord, laugh at them’ (Psalm 59:7 & 8).

There are Christian preachers who fancy themselves as prophets and teach false doctrines, yet the people they indoctrinate hold onto their errors and continue to teach them as fact. What does the Lord say in His Word about false prophets and their false doctrines? ‘The time is coming when people will not tolerate sound doctrine, but having ears itching for something pleasing, they will gather to themselves one teacher after another, chosen to satisfy their own liking and to foster the errors they hold, and will turn aside from hearing the truth and wander off into myths and man-made fictions’ (2 Timothy 4:3 & 4). There are many more scriptures that deal with false doctrine. Jesus said to watch out for false prophets who come in sheep’s clothing; or in other words, they pass themselves off as Christians, but lead many astray (Matthew 7:15; 24:11). So now, let’s look at some of these myths and false teachings.

Myth: The New Testament was written in Greek.

Truth: This would have to be the most ingrained myth of all, because it has been preached as fact for more than 1,500 years. The Old Testament and the New Testament were both written in Hebrew by Hebrew speaking Jewish men. The Lord gave the job of teaching the world about Himself, the heavens and His laws, to the Jewish people, and He said He

would never give the task of speaking His oracles to another nation or another people; and that would include another language. For more information on this topic, please read the sermon titled 'The whole Bible was written in Hebrew' on this website.

Myth: The meanings in the Bible have been lost in translation.

Truth: The Lord is the Author of the Bible and He is the Author of all languages on earth and in heaven. He would not allow too many discrepancies to occur in His spoken Word. There are nuances within the Hebrew language that are meaningless in other languages, but the truth of the scriptures, and the promises in the scriptures are clear for everyone to see. For an unbeatable translation of the Bible, it is better to go back to the original language – Hebrew. We can buy a Bible translated directly from Hebrew to English – and of course that would be the best one to study. Other translations are good, but logically, not as good as the language in which the scriptures were originally written.

Myth: The scriptures were handed down via word of mouth.

Truth: Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, but the Lord told him exactly what to write (Exodus 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; Numbers 33:2). Moses did not write his own thoughts, he wrote God's thoughts. After Moses, Joshua wrote everything down (Joshua 24:26), then Samuel (1 Samuel 10:25), then Shemaiah, the Levite scribe (1 Chronicles 24:6); Ezra wrote the book of Ezra. By the time of Ezra, the five books of Moses were several hundred years old, yet Ezra still had the books and used them (Ezra 7:6). In the original Hebrew text, the book of Nehemiah is actually part of the book of Ezra. If we turn back to 2 Kings 22:8 to 11 and 2 Chronicles 34:15 to 19, we see that King Josiah had the Book of the Law of Moses read out to him, hundreds of years after the death of Moses. The book of Psalms was written by various authors. It is believed Solomon wrote most the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon. Isaiah was told to write in a book (Isaiah 30:8), then a scribe named Baruch wrote on a scroll, everything Jeremiah told him to write (Jeremiah 36:4, 18, 27 & 32; 45:1). Later Jeremiah himself, wrote in a book (51:60). Jeremiah also wrote Lamentations. Ezekiel drew the design and wrote down precise measurements of Jerusalem (Ezekiel 4:1 then chapters 40 to 48). Daniel was told to seal up the words of his book (Daniel 12:4). The prophets named Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi all wrote and recorded the events surrounding real people as they occurred. None of this information was handed down by word of mouth. The history of births, deaths and marriages were carefully recorded, and that can be proven by reading Genesis chapters 5, 10 and 11; Matthew 1:1 to 17; Luke 3:23 to 38. Jesus read from the written words of Isaiah (Luke 4:17 to 20) and Jesus quoted the written Word when He overcame the devil with the Words from Deuteronomy using the prefix, "It is written" (Matthew 4:4, 7 & 10; Deuteronomy 8:3; 6:16 & 6:13). John was told to write down what he saw (Revelation 1:11). Even God has books in which He records everything we say and do (Malachi 3:16; Revelation 20:12). The Lord has a Book of Life that He has written since the foundation of the world. In that Book of Life, He has a list of names of believers (Exodus 32:32) and there are some people whose names were never written in the Book (Revelation 13:8; 17:8). That would be because, in the divine foreknowledge of God, He knew they would never turn to Him. Those who believe in Him and are worthy of heaven, have their names in that Book of Life (Luke 10:20; Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 21:27). Those who reject God, have their names blotted out of the Book of Life (Exodus 32:33; Deuteronomy 9:14; Psalm 9:5; 69:28). If those same people repent and turn back to God, He rewrites their names back into His Book of Life, or 'grafts' them in again (Romans 11:23). On Judgement Day these books will be opened to reveal everything we have done and said, and whether or not we are to be accepted into heaven (Revelation 20:12 & 15).

Myth: Evolution is scientific fact.

Truth: The tri-une God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit decided together to create the world and make it habitable (Genesis 1:1 & 2). Throughout all the universe, only the earth is fit for habitation (Isaiah 45:18). Although there is water on other planets (Psalm 148:4), the planets are not fit to be inhabited. Once the decision was made to create this earth, Jesus Himself, before He was born on earth, created everything. There is not one thing that exists that was not created by Jesus Himself (Genesis 1:26; John 1:1 to 3; Colossians 1:16 & 17). Men who deny the Lord with wickedness in their hearts, push the lie of the evolution theory to the world and mock those who believe the truth. These people are deceived and those who believe them are being led astray. Millions of children are being taught the lie of evolution in schools, and that makes it hard for them to accept the Gospel. The Lord says, if anyone makes a child (spiritually) stumble, it would be better for a millstone to be tied around his neck and tossed into the depths of the sea (Matthew 18:6; Mark 9:42; Luke 17:2). We need to show the world the wonderful wildlife that the Lord created, just as it is. Once people are born-again and their minds are renewed by the Spirit of God, and their eyes are opened to the truth, they can see through the lie of evolution and see that the Word of God is the truth. Evolution is not a scientific fact. It is a spiritual deception and there is no scientific evidence to support evolution. No 'missing link' fossils have ever been found, nor will they, because God created every animal exactly as they are. Evolutionist dating methods don't work and simultaneously, they ignore the earth dating methods that do work, which of course show that we live on a young planet earth. Sinful people will choose any alternative over the truth of creation, and then seek to mislead others, no matter what the scientific evidence really shows. These beliefs mislead people, and make it harder for them to view the Gospel as the only logical alternative. People refuse to accept that this earth was created for temporary habitation only, and will one day be destroyed by God Himself. Those who believe in Him, will live on a newly created earth, that has been created for eternal habitation (2 Peter 3:10 to 13; Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; Revelation 21:1). We ask these evolutionists: 'Men, why are you doing this? We are people who bring you the Gospel that you should turn away from these foolish and vain myths to the living God, Who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything that they contain' (Acts 14: 15).

Myth: A third of the angels rebelled with the devil and are on earth as evil spirits.

Truth: It is not written anywhere in the Bible, that any angels rebelled at the same time as the devil. What is written though, is that the angels sinned by leaving their proper place in heaven and for that reason, the Lord did not spare them but cast them into pits of gloom until Judgement Day (2 Peter 2:4), but it is not written that this took place at the same time as when the devil fell. The angels did not care for, keep, guard or hold on to their own first place of power but abandoned their proper dwelling place, and these angels are reserved in custody in eternal chains under thick darkness until Judgement Day (Jude 6). What they did wrong, was they chose to remove themselves from the special place the Lord had for them. Their sin was disobedience, which is rebellion against God's will. This erroneous myth is taken from Revelation 12:4 where it says the devil swept his tail across the sky and dragged down a third of the stars. The same verse says the devil was poised to devour the male Child, the One Who is destined to rule all the nations, and the new Christian church as it was brought to birth, which happened just 2,000 years ago. When John wrote the Book of Revelation, almost everything was to happen in the future. John knew Jesus well and John was one of those who helped bring the early church to 'birth'. Why then, do modern pastors say the first half of this verse is placed about 7,000 years ago or more, then the second half of the same verse places the time period at just 2,000 years ago. It simply does not make sense. If we study deeply Revelation 12:1 we see the stars on the 'woman's' head are in fact the twelve apostles, helping the 'woman' to give 'birth' to the

new church. In verse 6 we see that the 'woman' had special protection from God. If those stars were evil, they would not have been worn by the holy 'woman', nor would they have received any protection from God. If we look at Revelation 1:20, we see that the hidden meaning of the stars, are angelic messengers; one for each of the churches. The other myth within this myth is: If the devil had dragged the angels out of heaven, indicating that they were forced out, then they would not have been held accountable, and thus sent to hell. Also, there is no verse that says angels work with the devil. This myth has taken that verse in Revelation completely out of context, and the myth does not fit in with the surrounding verses.

Myth: The devil has rights.

Truth: The devil does not have any rights. If he did, he would have the right to do whatever he wanted with no consequences. The devil is nothing more than a created being that sinned and has been rejected by God, like all other sinners that will be rejected by God on Judgement Day. The only difference between him and earthly sinners, is he was given power because he was an anointed cherub (Ezekiel 28:14), and he was at one time blameless in all his ways (Ezekiel 28:15), but once the devil is in the lake of fire with all other sinners, he will no longer have any power, and people will look at him and wonder why they were so afraid of him because he will have a horrible end (Ezekiel 28:18 & 19). People will taunt him and say 'Have you become as weak as we are? Have you become like us? Is this he who made the earth tremble and who made the world like a wilderness?' People will be astonished at how humiliated he will be (Isaiah 14:9, 10, 15 to 17). For more information about this topic, please read the sermon on this website titled, 'Good and evil spirits'.

Myth: The devil was one of three archangels.

Truth: He was never an archangel. He was an anointed cherub (Ezekiel 28:14). Angels and cherubim are different.

Myth: Christians will be 'raptured off' in the middle of the great tribulation.

Truth: There will never be a rapture! The Bible speaks about the first resurrection that will take place after the great tribulation and that has been mistaken to be a 'rapture'. For more on this topic, please read the sermon on this website titled, 'The Rapture; Prophecy or Heresy?'

Myth: The Christian church has replaced the Jews.

Truth: That teaching is utterly false and is bordering on being anti-Semitic. The Jews will always be God's chosen people, and in Matthew 25:31 to 46, Jesus made it very clear, He considers the Jews His family and we will be judged according to the way we treat His family. For more information about this topic, please read the sermon on this website titled, 'Israel: God's chosen land; Jews: God's chosen people'.

Myth: Once saved; always saved.

Truth: That is only the truth as long as we continue to walk with God. If we slip away from God, then our penalty will be with the unsaved (Colossians 1:23; Hebrews 6:4 to 8).

Myth: Jesus went to the cross naked.

Truth: That is not so. The seamless linen robe the Roman soldiers gambled over, was an item of underwear, and Jesus would never have gone in public wearing only an under tunic, the equivalent of a modern-day short-sleeved singlet. It was winter when Jesus was crucified and the weather was cold (Mark 14:67; Luke 22:55; John 18:18), so logically, He would have been wearing more than just an undergarment. The scripture says He was

wearing five items of clothing. What clothing would Jesus have been wearing? He would have been wearing closed in sheepskin shoes, probably with knitted warm sock-like items made of wool to keep His feet warm. He would not have been wearing the light summer thongs that need to be tied with thin straps, as He wore at His baptism which took place 3½ years earlier, in the summer. Jesus would have been wearing a normal robe, similar to the ones Middle-Eastern men wear today; He would also have worn a woollen cloak, possibly with a hood attached, to keep His body and head warm. Most people do not realise that Jewish men wore linen underwear; white linen trunks reaching from the waist to the knees, underneath the linen undergarment (Exodus 28:42; Leviticus 6:10; 16:4). None of these items of clothing; shoes, robe, trunks or cloak, were mentioned individually in the four Gospels that describe the crucifixion, but they were mentioned collectively. The reason that particular seamless garment was mentioned in the Gospels, was to show the crucifixion was foreseen and prophesied about in detail, hundreds of years earlier, to prove that our Messiah, really is the Messiah, because everything that happened to Jesus was foretold (Matthew 26:56). Jesus knew He was about to be crucified, so it is not logical for Him to have gone without the normal set of clothing, which included two items of linen underwear; the trunks and the tunic. It is not once written that Jesus was naked on the cross. That is a conclusion that people have come to because they assume Jesus only wore the seamless undergarment because that is the only item of clothing individually mentioned; and they do not know their Bibles well enough to see that men wore underwear or that the seamless garment was not an item of outer clothing. Like everyone else in the world, Jesus would have been wearing underwear. Besides all this, it is written that Jesus was wearing His own clothes at the crucifixion. Initially, His clothes were stripped off Him (Matthew 27:28), then they put His own clothes back on Him before they led Him away to be crucified (Matthew 27:31; Mark 15:20). After He was crucified, they distributed His garments among them (Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:23 & 24; Psalm 22:18). We can see by what is written in John 19:23, that Jesus was wearing four garments, shared between four soldiers, plus the seamless robe = five garments; but the seamless robe was an underwear item, proving that Jesus was in fact, wearing underwear.

Myth: If a person obeys the Ten Commandments, they will go to heaven.

Truth: Most people don't even know what the Ten Commandments are to begin with. The Commandments were given to Moses as part of the Law. The laws were given to make people aware of sin (Romans 3:20), and they were part of the Old Covenant. Jesus came and fulfilled the Law (Matthew 5:17) and created a New Covenant of grace. Now that we live under the New Covenant, we must do things differently than the Jews, and Jesus pointed that out in the four Gospels, and He explicitly said He was bringing in the New Covenant with His blood (Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20). The New Testament writers agreed (1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:8 & 13; Hebrews 9:15; 12:24). Jesus went one step further and said we could break the Ten Commandments, not by sinful actions, but by sinful thoughts! (Matthew 5:27). Obeying the Ten Commandments is not enough to get into heaven. To get to heaven, Jesus said we must be born-again (John 3:7) and we must believe and be baptised (Mark 16:16).

Myth: Mary must intercede for us.

Truth: Mary was Jesus' human mother, but as a normal human person, she too had to be born-again to get into heaven. Mary was not divine – she was a normal lady. Her special calling – to give birth to our Messiah and raise Him in the Lord, was a calling no other person was ever called to do, and no other person will ever be called to do – but that does not mean she was divine. She died like all humans eventually do, and she is with the Lord

in heaven, but she cannot intercede for us. Our Intercessors are Jesus (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25) and the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:26 & 27).

Myth: The pope is the holy father.

Truth: Only God in Heaven is the Holy Father; Jesus called Him the Holy Father (John 17:11) and we are not to ever call any man 'father' in the same context as Jesus referred to God as Father (Matthew 23:9). The pope is the head of the Catholic church – he is not God's representative on earth. Jesus came as our Saviour, then He sent the Holy Spirit to us, and the Holy Spirit working within us, represents God on earth (Titus 3:5).

Myth: Saints help and protect us.

Truth: People cannot do anything for us once they are dead no matter how holy they were on earth. The word 'saint', in Catholic tradition has been reserved for a few outstanding examples of Christian living, but Godly people were called saints as early as in Moses' time (Deuteronomy 33:3) and that word has been used throughout the Bible since then. In the early Jewish based Christian church, 'saint' was commonly used to describe all believers in Jesus; every genuine, Holy Spirit filled believer was called a saint. The word 'saints' simply means 'God's People'. 'To all God's beloved ones, called to be saints and designated for a consecrated life ...' (Romans 1:7). We don't have to be a Catholic to be a saint – we have to be Godly, obedient to God and a genuine believer, and those people can be found in every Christian church.

Myth: Christians should meet together on Saturday.

Truth: The Jewish Sabbath, which starts on Friday night at sundown, was never given to Christians. Paul and the other apostles always met on the first day of the week because Jesus rose on the first day of the week – that was the day after the Sabbath – our modern-day Sunday, and there are many scriptures to verify that fact. After rising from the dead, Jesus Himself had the very first meeting with His disciples on the first day of the week – so Jesus started the brand new church with that very first meeting on a Sunday and the apostles continued with that theme (Matthew 28:1 & 6; Mark 16:2, 6 & 9; Luke 24:1 & 6; John 20:1 & 19; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2).

Myth: Christians should meet in private homes and not in churches.

Truth: The early church believers met in private homes because they needed to avoid detection and thus persecution, and it is easier to secretly go into homes than public places. Also; the early houses were often very large – big enough to accommodate many people at once, so the need to build or lease halls was not necessary. Remember, the early church was the people within a city – not people in a particular denomination, or who exclusively attended a particular building, as they are referred to today. The Ephesian church, for example, was all the believers who lived in Ephesus. The Lord doesn't mind where we meet together for fellowship; whether it be in a house, hall, garden, bus, chapel or cathedral – as long as it is in the name of the Lord and He is welcome to be in the midst (Matthew 18:20).

Myth: Eve's fruit was an apple.

Truth: It wasn't so much the fruit that lured Eve, but the look of the tree. 'When Eve saw that the tree was good for food and that it was delightful to look at, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit' (Genesis 3:6). It was the delightful sight of the tree that lured Eve. An apple tree is rather ordinary to look at, like most fruit trees. They have small green leaves, branches, a trunk – nothing special. We need to think about what fruit tree is delightful and desirable to look at. What tree does the next verse specifically speak about? 'Then they sewed fig leaves together' (verse 7). Where did they get fig leaves? Off

a fig tree. Unlike any other fruit tree, the leaves and the fruit appear at the same time, and the leaves grow very large indeed – bigger than a man's hand, and are bright and shiny. For the fig leaves to be large enough to sew, they would have to have been mature leaves, and the fruit would have been mature enough to eat. Fig trees are known to be an ancient fruit and were plentiful around the Middle East. It is the only area in the world where fig trees can grow wild, without any cultivation. The nourishing fruit is full of calcium, phosphorous and iron; they are sweet and juicy. Apples, on the other, are a native to China – not the Middle East, and the original species can still be found in China. Apple trees have been highly cultivated over the centuries to produce the big, juicy fruit we see today. The original apple was a small fruit, like a sour crab-apple – and not desirable at all. If we put verses 6 & 7 together, we could come to the conclusion that the fruit Eve desired was a fig. The fig tree, laden with fresh, juicy fruit (good for food) and its beautiful big, shiny leaves (delightful to look at) could have been enough to lure her. Why did people associate the apple with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Because the Latin (Roman) word for evil is malum, and the word for apple can be either malum or a similar word – malus. In the 4th century AD, the word malum appeared in the Latin Vulgate translation of Genesis. Malum was used to describe the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and from that time onwards people associated the piece of fruit that Eve ate with an apple. There is one other strange event involving the fig tree that we can only wonder about. When Jesus saw a fig tree that was void of fruit because it was out of season, He spoke to the tree, cursed it and made it wither (Matthew 21:19 & 20; Mark 11:13, 14, 20 & 21). Why did He do that? What's the point? Jesus created the trees, so He would have known that there would not have been any fruit on the fig tree because it was out of season. There is no logical or scriptural explanation, why Jesus would do such an unusual thing as to curse a fruit tree! Even His disciples were left wondering. We don't know the exact reason either because the scriptures do not tell us, but we could imagine it could be because Jesus knew He was going to suffer terribly and die, to undo the curse on mankind, that Adam and Eve caused when they ate the fruit of the original fig tree. To put the curse on the tree, took the curse off mankind, and we know that is the reason Jesus left heaven to come to earth. If we look at His actions in that light, it all makes sense.

Myth: Only good people will go to heaven; sinners can't.

Truth: Nobody is good (Matthew 19:17; Romans 3:12). We are all sinners (Romans 3:23). Jesus said we all have to believe, be born-again and then be baptised if we want to enter into heaven (John 3:7; Mark 16:16). When people are born-again and have turned away from their old lives, and seek to obey God's commands to be holy, righteous, giving, sharing, kind and loving, that is when, over time, people become more God-like. They can be perceived as being 'good' people, but even Christians who have been believers for 50 years, are still sinners and have to frequently repent of their sin and confess their sins to God, just like everybody else. We are all sinners, saved by the grace and mercy of God, through the blood of Jesus, shed on the cross of Calvary. We can't be 'good' on our own; we need His help. We need the redeeming blood of Jesus to cleanse us from our unrighteousness and forgive us our sins (1 John 1:9).

Myth: There were three wise men who visited Jesus.

Truth: There were wise men who visited Jesus soon after He was born, but we don't know how many there were. The scriptures say they brought three gifts; gold, frankincense and myrrh, but there could have been two men, or there could have been twenty-two men. The Bible gives the exact number and names the gifts, not the exact number of men who brought those gifts (Matthew 2:1 to 16). The scripture says they came from the east. A country to the east of Israel was Babylon. During the days of the Babylonian Empire, thousands of Jewish people were forced from Israel to Babylon. Many eventually returned

to Israel, but just as many remained in Babylon, and their descendants still live there today. The wise men of the east were probably Jews from Babylon, descendants of the original Diaspora. The Bible does not say they were Pagans. They were waiting for their Messiah and King so they could worship Him. Pagans would not have been waiting for the Messiah, nor would they have referred to Jesus as their King. No Pagan would ever worship a Jewish baby! Nor would a Pagan, who were idol worshippers, be able to listen to and obey the voice of the Lord as they did. They were wise because they obeyed the warning of the Lord and took a different route back to their own country, which gave Joseph, Mary and Jesus time to escape into Egypt.

Myth: Mary was alone when she gave birth to Jesus.

Truth: Joseph was of the House of David, so he had to be registered in Bethlehem along with Mary, his wife (Luke 2:1 to 5). Because of the numbers of people who had to be in Bethlehem at that time, there was no room for Mary and Joseph in the inn. We need to keep in mind, that because Joseph was from Bethlehem, logically, so would his family be from there. Mary would have had assistance from the women in Joseph's family. It is so obvious, the male writers of the Gospel would not have thought it necessary to add such a footnote. The place where Jesus was born, would not have been a dirty, animal infested barn. The animals lived in a downstairs area to keep them safe and warm at night; the people lived in the houses upstairs. It is very likely, although not written, that Joseph and Mary stayed in a house belonging to members of Joseph's family. If the place was full of people, then the next best place would have been downstairs. We know that the animals were not in the downstairs area at that time, because the shepherds were watching their sheep outside (Luke 2:8). We know that Mary was actually in a house, because when the wise men visited, they went to the house (Matthew 2:11). We know that Mary had no baby clothes with her, because the angel made a point of saying Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes (Luke 2:12). If swaddling clothes had been the norm, they would not have needed to point that fact out to the shepherds. When the shepherds arrived, they were still staying in the place where Jesus was born – and there were many other people there too. We know that because they marvelled at what the shepherds told them (Luke 2:18). If the things the shepherds told them had been said to strangers, news would have travelled quickly, but if what the shepherds said, was said to Joseph's family, they would have taken it in their stride, and what Jesus said later in His ministry bears that out (Matthew 13:57; Mark 6:4; John 7:5). It was Mary who kept all these things to herself (Luke 2:19). She kept so quiet about the events surrounding Jesus' birth, it seems she didn't even tell her younger children, because they taunted Jesus about His ministry (John 7:3 to 10). Even Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist, was never told. He said he did not know Him as the Messiah until Jesus revealed Who He was (John 1:31).

Myth: Jesus was an only Child.

Truth: Jesus was Mary and Joseph's Firstborn (Luke 2:7). They had at least seven other children after Jesus was born. They were named Joses, a shortened version of Joseph, Simon, James and Judah, and there were 'all the sisters' indicating more than two sisters (Matthew 13:55 & 56; Mark 6:3). The women who were watching the terrible events of the cross when Jesus died, were Mary Magdalene; Mary, the mother of Jesus, James and Joses', and a woman named Salome (Mark 15:40). Later it seems, they were by the cross (John 19:25). When Mary Magdalene, with Mary, Jesus and James' mother, went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body, they had Salome with them (Mark 16:1), and another woman named Joanna (Luke 24:10). The scriptures say Joanna was the wife of Chuza, and she, along with Susanna ministered to Jesus during His ministry (Luke 8:3). Joanna and Susanna could possibly have been two of Jesus' sisters because these women were active in Jesus' life and in His ministry. They were at a distance, but close enough to watch

Him die, and Joanna went to anoint His body and saw the empty tomb, so it seems these women were closely related to Jesus. The closest family members were the ones who tended to a dead body. The only time a stranger dealt with someone who had died, was when there was no family to do it. What about Salome? She was the wife of Zebedee and mother of James and John. 'There were women looking from a distance who were of those who had accompanied Jesus, ministering to Him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses (Jesus' mother) and the mother of Zebedee's sons' (Matthew 27:55 & 56; Mark 15:40; 16:1). There were three women named Mary at Jesus' cross; Mary, Jesus' mother; Mary, Clopas' wife and Mary Magdalene. There was another woman identified as the sister of Jesus' mother Mary (John 19:25). Since we know that Salome was there, and she was the wife of Zebedee, then we can see that Salome and Mary were sisters. That would make James and John, the sons of Zebedee, the first cousins of Jesus. It would then make sense for Salome to ask Jesus to put his cousins on either side of His throne in the Kingdom of God (Matthew 20:21). It also makes sense then, that Jesus asked John to take care of His mother Mary (John 19:26 & 27). That will also explain why Jesus loved John so much and why they were so close (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7; 21:20). We know that James and John were the sons of Zebedee. This James was older than Jesus' brother James, because Jesus' brother was called James the Younger (Mark 15:40). James, son of Zebedee was killed with a sword (Acts 12:2), while James the Younger went on to write the book of James. John wrote the Gospel of John, plus the three epistles of John and the book of Revelation. Jesus' brother Judah wrote the epistle of Jude. Far from being an only child, Jesus was part of a large, close family.

Myth: Noah only took two pairs of each animal into the ark.

Truth: Noah took nine pairs of each animal into the ark. Of every clean, that is edible animal, Noah took seven pairs; of the birds, Noah took seven pairs and of beasts that were not clean, Noah took two pairs of each kind (Genesis 7:2 & 3). The sea creatures would have remained in the sea.

Myth: God gave us a free will.

Truth: God wants nothing less than total and absolute obedience; the type of obedience Jesus showed (Luke 22:42). If we had a free will, we could do whatever we wanted without incurring the consequences, and we know that is not the case. To prepare us for heaven, while we are here on earth, we need to learn how to be completely obedient to God, because His will is always done in heaven (Matthew 6:10). If we want to join Him in heaven, then we have to do His will on earth (Matthew 7:21). God calls many people and of those, He chooses just a few (Matthew 22:14). Whosoever of those who desire to obey God and come to Him (Revelation 22:17) must accept God's way of salvation. They will find the way to eternal life, but their lives on earth are very narrow and straightened, and only a few will find the way (Matthew 7:13 & 14). We did not choose to follow Him; He chose us; He called us to serve Him (John 15:16). Our lives must be that of absolute obedience, which will produce holiness and righteousness as we conform to His will and purpose (Romans 8:29). If we refuse to conform to His will, then God will bring about circumstances to break our will. Remember that God did not even spare the angels that disobeyed Him (2 Peter 2:4), and if we humans disobey God, then we face the same fate. It is nothing short of rebellion in the hearts of men who insist God gave us a free will.

We hope the truth will counteract the spread of all these myths.

Amen and God bless you.

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