

The Discerner

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A QUARTERLY EXPOSING
UNBIBLICAL TEACHING & MOVEMENTS

Volume 43, Number 3

July August September 2023

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"Hereby know we the spirit of truth
and the spirit of error" 1 John 4:6

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Cult Ministry

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WITH THIS ISSUE

Dear Discerning Reader:

Are you aware of what's going on in Kenya? In our first article, RAS President Steve Lagoon brings us news about a cult you might have not heard about.

Closer to home, it seems like almost everyone has at one time or another observed or participated in a marriage ceremony. The Bible reminds us of several Truths & Principles with respect to life, marriage, and children:

Genesis 5:2 He [God] created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created.

Ephesians 5:31 “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Accordingly, our second article was written by Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum. In logical progression, he examines *procedures and events associated with the ancient, typical Jewish wedding* (still practiced in the first century AD and beyond)—and then demonstrates how it sheds light on and mimics God-the-Father's program with respect to *the relationship between Christ as Bridegroom and the Church as His Bride* within the New Testament. An awesome read!

Our next article is an interesting feature in the New Testament gospels that Steve Lagoon calls (with all due respect) the *Teflon Jesus*. Despite the hate-filled efforts of each and every enemy of Jesus Christ—whether citizen(s), religious groups, soldiers, and/or amassed crowd—Steve illustrates how God's Sovereignty preserved Our Lord from peril time-and-time again. That is, until the day chosen on the Father's timetable

and by God's Sovereign Will and Design, when Jesus' obedient death at Golgotha initiated man's atonement and redemption at Calvary.

Our final article was written by Julian Stoltzfus titled *Powerless Absolution: Assessing the Christus Victor Theory*, which is a look at Christ's atonement of our sins.

Finally—ever fancied yourself to be 'on the level' with a Bible professor or scholar? *Not even a little bit?* Or wondered what some of the theological disciplines are—and what 'fields of study' present themselves—to those who pursue formal academic Bible studies? Whether you answer yes or no, we still invite you to enjoy our quiz—which for this quarter is titled *Theological Categories and Nomenclature*.

Blessings in Christ and on behalf of the RAS Board,

Douglas Steiner

THE DANGER OF CULTS

By Steve Lagoon

As a young man I worked at a local grocery store. One day as I was driving to work, I noticed a mother duck and seven or eight babies in tow, getting ready to cross the very busy highway. I quickly pulled to the side with the intention of driving the duckling family to safety.

But sadly before I could get there, they began to cross the highway. Then I noticed, to my horror, a big 18-wheeler truck coming fast. One minute there was Momma and her ducklings; the next moment, there were only their scattered remains all over the highway. I was sick to my stomach.

It has occurred to me through the years that that sad story was a perfect illustration of false teachers in the religious realm. Cult leaders and their false teachings are a danger both to one's earthly life and to their eternal well-being.

How many 1000's of Jehovah's Witnesses have died blindly following the Watchtower's prohibitions against organ transplantations and blood transfusions? Over 900 people were killed blindly following Jim Jones to his People's Temple in the jungles of Guyana and drinking his Kool-Aid on command. 76 died at the Waco cult of David Koresh and the Branch Davidians. Tragically, the parade of cultic death marches on.

When we think of the practice of fasting, we likely think of it as a spiritual discipline among believers who want to set aside for the moment the enjoyment of earthly pleasure, most often food, in order to focus devotion on God.

Concerning fasting, *The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* makes this interesting comment:

“Religious dicta concerning fasting range from Zoroastrianism, which forbade it, to Jainism, which teaches that the believer's goal is a life of passionless detachment culminating ideally in death by voluntary starvation.”¹

¹ Robert D. Linder, Fasting, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, Walter A. Elwell, Editor, Grand Rapids MI (Baker Book House, 1984), 406.

Amazingly, Jainism actually promotes fasting to the point of death (*Sallekhana*), believing self-starvation to be a lofty goal.

And now news has surfaced of a cult in Kenya that has caused the deaths of hundreds. The May 14, 2023, *Star Tribune* (page A-12), carried a story by Andrew Higgins of *The New York Times* entitled: “Kenya cult death toll tops 200.”

The adherents to this supposedly “Christian” group were taught that they would achieve salvation by starving themselves to death. Higgins reported:

“They were following the call of Paul Nthenge Mackenzie, a former taxi driver turned evangelist who, declaring that the world was about to end, marketed Shakahola to his followers as an evangelical Christian sanctuary from the fast-approaching apocalypse.”

Higgins continued:

“Instead of a Haven . . . the 800-acre property . . . is now a gruesome scene, scattered with the shallow graves of believers who starved themselves to death—or, as Mackenzie would have it, crucified themselves so that they could meet Jesus.”

And again:

“Some bodies showed signs of death by asphyxiation, strangulation or bludgeoning. Some had had organs removed . . . Hundreds more are still missing [in what] the Kenyan news media called the “Shakahola Massacre.”

This, and similar stories, are why Religion Analysis Service exists. We want to sound the alarm when cultic groups arise in the United States and around the world. Jesus warned that Satan is a thief that wants to steal, kill, and destroy ([John 10:10](#)). How sad that so many reject sound biblical teachings and are instead deceived by the twisted teachings of false teachers ([2 Peter 3:16](#)). The consequences are too often deadly!²

² As of August 3, 2023 the death toll has increased to 400 as reported by <https://www.mnnonline.org/news/death-count-passes-400-from-starvation-cult-in-kenya>

THE JEWISH WEDDING SYSTEM AND THE BRIDE OF THE MESSIAH

By Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum

In the Scriptures, the Church is depicted both as the body of the Messiah and as His bride.

Regarding the latter, the thrust of all New Testament passages is that she is a betrothed bride who is not yet joined to her Husband, the Messiah.

Within the context of the Church, one must distinguish between the visible and the invisible church. The invisible church is composed of all true believers, whereas the visible church can be composed of both believers and unbelievers.

A clear definition of the invisible church can be deduced from [Colossians 1:18](#), [Ephesians 2:11–16](#), [1 Corinthians 12:13](#), [Acts 1:5](#), and [Acts 2](#) (in combination with [Acts 11:15–16](#)). Summarizing these five passages, the bride of Messiah is composed of all true believers from Pentecost in Acts 2 until the Rapture. Once she has been raptured, the bride will experience the marriage of the Lamb.

To fully understand what this event involves, one must first understand the background of the Jewish marriage system at the time of Yeshua's first coming. A thorough examination of this system provides a better understanding of the believers' special relationship with Messiah, and it explains the future aspects of church history. As will be seen, the Jewish wedding system involved five distinct steps.

1. The Arrangement

The first step in the Jewish wedding system was the arrangement, during which the father-of-the-groom made the arrangements with the father-of-the-bride for the marriage and paid the bride price. The timing of the arrangement varied. Sometimes, it occurred when both the bride and the groom were still children. Other times, it occurred at least one year before the marriage itself. Often the bride and groom did not even meet until their wedding day.

The application of this step in the Jewish wedding system to the bride-of-the-Messiah is that God the Father—the Father-of-Messiah-the-Groom—made the arrangement and then paid the bride price. The bride price was the blood of His Son. This is seen in two passages of

Scripture, the first of which is [Ephesians 5:25b](#): *Messiah also loved the church, and gave himself up for it.* The second passage is [John 3:16a](#): *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.*

By giving up His Son and by shedding the blood of His Son, God the Father paid the bride price, and thus the arrangement was sealed with blood.

2. The Preparation

The second step in the Jewish wedding system was known as the preparation. This was the period of the betrothal. It lasted for at least a year but could also have lasted for many years, especially if the arrangement was made when the bride and groom were only children.

During this time, the bride was prepared to take on the role of a wife. Furthermore, she was observed for her purity. The betrothal had to last a minimum of a year because this time span allowed at least a full nine months to pass to make sure that the bride was a virgin at the time of the betrothal. If she gave birth before the year was up, it demonstrated that she was in a state of immorality.

The application of this stage to the Church is that the bride is even now in the process of being perfected for the Groom. Two passages deal with this fact. In [2 Corinthians 11:2](#), Paul stated: *For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Messiah.*

Paul explained that the Church has been *espoused* or betrothed to *one husband*. The goal is that she might be presented *as a pure virgin* to the Messiah. She is now in the period of preparation when the bride is being prepared to become a fitting wife for her husband. When the wedding day comes, she will be presented as *a pure virgin* to the Messiah.

In [Ephesians 5:26–27](#), Paul further detailed the process of sanctification, which the Church is currently undergoing. According to [verse 26](#), this process involves the following points: *that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word.*

The term “sanctify” means “to set apart” or “to be set apart.” The Church is being set apart for the Messiah to eventually be presented as a pure virgin to Him ([2 Corinthians 11:2](#)). The means of sanctification is *by the washing of water with the word*. This phrase does not refer to water baptism but to the water of the Word of God. The Church is being cleansed by the Word of God. As she becomes more and more conformed

to what the Scriptures teach, she becomes more and more that pure virgin to be presented to Messiah.

[Verse 27](#) provides the purpose of this process of sanctification: *that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish*. The purpose is to present the bride as a *glorious Church*.

This is just another way of saying what was stated in [2 Corinthians 11:2](#), namely, that the intent of the sanctification process is to present the Church as a pure virgin to Messiah. The four characteristics of a glorified church are as follows:

1. The Church will have no *spot*, meaning there will be no outward defilement.
2. There will be no *wrinkle*, meaning there will be no evidence of age.
3. The Church will *be holy*, meaning she will eventually reach full sanctification.
4. There will be no *blemish*, meaning there will be no inward defilement.

The Church will be declared glorified at the Judgment Seat of the Messiah. At that time, the wood, hay, and stubble of each believer will be burned, while the gold, silver, and precious stones will be purified by the fire of that judgment. More will be said about this event in the discussion of the next step in the wedding system.

The final verse to consider in the context of the preparation of the bride of Messiah is [Ephesians 5:29](#): *for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Messiah also the church*. Paul revealed the way that the Church is being made glorious: She is being nourished, built up, and given strength. Furthermore, the Church is being cherished, meaning that she is receiving care with warmth and tenderness.

Two thousand years have passed since God the Father paid the bride price. The period of betrothal or preparation will end with the next step in the Jewish wedding system: the fetching of the bride.

3. The Fetching Of The Bride

The third step in the Jewish wedding system was known as the fetching of the bride. This event occurred a year or more after the marriage had been arranged and the bride price had been paid. It ended the period of preparation.

The bridegroom would go to the home of his soon-to-be wife in order to pick her up and bring her to his own home. It was the father of the groom who determined the timing of the fetching of the bride. Prior to the groom's leaving, he had to already have a place prepared for her as their abode.

The application of this step to the bride of the Messiah will be accomplished by the Rapture of the Church. The main Scripture for the Rapture is [1 Thessalonians 4:13–18](#):

But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Yeshua died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Yeshua will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Messiah shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

This passage describes the course of the Rapture. In verses [13–15](#), Paul answered a question that was raised in Thessalonica: Do believers who have died miss out on the benefits of the Rapture?

Apparently, while Paul had been with the Thessalonians, he had taught some truths concerning the Rapture as it related to the living but not to the dead. But now, some believers had passed away, and those they left behind were distressed by not knowing what the future had in store for them. So, Paul comforted the bereaved family members with the truth that dead believers will not miss out on the benefits of the Rapture; in fact, they will receive them first.

Then in verses [16–17](#), Paul spelled out the chronological sequence of the Rapture *in seven stages* to show why this is true (vv. [16–17](#)).

1. First, the Messiah will come out of the heaven of heavens and descend into the atmospheric heavens. In doing so, He will enter into the realm of the home of His bride.
2. Second, the Lord's descent will happen *with a shout*. The Greek word used is that of a command of a military leader who comes out of his tent and issues an order. One day, the Chief Commander will

come out of His heavenly tent and give the order for the resurrection and the translation to occur.

3. Third, the Lord's descent will also happen with the voice of the archangel. Angels are often used to put God's plan into motion. Michael the archangel will be used in the case of the Rapture. The content of what the voice says is not stated. But if known military procedure can be applied to this situation, then this is simply a repetition of the original order. The sub-commander repeats the order (the "shout") of the chief commander. Yeshua will give the command for the course of the Rapture to begin, and it is Michael's task to set it into motion, so he will repeat the command.¹
4. Fourth, the Lord's descent will also happen *with the trump of God*. The sound of the trumpet was used as a summons either to battle or to worship. With Michael's repetition of the command, the trumpet will sound and thereby trigger the Rapture itself. Thus, this trumpet will serve as a summons for the plan to go into motion.
5. Fifth, *the dead in Messiah shall rise first*. This is the resurrection, and it is why dead believers will not miss out on the benefits of the Rapture. To the contrary, they will begin to enjoy the benefits of the Rapture first.

The expression "in Messiah" limits the resurrection at the time of the Rapture to those who were baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body, which only began in [Acts 2](#) [i.e. The Church Age]. Thus, this resurrection of dead saints will be limited to church saints only. The Old Testament saints will be resurrected at a later point in God's prophetic program.

6. Sixth, *then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them to be caught up in the clouds*. The resurrection of the dead church saints will be followed by the translation of the living saints.
7. Every believer without exception will be removed from the earth and will be united with the Lord Yeshua in the heavens. The living believers will be caught up with the dead ones. The expression "to be caught up" is the source of the term "rapture." The Greek word used in [1 Thessalonians 4:17](#) is *harpazo*. When the verse was

¹ RAS Editorial Note: Not all scholars, denominations, Bible students hold this position. There are various reasons. Some of the most prominent are: (a) There are additional archangels/"chief princes" in heaven (e.g. Bible [Daniel 10:13](#), Apocrypha (e.g. [Tobit 12:15](#)), as well as some historical/modern Church Age doctrines and teachings) that support seven or more archangels—so [1 Thessalonians 4:16](#) does not have to be, nor can it be exclusively interpreted, as Michael; (b) Michael the archangel is often, if not always, associated with God's Program regarding the nation of Israel (cf. [Daniel 12:1](#))—not the Church Age which ends by Rapture; (c) The Lord Himself is sometimes understood to be speaking directly through the archangel instead of an archangel who "repeats" the order of Messiah (Christ).

translated into Latin, the word *rapio* was used. The English word “rapture” comes from this Latin source.

8. Seventh, the raptured saints will *meet the Lord in the air: so shall we ever be with the Lord*. Both the resurrected dead believers and translated living believers will meet the Messiah in the air. Once they have been united with Him in the air, they will permanently remain with Him and return with Him into heaven, as already promised in [John 14:1–3](#).

It is after the fetching of the bride into heaven that the final point of cleansing and sanctification will come. This final point has already been mentioned. In [1 Corinthians 3:10–15](#), Paul describes the judgment seat of the Messiah, when the wood, hay, and stubble will be burned away and the gold, silver, and precious stones will be purified. According to [1 Corinthians 15:50–58](#), the church will indeed be glorified because, at that point, mortality will put on immortality and corruption will put on incorruption.

4. The Ceremony

The fourth step of the Jewish wedding system was the ceremony. It was conducted in the home of the groom. Only a few, usually the immediate family and two witnesses, were invited to come in and observe the wedding ceremony.

The application of this fourth step to the Church as the bride of the Messiah is that there will be a marriage ceremony in heaven. The main Scripture that describes this step is [Revelation 19:6–8](#):

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

These verses make three main points. First, *the marriage of the Lamb is come* ([v. 7](#)). This describes the marriage ceremony of the Lamb, which will occur in heaven just before Yeshua’s second coming. Second, *the wife has made herself ready*. She is now glorified. There is no spot, no wrinkle, no blemish, nor any such thing on her anymore. Third, *she is arrayed in fine linen, bright and pure*. The fine linen is interpreted as representing *the righteous acts of the saints*.

This shows that by this time, the sanctification process is complete, the Judgment Seat of Messiah is over, and the Church is indeed a pure virgin. Now, she is being presented to the Messiah at the wedding ceremony.

5. The Marriage Feast

The marriage feast is the fifth step in the Jewish wedding system. Often, this feast lasted for seven days. While only a few people were invited to the wedding ceremony, many more were invited to celebrate the marriage of the son.

The application of this step to the Church as the bride of Messiah is that the marriage feast will take place on earth.² In fact, it will initiate the Messianic kingdom. Among the guests will be three groups that will not have participated in the wedding ceremony but will be invited to the marriage feast.

1. The first group will be composed of Old Testament saints who are resurrected after the Tribulation [period] ([Isaiah 26:19](#); [Daniel 12:2](#)). In [John 3:28–30](#), John the Baptist considered himself to be neither part of the groom nor part of the bride but rather part of a third category called *the friend of the bridegroom*. The friends of the bridegroom are the Old Testament saints.
2. The second group is the Tribulation saints who will be resurrected after the second coming ([Revelation 20:4–6](#)).
3. The third group will be the regenerated nation of Israel, meaning those Jews who survive the Tribulation and come to faith in Messiah Yeshua. The invitation to the wedding feast will be sent out just before Messiah's second coming ([Revelation 6:9, 11–16](#)).

The Home Of The Bride

The sixth and final step of the Jewish wedding system concerns the home of the bride. Traditionally, the groom was responsible for providing a suitable home for the bride, and he got this home ready during the preparation stage.

The application of this step to the Church as the bride of Messiah is seen in [John 14:1–3](#), where Yeshua said that He was going to heaven to prepare a place for His bride. This place is known as the New Jerusalem. All believers will move into this home in the eternal order.

² RAS Editorial Note: Some believers, as well as denominations, predominately believe the Marriage Supper takes place in heaven.

The main Scripture is [Revelation 21:9–22:5](#), where John was able to see the home of the bride. In verses [9–10](#), he stated:

And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spoke with me, saying, Come hither, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

According to [verse 9](#), the bride is now *the wife of the Lamb* because by this time the wedding ceremony and the wedding feast will have taken place, and the Lamb and His bride will have been married a thousand years. In [verse 10](#), John next saw the eternal home of the bride, the New Jerusalem.

Conclusion

As this discussion of the relationship between the Jewish wedding system and the Church as the bride of Messiah has shown, some things have already been fulfilled; other things are in the process of being fulfilled; and again others will occur in the future. The conclusion is that there is a great future for those who have believed in the Messiahship of Yeshua.

About the Author

Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum holds a B.A. degree from Cedarville University in Hebrew and Hellenistics, a Th.M. degree in Hebrew and Old Testament Studies from Dallas Theological Seminary, and received his Ph.D. from New York University with the completion of his dissertation, *Israelology: The Missing Link in Systematic Theology*. He is the founding director of Ariel Ministries and a much-respected biblical authority in evangelical and Messianic circles.

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THE TEFLON JESUS MOTIF: DIVINE ESCAPES DISPLAYING THE AUTHORITY OF MESSIAH JESUS

By Steve Lagoon

As a young man, fresh out of high school, I attended Oak Hills Bible College in Bemidji, Minnesota. I recall vividly an incident that occurred in one of my classes. We were discussing Jesus' return to his hometown of Nazareth described in [Luke 4:14–30](#). The pericope closes with the enraged people of Nazareth driving Jesus out of town with the intention of throwing him over a cliff to his death ([Luke 4:28–29](#)). But despite the vicious intent of this angry mob, Luke explained: "*But he [Jesus] walked right through the crowd and went on his way*" ([Luke 4:30](#)).

Although new in the faith, and a bit timid, I raised my hand, and asked the teacher with all earnestness how it was that Jesus was able to pass unscathed through such a mob? My professor, John Sanders¹, without missing a beat, answered me: "You see Jesus had this ray gun!" His response got a big chuckle from the class, but fell short of being a satisfying answer.

And if we think about it, this isn't the only time Jesus made a timely escape from those who sought to lay hands upon Him. So much so that we can give such gospel episodes a name. I will call them *The Teflon Jesus Motif*.

Teflon Jesus Motif

What, then, is the Teflon Jesus Motif? It is the name of situations in the ministry of Christ Jesus in which His enemies have the intention to oppose Jesus in some fashion, but find themselves simply unable to carry out their intentions.

The pericope we just examined is a perfect illustration of Teflon Jesus. The townspeople were in a rage and had every intention of killing Jesus. They had Him outnumbered and surrounded, and yet He passed right through their midst without incident or harm.

What does this indicate? I suggest that it shows Jesus' divine authority and control. Christ's hour had not yet come, and so God miraculously prevented this mob action against Jesus.

¹ John Sanders is perhaps best-known as the author of *No Other Name: An Investigation into the Destiny of the Unevangelized*, Eerdmans, 1992. He is a well-known advocate of Open Theism and Inclusivism.

Opposition From Jesus' Own Family

Let us consider another example, this time from the Gospel of Mark, in which Jesus' own family attempted to take charge of Him:

"Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, 'He is out of his mind.'" ([Mark 3:20–21](#))

It appears that Jesus' family was embarrassed by the controversy surrounding His public ministry. In his gospel, the apostle John explained, *"For even his own brothers did not believe in him"* ([John 7:5](#)). They, therefore, came to take charge of Jesus. Jesus used the occasion to teach what it means to be a part of His spiritual family ([Mark 3:31–35](#)), but there is no indication that His family was successful in restricting Jesus' activities.

Jesus Was Constantly Ministering Under The Threat Of Death

It is fair to say that Jesus was living under the threat of death during much of His ministry. When Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath early in His ministry, already Mark tells us *"Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus."* ([Mark 3:6](#))

After a controversy erupted following Jesus' healing of a long-time lame man on the sabbath, John explained: *"For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him..."* ([John 5:18](#))

After describing Jesus' cleansing of the temple, Luke states:

"Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words." ([Luke 19:47–48](#))

After raising Lazarus from the dead, a miracle that the leaders of the Jews could not deny, and the reports of which were spreading like wildfire throughout Jerusalem, the Jewish leaders gathered together in an emergency council, and conspired against Jesus' life: *"So from that day on they plotted to take his life."* ([John 11:53](#))

Yet none succeeded in their hate-driven obsession against Jesus, until His hour had come.

More Examples Of Teflon Jesus In The Gospel Of John

Nowhere is the Teflon Jesus motif more prominent than in the Gospel of John.

John 7

In the seventh chapter of John, Jesus is teaching in Jerusalem and His powerful ministry was creating debate amongst the crowds as to whether Jesus was, in fact, the Messiah:

At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, 'Isn't this the man they are trying to kill? Here he is, speaking publicly, and they are not saying a word to him. Have the authorities really concluded that he is the Messiah? But we know where this man is from; when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from.' Then Jesus, still teaching in the temple courts, cried out, 'Yes, you know me, and you know where I am from. I am not here on my own authority, but he who sent me is true. You do not know him, but I know him because I am from him and he sent me.' At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come." ([John 7:25–30](#))

Did you catch that? John explained that those in opposition to Jesus “tried to seize him” and yet, “No one laid a hand on him” ([John 7:30](#)).

Yet the debate over Jesus’ Messianic identity raged on:

Still, many in the crowd believed in him. They said, 'When the Messiah comes, will he perform more signs than this man?' The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering such things about him. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest him." ([John 7:31–32](#))

The Jewish leaders were not going to depend any longer on amateurs to seize Jesus, and so they sent temple guards to arrest Him, but without success. In [John 7:37–43](#), John described Jesus as continuing his public teaching on ([v. 37](#)) “the last and greatest day of the festival.” He again explains the reaction: “Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him.” ([John 7:44](#))

John also provide us with the culmination of this episode and the frustration of the Jewish leaders at the failure to apprehend Jesus:

“Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and the Pharisees, who asked them, 'Why didn't you bring him in?' 'No one ever spoke the way this man does,' the

guards replied. ‘You mean he has deceived you also?’ the Pharisees retorted.” ([John 7:45–47](#)).

Can we imagine the beauty of this scene? Several attempts have been made to seize Jesus, but none had succeeded. Jesus just kept on teaching the people.

Finally, the trained Jewish temple guards are sent take charge of Jesus. And yet, when they arrive on the scene, they find themselves unable to carry out their orders. Moreover, they find themselves spellbound by Jesus’ teachings and the power and authority behind them! So much so that they returned to their quarters, having failed their mission, and suffered under the virulent assault of these supposed godly leaders of the Jews.

John 8

In John chapter eight, Jesus is engaged in heated conversation with the Jewish leadership. In the midst of the controversy in which Jesus has exposed the wickedness of the Jewish leaders, He openly declared: “Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word.” ([John 8:37b](#)).

John explained that after this harsh encounter, the Jews proved Jesus correct: “*At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.*” ([John 8:59](#)) Those Jews were enraged and so wanted to kill Jesus on the spot, but it wasn’t His hour, and so He just slipped away leaving the Jews to toss aside the stones in disgust.

John 10

In the tenth chapter of John, Jesus was teaching at the Feast of Dedication. Again a controversy broke out concerning His identity and whether he was, in fact, the Messiah. Jesus proclaimed: “*I and the Father are one.*” ([John 10:30](#)) John explained the reaction:

“Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus said to them, ‘I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?’ ‘We are not stoning you for any of these,’ replied the Jews, ‘but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.’”
([John 10:31–33](#))

The Jews had picked up the stones and were ready to execute Jesus. Yet Jesus remained in perfect control of the situation.

He continued to engage the Jews in conversation, challenging them to justify their violent intentions. He concluded by proclaiming: *“That you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.”* ([John 10:3](#)) And John concluded the scene, *“Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.”* ([John 10:39](#)) They just can’t seem to harm Teflon Jesus!

John 18: The Hour Had Come

Finally, we arrive at the time when Jesus’ hour had arrived. He had completed His teaching ministry, and was ready to complete His mission; to drink of the cup the Father had prepared for Him; to die for the sins of the world. And so He would no longer resist the enemies arrayed against Him. The apostle John tells the story:

“When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was a garden, and he and his disciples went into it. Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples. So Judas came to the garden, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and the Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons. Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, ‘Who is it you want?’ ‘Jesus of Nazareth,’ they replied. ‘I am he,’ Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) When Jesus said, ‘I am he,’ they drew back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, ‘Who is it you want?’ ‘Jesus of Nazareth,’ they said. Jesus answered, ‘I told you that I am he.’” ([John 18:1–8](#))

Notice the care and preparation the Jewish leadership undertook to arrest Jesus. It looks to us like overkill. But they have been thwarted by Jesus too many times, and so were intent on succeeding in their plot to destroy Jesus.

But even while surrendering to His enemies, it was apparent that Jesus was still in control; for even as they arrested Him, they bowed to His divinity. *“Who is it you want?”* Jesus asked. They replied, *“Jesus of Nazareth.”* Jesus answered: *“I am he.”*

“When Jesus said, ‘I am he,’ they drew back and fell to the ground.” ([John 18:6](#)) In the Greek, “I am he” is “ego Eimi” or “I am.” This is the divine name harkening back to [Exodus 3:14](#) (LXX) and the self-identifying title Jesus used in [John 8:58](#) which caused the Jews to be in an uproar, and then pick up stones to stone Him.

At the divine name, the amassed crowd of soldiers, officials, Pharisees, and even Judas Iscariot prostrated themselves before the King of Kings, if but for a moment. It was as though the Father was saying, 'You will arrest Him, but only because I allow it.'

The Good Shepherd Lays Down His Life For The Sheep

Indeed, John had already explained this same truth. No one was going to take Jesus' life; He was going to voluntarily lay it down:

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep...The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father." ([John 10:11, 17-18](#))

But What About The Cross?

Some might object to the Teflon Jesus model in the light of the cross. Doesn't the cross negate the premise of the Teflon Jesus motif or model? Surely His enemies did finally prevail.

My response is that going to the cross was Christ's intention from the start. It was His purpose for coming into the world. "*Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!*" ([John 1:29](#))

But the cross was going to take place on God's timetable and not man's. Jesus knew what His divine mission was and it would be carried out to the fullest. Only then would Christ willingly lay down His life for the sheep.

That is, Jesus would be Teflon Jesus while training His disciples for their future leadership of Christ's Church. And when that mission was complete, and the time was right, He would fulfill His mission of dying for the sins of the world on Calvary's Cross ([John 3:16](#)).

And so was the cross really a defeat for Christ Jesus? It may have appeared to be so to those not having the divine perspective. But the fact is that the cross was the greatest victory ever won, for on it Christ atoned for the sins of the whole world:

"He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he

made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” ([Colossians 2:13–15](#))

The Victory Of Christ’s Resurrection

And tied to the cross is the victory of the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Can there be any greater escape than rising from the dead? Jesus predicted it on the third day after His death, and all the powers of Hell could not prevent it!

Conclusion

We have noted a feature present in all the gospels, and most especially in the Gospel of John. This Teflon Jesus Motif describes those situations in the life and ministry of Christ Jesus in which He appeared to be in peril, with His enemies intending to seize and/or kill Him. And yet, they were thwarted time and time again.

What do we learn from these episodes? I suggest that they show Divine Authority and that in every moment God was in control, moving all things according to His purposes. The cross would occur on God’s timetable and would finally result, not in defeat, but in the ultimate cosmic victory!

EVOLUTIONARY SCIENCE AND FRAUD

By Steven Lagoon

We are often told by supporters of evolution that the scientific data overwhelmingly proves Darwin's theory. However, the scientific evidence simply does not support their over-confident and misleading claims. For instance, Philip Johnson, a leader in the Intelligent Design movement, in his book, *Darwin on Trial*,¹ has shown decisively that the fossil record refutes evolutionary claims, and is more consistent with the creationist model.

But a less known issue in the Creationist/Evolution debate is the problem of distorted, misleading, and fraudulent claims made by Evolutionists to support evolution. Evolution is simply accepted as fact and everything must be interpreted in line with this filter, regardless of the evidence. Likewise, anything that would appear to support the Creation model must be suppressed and debunked.

The file drawer problem

The Creation scientist Steven Austin provided an example of this which he called *the file drawer problem*:

“We all filter data through a grid of prior assumptions. This unavoidable bias in the selection and interpretation of data has been called the file drawer problem. That is, data which give unexpected or inconsistent results may be stored away in a file drawer for later investigation rather than being published. This can occur in all disciplines.”²

Brown and Willis explained how this bias has affected evolutionary scientific research:

“Compton's Encyclopedia bears witness to the fact that commitment to the theory of evolution has tainted objectivity in dealing with the evidence: ‘During the period of these discoveries, most scientists believed in the Darwinian theory . . . they overlooked or denied the validity of several finds which did not fit into this view.’ As examples, the Encyclopedia lists a fully human jawbone

¹ Phillip E. Johnson, *Darwin on Trial*, Downers Grove IL (InterVarsity Press, 1991).

² Steven Austin, *Discordant Radioisotope Dates*, chapter in *Thousands, Not Billions: Challenging an Icon of Evolution, Questioning the Age of the Earth*, Dr. Don DeYoung Editor, Green Forest AZ (Master Books, 2005) 110.

found at Foxhall, England in 1867 in Ice Age surroundings, and a fully human skull found at Galley Hill near London in 1888 in the ‘wrong’ kind of rock.”³

Phillip Johnson showed how the bias affected academia:

“Suppose that paleontologists became so committed to the new way of thinking that fossil studies were published only if they supported the theory and were discarded as failures if they showed an absence of evolutionary change. As we shall see, that is what happened. Darwinism apparently passed the fossil test, but only because it was not allowed to fail.”⁴

Douglass Groothuis agreed:

“Moreover, scientist qua scientists are not exempted from unfair biases and prejudices. Although scientists claim to follow the evidence wherever it leads, they are just as susceptible to dogmatism, propaganda, egotism, and authoritarianism as any religious believer supporting a religious cause.”⁵

The history of Science provides ample evidence to support Groothuis’ claims. Further, examples of fraud in the name of evolution abound. We could start with drawings of embryos by Ernst Haeckel that were offered in science textbooks for decades to prove evolution, even though they were known to be fraudulent.⁶

Fraudulent examples of human evolution

Let us consider, briefly, a few notorious examples of fraud advanced to deceive the public into accepting evolutionary theory.

Piltdown Man Hoax

David Brown and Tom Willis commented on the ramifications of the Piltdown hoax:

³ David W. Brown & Tom Willis, *Ape Men: Science or Myth*, Cleveland MO (The Creation Science Association for Mid-America, 1992) 22. The Compton’s Encyclopedia cited was from 1957. Vol. “M”, page 80.

⁴ Phillip E. Johnson, *Darwin on Trial*, 48.

⁵ Douglass Groothuis, *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith*, Downers Grove IL (InterVarsity Press, 2011) 304.

⁶ Jonathan Wells, *Icons of Evolution: Science of Myth? Why Much of What We Teach About Evolution is Wrong*, Washington D.C (Regnery Publishing, Inc, 2000) 81–109.

“For over 40 years, ‘Piltdown Man’ was the premier ‘proof’ of human evolution . . . Over 500 doctoral theses were written on Piltdown Man. Piltdown even furnished the principal ‘evidence’ for human evolution at the famous Scopes trial. In the 1950’s, however, it was discovered that someone had taken an ape jawbone and filed down the teeth to make them more human looking, then stained it with potassium chromate to make it look as old as other fossils which had been found at the site . . . It does serve as an example of how wrong the experts can be.”⁷

Yes, for 40 years, Piltdown Man was presented as proof positive of evolution, appeared in the school textbooks to brainwash generations of students, and any that questioned it were ridiculed as buffoons, country bumpkins and religious extremists, devoid of any scientific understanding. And it was all a hoax!

Nebraska Man

Brown and Willis also described the fiasco of Nebraska man:

“In 1922, professor Davidson Black found a tooth in Nebraska which he believed to be the remains of an early human. Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, of Columbia University, Director of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, gave Black’s claims his complete endorsement, claiming he could see characteristics intermediate between man and ape in the tooth. Pictures of the brutish ‘Nebraska Man,’ concocted by fertile imaginations, appeared in popular magazines . . . During the Scopes trial, Osborn declared that ‘the earth has spoken to William Jennings Bryan directly from his home state of Nebraska, furnishing positive proof of man’s primate ancestry.’ However, further excavations at the site revealed that tooth was not even that of a primate, but belonged to an (apparently) extinct species of pig!”⁸

The example of Archaeoraptor and fraud

In an interview with Lee Strobel, Jonathan Wells blew the whistle on fraud being perpetrated to support evolutionary theory:

⁷ David W. Brown & Tom Willis, *Ape Men: Science or Myth*, Cleveland MO (The Creation Science Association for Mid-America, 1992) 13.

⁸ David W. Brown & Tom Willis, *Ape Men: Science or Myth*, Cleveland MO (The Creation Science Association for Mid-America, 1992) 14.

“Paleontologists, however, have been on a frenzy to try to locate an actual reptilian ancestor for birds. Driven by an all-consuming commitment to evolutionary theory, their zeal has resulted in some recent embarrassments for science. Wells was more than willing to regale me with some examples. ‘A few years ago, the National Geographic Society announced that a fossil had been purchased at an Arizona show that turned out to be ‘the missing link between terrestrial dinosaurs and birds that could actually fly,’ he said. ‘It certainly looked that way. They called it Archaeoraptor, and it had the tail of a dinosaur and the forelimbs of a bird. National Geographic magazine published an article in 1999 that said there’s now evidence that feathered dinosaurs were ancestors of the first bird.’ ‘That sounds pretty convincing,’ I said. ‘Well, the problem was that it was a fake!’ Wells said.’ A Chinese paleontologist proved that someone had glued a dinosaur tail to a primitive bird. He created it to resemble just what the scientist had been looking for. There was a firestorm of criticism—the curator of birds at the Smithsonian charged that the Society had become aligned with ‘zealous scientists’ who were ‘highly biased proselytizers of the faith that birds evolved from dinosaurs.’ Then Wells made a blanket statement that struck me at the time as being too cynical. ‘Fakes are coming out of these fossil beds all the time,’ he said, ‘because the fossil dealers know there’s big money in it.’”⁹

Lee Strobel then provided a quote from the widely respected ornithologist Alan Feduccia that supported Well’s claims about fraud:

“Ornithologist Alan Feduccia, an evolutionary biologist at the University at North Carolina at Chapel Hill [in an interview in *Discover* magazine said] Archaeoraptor is just the tip of the iceberg. There are scores of fake fossils out there, and they have cast a dark shadow over the whole field. When you go to these fossil shows, it’s difficult to tell which ones are faked and which ones are not. I have heard there is a fake-fossil factory in Northeast China, in Liaoning Province, near the deposits where many of these recent alleged feathered dinosaurs were found. Asked what would motivate such fraud, Feduccia replied: ‘Money. The Chinese fossil trade has become big business. These fossil

⁹ Jonathan Wells, from an interview in Lee Strobel, *The Case for a Creator: A Journalist Investigates Scientific Evidence That Points Toward God*, Grand Rapids MI (Zondervan, 2004)70.

forgeries have been sold on the black market for years now, for huge sums of money.”¹⁰

Eventually, in a letter written by Lewis M. Simmons at the invitation of the editors of the National Geographic Magazine, the fraud was conceded:

“It’s a tale of misguided secrecy and misplaced confidence, of rampant egos clashing, self-aggrandizement, wishful thinking, naïve assumptions, human error, stubbornness, manipulation, backbiting, lying, corruption, and, most of all, abysmal communications.”¹¹

Sadly, the general public is seldom informed when such fraud is exposed. But we can take comfort that in the end, truth will prevail to the glory of God!

¹⁰Alan Feducia, *Discover* magazine interview as quoted by Lee Strobel, *The Case for a Creator: A Journalist Investigates Scientific Evidence That Points Toward God*, Grand Rapids MI (Zondervan, 2004)70–71.

¹¹Lewis M. Simmons, *Archaeoraptor Fossil Trail*, *National Geographic*, Vol. 198, No. 4, October 2000, p. 128, as quoted by Walt Brown, *In the Beginning: Compelling Evidence for Creation and the Flood*, Phoenix AZ (Center for Scientific Creation, 2008) 340.

POWERLESS ABSOLUTION: ASSESSING THE CHRISTUS VICTOR THEORY

By Julian Stoltzfus

The nature of Christ’s atonement is becoming a common discussion. It’s an important one, one upon which our salvation rests. What exactly did Christ do in His death that freed us from sin? Bound up in this is our understanding of what it is that separates us from God. What interferes with full fellowship? What prevents God from embracing all of His creatures in His love? What must we be saved from if we are to be saved to God?

Increasingly popular is a theory called the Christus Victor theory of the atonement. Its proponents claim that Christus Victor is the classical understanding of the atonement, one held by the majority of the Church until Anselm of Canterbury developed a substitutionary model of the atonement in the 11th century.

According to the Christus Victor view, Christ's death is primarily about His defeat of the powers of darkness. Man is captive to Satan, and he can only be freed through Christ's victory over Satan. Man's captivity in the realm of darkness keeps Him from God. Salvation, then, is about his being rescued from Satan. Christ's death is a display of divine power, Christ showing that He is greater than even death itself. Through His power, He breaks the bonds of sin, Satan, and death, and frees us from captivity.

Christus Victor rests heavily on the work of Gustaf Aulen, whose work was published 60 years ago in the book entitled Christus Victor. He quotes extensively from the early church, showing that they frequently referred to Christ's work in the atonement as a victory over Satan. He believed this was the prevailing view of the early church, thus he called it the classical view of the atonement. His work has had an outsized effect on the church, reintroducing ideas of the atonement that have been foreign for several centuries. The question is, are his claims legitimate?

Far from being the long-held position of the church, Christus Theory as it is in circulation among us is a modern invention. Crucial to this understanding is realizing that, while the early church said things that sounded very much like Christus Victor, they also were quite comfortable using substitutionary language to describe the atonement. Poor scholarship allows one to prop up Christus Victor ideas while ignoring the other atonement themes also present in the early church writers. They certainly taught Christus Victor themes, but they did so alongside a full-orbed definition, one that included substitutionary atonement and justice satisfaction.

Distinct from the early church's view of the atonement, *the modern definition of Christus Victor is opposed to any kind of wrath-bearing, justice-satisfying, sin-propitiating understanding of the atonement.* Thus it overturns the biblical gospel by turning our attention away from our personal culpability, rather looking to Adam's mistakes and Satan's dominion over us to excuse our sinful behavior.

In Christus Victor, our problem becomes, not our sin, but our situation. We are victims, not villains. We sin because we are enslaved to Satan, not because we are sinners. Christus Victor has no mechanism for absolution of sin; rather, we need freedom from captivity.

This blame-shifting redefinition is little different than Adam's game in the garden. Rather than own our sin, it excuses it. Rather than maintaining God's perfection, it softens it to minimize the severity of our own rebellion. *But salvation does not come to those who excuse*

their sin. Rather, we must “confess our sins.” When we own our sin, confessing it in brokenness and contrition, God is “faithful and just to forgive us our sins.”

Does Christus Victory highlight some biblical themes? Certainly. We are freed from Satan’s power through Christ’s death. But is freedom from Satan what the atonement is primarily about? Certainly not. Rather, freedom from Satan’s clutches is accomplished by Christ’s payment for our sins.

As is laid out so clearly in [Hebrews 2](#), Christ through death destroyed him who had the power of death, the devil. What in His death destroyed the devil’s work? His substitution. He was made like us so He could “make propitiation for the sins of the people” ([Hebrews 2:17](#)). This propitiation is none other than His substitutionary death. He “put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” ([Hebrews 10:26](#)). His death delivers us from sin. [And] delivery from sin delivers us from Satan. Far from Christus Victor (which makes sin an effect of bondage to Satan), this is clear that bondage to Satan is an effect of our bondage to sin. Kill sin, and the bondage is broken.

Similarly, Colossians 2 says that Christ has “forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it” ([Colossians 2:13–15, NKJV](#)). We see here that forgiveness comes through Christ’s paying the penalty for our sins. That payment was made on the cross. And the effect of this victorious substitution is that the principalities and powers (Satan and his demons) are disarmed and humiliated. Trespasses are forgiven through Christ’s death. By this we are not only freed from sin and death, but also from Satan.

So yes, Christ is the victor over sin, Satan, and death, but He is victorious precisely because He has paid our debt. He died for us, bearing our sin, taking our place, becoming sin for us ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)). It is this justice-satisfying substitution that frees us from Satan’s iron grip. But without substitution, there is no freedom. Christus Victor’s denial of substitution removes the substance of the gospel. All that’s left is powerless absolution.

Is Christus Victor an acceptable atonement theory? When it is used to sidestep the just wrath of God, it is not. When it is used to minimize our sin, it is not. When it is used as a cop out, it is not. When it is used in contradiction to the clear teachings of Scripture, it is not.

Christus Victor is gaining ground because it depicts a softer, kinder God, not one of wrath but one of grace, not one of justice but one of mercy. Yet without wrath, grace is no grace. Without justice, mercy is no mercy. Minimizing God's perfections has only the effect of minimizing His salvation. It is precisely because sin deserves eternal punishment that salvation is so marvelous.

It is because God is perfect and holy that we are amazed to be brought into His presence through Christ. Sinners with the Sinless. Unholy with the Holiest of All. We were soiled and detestable. Only through Christ's substitutionary death can we be made clean.

*Julian Stoltzfus is a conservative Mennonite at author of numerous articles of interest in defense of God's word and sound theology. You can read his blog at [Theological Touchpoints.com](http://TheologicalTouchpoints.com) Julian's articles regularly appear in the excellent journal: *The Sword and Trumpet* (Swordandtrumpet.org).*

BIBLE QUIZ: THEOLOGICAL CATEGORIES AND NOMENCLATURE.

1. What is the area of theological studies pertaining to 'last things' and 'prophetic' issues?
 - a. Eschatology
 - b. Apocryptology
 - c. Aromatherapology
 - d. Pan-Millennialism
2. What branch of theology is devoted to an organized and logical expression of biblical teachings?
 - a. Liberation Theology
 - b. Synthetic Theology
 - c. Systematic Theology
 - d. Process Theology

3. What branch of theology is devoted to the development of Christian theology over the course of Church Age history?
 - a. Developmental Theology
 - b. Neo-Orthodoxy
 - c. Archeotheology
 - d. Historical Theology
4. What is the theological study of Ecclesiology devoted to?
 - a. Miracles
 - b. Things related to the Church/Body of Christ
 - c. Things related to the Bible/Word of God
 - d. Understanding why people fall asleep during sermons
5. What is the theological study of Anthropology devoted to?
 - a. The use of grammar in biblical interpretation
 - b. Textual Criticism
 - c. The role of men in church leadership
 - d. Themes related to mankind, including man's fall and original sin
6. Which is not a field of Millennial Eschatology?
 - a. Post-Millennialism
 - b. Pre-Millennialism
 - c. Amillennialism
 - d. Hyper-Millennialism
7. Soteriology is the branch of theology devoted to:
 - a. Spiritual salvation
 - b. Angels and demons
 - c. The effects of sin
 - d. The Soters, the cute little bunny-like critters that roamed ancient Palestine, and their mythological associations with the fall of man
8. Which is not a primary subject of Christology?
 - a. Christ's human nature
 - b. Christ's divine nature
 - c. Canonical order of Bible Books
 - d. Christ's Virgin Birth
9. Hermeneutics is the study of:

- a. Influence of Greek Mythology on early Christian theology
- b. Ways to harmonize New Testament teachings
- c. Ways and Means to effectively deliver sermons (preaching)
- d. Correct methods and principles for interpreting the Bible

10. Pneumatology is the study of:

- a. New things (contrasted with eschatology or last things)
- b. The study of Pneumatic drills used in biblical times
- c. The biblical study of the Holy Spirit
- d. Theodicies (Attempts at understanding the existence of evil and suffering)

Answers:

1a 2c 3d 4b 5d 6c 7a 8c 9d 10c

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