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# CANAANITE DNA AND THE BIBLICAL CANON

**JESUS  
GAVE  
HIM NO  
ANSWER**

**Atheism  
Associated with  
Immorality**

*Holy Bible*

**The Moon  
is a Witness**

**New Book**  
*God & Government*

# Canaanite DNA<sup>and the</sup> Biblical Canon

Dewayne Bryant, Ph.D.

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**A** PAPER published on July 27, 2017 sparked a series of headlines questioning the accuracy of the Bible. A study demonstrated that comparing the DNA of modern Lebanese with ancient Canaanites revealed a striking similarity between the two.<sup>1</sup> By comparing the genomes of five inhabitants of the city of Sidon (from roughly 3,700 years ago) with 99 persons living in modern Lebanon, researchers estimated that the genetic similarity between the two is about 93 percent. Based on these findings, it is argued by some that the Canaanites were not destroyed as the Bible alleges.

Headlines after the publication of the study ran with the story, with several of them stating flatly that

DNA evidence had proven the Bible wrong. David Klinghoffer, a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute, noted that numerous headlines (many of them originating in the United Kingdom) seemed to take a deliberate swipe at the Bible.<sup>2</sup> He listed a dozen headlines from various news outlets that directly challenged the truthfulness of the biblical account of the conquest.<sup>3</sup>

In an age where attention-grabbing headlines can determine the number of clicks an article gets—as well as the amount of potential revenue from advertisers—this allegation is no surprise. However, it does expose the stunning biblical illiteracy in society today. To be fair, it may have been that the authors of the news articles simply took the following statement from the study at face value:

[T]he Bible reports the destruction of the Canaanite cities and the annihilation of its people; if true, the Canaanites could not have directly contributed genetically to present-day populations. However, no archaeological evidence has so far been found to support widespread destruction of Canaanite cities between the Bronze and Iron Ages:

cities on the Levant coast such as Sidon and Tyre show continuity of occupation until the present day.<sup>4</sup>

Although the removal of the Canaanite population was commanded (Deuteronomy 20:17), numerous passages indicate the incomplete nature of the conquest (e.g., Joshua 17:12-13; Judges 1:27-33). One of the clearest failures recorded in the book of Judges is that the tribe of Dan in particular (or a large segment of it) remained nomadic instead of taking the territory allotted to it (Judges 18:1). The text indicates that this tribe had particular difficulties, later losing some of the land they had taken previously (Joshua 19:47).

The northernmost border of Israel's territory was found in the allotment given to the tribe of Asher, which included the cities of Tyre and Sidon (Joshua 24:24-31). The text states that the Israelites failed to take this territory, so that the people of the tribe of Asher "lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, for they did not drive them out" (Judges 1:31; 3:3). Both Sidon and Tyre seem to have remained as independent city states. King Hiram of Tyre made treaties with both David and Solomon many years after the conquest (2 Samuel 5:11; 1 Kings 5:1; 9:13). Later prophets denounced the Phoenician cities of Tyre<sup>5</sup> and Sidon,<sup>6</sup> treating them as foreign political entities. The Bible never indicates that the Israelites conquered these cities or killed their populations.

The Homeric epics of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* mention Sidon, known in the Bible as the home of Jezebel and



her father Ethbaal (1 Kings 16:31). Jezebel's royal seal—donated to Israel's Department of Antiquities in the early 1960s—identifies her as the “daughter of the king.”<sup>7</sup> The city of Sidon had a succession of kings and was powerful enough that the term “Sidonian” became virtually synonymous with the term “Phoenician.”<sup>8</sup> There is no indication—either historical or biblical—that the Israelites ever conquered the city.

Tyre was a powerful and wealthy city also, enough so that it was able to establish colonies throughout the Mediterranean. It is no coincidence that Tyre experienced a golden age beginning precisely at the time when the Bible indicates that its king made important trade agreements with David and Solomon.<sup>9</sup> Tyre had a long succession of kings who often ran afoul of more powerful nations. For instance, the famed Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III (747-727 B.C.) defeated a second Hiram of Tyre ruling in the eighth century.<sup>10</sup> Later, the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar plundered the city, which was subsequently razed by Alexander the Great in fulfillment of prophecy (Ezekiel 26).<sup>11</sup> The biblical portrayal of Tyre—including its wealth, its continual problems with other nations, and eventually its destruction—agrees with the ancient evidence.

The Bible and ancient inscriptions both indicate that Israel never defeated Tyre or Sidon, a fact that seems to have eluded some critics. That the modern inhabitants of Lebanon should share such genetic

similarity with their ancient ancestors should not be surprising. Phoenicia always remained independent of Israel despite any political or economic connections the two may have shared. Far from undermining the biblical text, the most recent findings concerning Canaanite DNA support the accuracy of Scripture.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> See Marc Haber, et al (2017), “Continuity and Admixture in the Last Five Millennia of Levantine History from Ancient Canaanite and Present-Day Lebanese Genome Sequences,” *American Journal of Human Genetics*, 101, August, [http://www.cell.com/ajhg/fulltext/S0002-9297\(17\)30276-8](http://www.cell.com/ajhg/fulltext/S0002-9297(17)30276-8).
- <sup>2</sup> David Klinghoffer (2017), “For Culturally Illiterate Science Reporters, Canaanite DNA Yields Occasion to Slap Bible Around,” <https://goo.gl/Pv3idN>.
- <sup>3</sup> E.g., Shivali Best (2017), “Bronze Age DNA Disproves the Bible's Claim that the Canaanites Were Wiped Out: Study Says Their Genes Live On in Modern-day Lebanese People,” <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-4733046/Canaanites-ancestors-modern-day-people-Lebanon.html>; Chris Graham (2017), “Study Disproves the Bible's Suggestion that the Ancient Canaanites Were Wiped Out,” <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2017/07/28/study-disproves-bibles-claim-ancient-canaanites-wiped/>; Ian Johnston (2017), “Bible Says Canaanites Were Wiped Out by Israelites But Scientists Just Found Their Descendants Living in Lebanon,” <https://goo.gl/6xXTCs>.
- <sup>4</sup> Haber, et al, p. 275.
- <sup>5</sup> E.g., Amos 1:9-10; Zechariah 9:3-4; Ezekiel 26:1-28:19.
- <sup>6</sup> Jeremiah 24:22; Ezekiel 28:20-24.
- <sup>7</sup> See Marjo C.A. Korpel (2008), “Fit for a Queen: Jezebel's Royal Seal,” *Biblical Archaeology Review*, <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-artifacts/inscriptions/fit-for-a-queen-jezebels-royal-seal>.
- <sup>8</sup> Philip C. Schmitz (1992), “Sidon” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday), 6:17.
- <sup>9</sup> H.J. Katzenstein (1992), “Tyre” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday), 6:687.
- <sup>10</sup> Edward Lipinski (2006), *On the Skirts of Canaan in the Iron Age: Historical and Topographical Researches*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 153 (Leuven: Peters), p. 187.
- <sup>11</sup> See Kyle Butt (2006), “Tyre in Prophecy,” *Reason & Revelation*, 26[10]:73-79, October, <http://apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=13&article=1790>.

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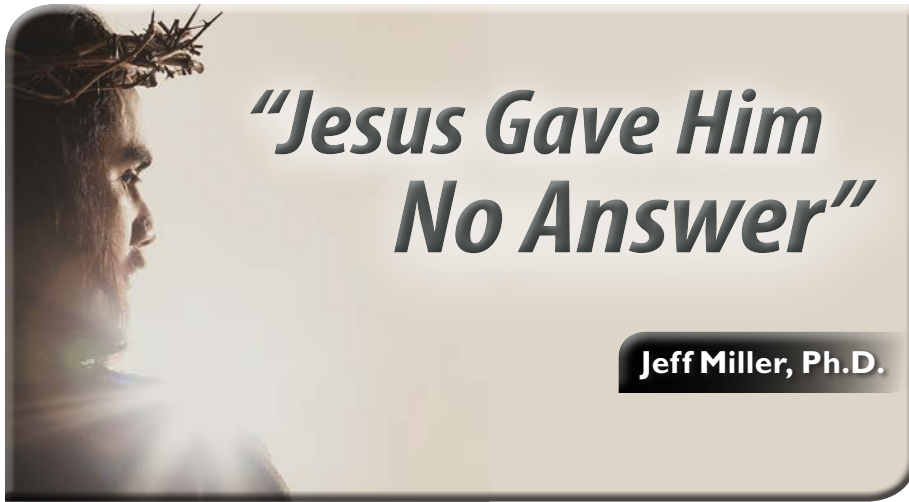
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# “Jesus Gave Him No Answer”

Jeff Miller, Ph.D.

Article In Brief... 

**The Christian apologist must be prepared to humbly but boldly contend earnestly for the faith at all times, and always in love. That said, Scripture indicates and Jesus demonstrates that sometimes the appropriate response to public attacks is not to respond at all.**

“**T**O err is human,” the poet rightly said, and apologists are humans. But as apologists, it is also inevitable that the writers and speakers for Apologetics Press will be unjustly criticized, viciously and publicly attacked, brazenly misrepresented, unethically plagiarized, or even outright lied about—and not infrequently. After all, Jesus predicted that persecution will come to those who attempt to speak the truth (John 15:18-20). From time to time, individuals will witness examples of such shocking behavior and ask us with incredulity, “Do you guys respond to that kind of behavior? And if so, how!?” Answers range from, “The best we can, though not always perfectly” to “sometimes better than at other times” to “not always in the wisest ways, but always with the desire

to defend the faith and trying to speak the truth in love.” The real question in our minds, however, is not “How do we respond?” but how does God tell us to respond to that type of persecution?

Jude 3 tells us that we are to “contend earnestly for the faith,”<sup>1</sup> but how? Jude 3 is a mandate, but it does not prescribe a manner. Scripture certainly has a lot to say about the attitudes we should have when we are publicly mistreated and the ways we should respond to people, making it clear that different people and situations often call for different approaches. While we should **always** speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), it is also true that sometimes love demands different approaches. The New Testament tells us repeatedly that *agape* love is fundamental to Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Without love, one simply can-

not be a Christian (1 John 4:7-8). That single motivation—to love—would govern every decision and action that a Christian takes, if he would be perfect. After all, according to the New Testament and Jesus, Himself, sin ultimately boils down to a lack of *agape*<sup>3</sup>—love towards God and our fellow man.

Gathering all of the relevant passages on *agape*, we learn that it can be defined in the following way:

Having such concern for the well-being of someone else that I am willing to unselfishly act on that concern for that person’s well-being, no matter who it is or the cost to me.<sup>4</sup>

Notice, then, that love is not a feeling, but a choice (1 John 3:18). If we were to summarize the definition of *agape* in one word, it would be **unselfishness**, and it is always manifested through some form of a selfless act.<sup>5</sup> That attitude encapsulates Who God is (1 John 4:7-8), while the opposite—being self-serving—is described as being demon-like (James 3:14-16). Truly, if we wish to be like God, we will unselfishly put ourselves aside and do what’s best for others, even when they are mistreating us.

That said, a common misconception about biblical love is that it can be defined solely as being gentle, tolerant, and without judgment. If one were to be anything else in his evangelism or defense of truth, he would be unloving and guilty of sin—according to the common misconception. In truth, biblical love is not always manifested gently,<sup>6</sup> with tolerance,<sup>7</sup> or without judgment.<sup>8</sup> In truth, different approaches are appropri-



ate at different times. Sometimes rebuking—an approach we would not generally deem gentle—might be necessary (Luke 17:3), while at other times admonishing/warning (Romans 15:14), edifying/building up (Romans 14:19), or exhorting/encouraging (Titus 1:9) are appropriate. Notice, however, that in all cases, love is the motivation: a desire to do whatever is necessary to help others be pleasing to God—whether through gentle pleading (Galatians 6:1) or through “tough love” (Hebrews 12:5-11; Titus 1:13). Further, boldness is certainly encouraged for evangelists (Acts 4:29), but it is to be tempered with humility (2 Timothy 2:25), prudence (Proverbs 22:3), and being slow to speak (James 1:19), as Peter learned the hard way on more than one occasion.<sup>9</sup> Knowing the best response for each situation would require more wisdom than any single human could have, which is why humbly gaining knowledge through experience (Proverbs 16:31), study (Proverbs 10:14), and counsel (Proverbs 11:14) is emphasized in Scripture.

**Preparation** for the day of persecution and challenges to your beliefs is also emphasized in Scripture. Peter reminds us to “always be ready to give a defense” (1 Peter 3:15), since there will be a day when a person will ask us why we have hope in God, if we are living as we should before them. So we should strive to “be ready, in season and out of season” (2 Timothy 4:2) to use whatever tactic might be appropriate in various situations—whether it be merely convincing

them of the truth, or rebuking, or exhorting another Christian. Such readiness takes diligence—incessant study and preparation (2 Timothy 2:15; Acts 17:11).

That said, Who better to study to learn how to respond to public persecutions and challenges than the Chief Apologist, Himself—Jesus Christ? After all, it is He Whom the Christian must emulate. Reading through the gospel accounts, watching how Jesus chose to re-



Jesus faces Pilate.

spond to His critics, is a fascinating practice. Jesus was never looking for a fight, but was always prepared to contend for the Faith and defend Himself when necessary, and chose to do so many times throughout His ministry. Typically, He did so seemingly dispassionately—using pure logic and reason.<sup>10</sup> The word used to describe Him in 2 Corinthians 10:1 is “meek”—the word often used to describe, not a wild

bull in a China shop, but a trained war horse: strength and fearlessness that is bridled or under control. Jesus recognized that He had ultimately nothing to lose by teaching the truth and, therefore, did not get “riled” up and respond defensively to skeptics and antagonists. That is not to say, however, that He never showed passion when the circumstance called for it; but He was always controlled in His responses, being fearless of the possible consequences. Oh that we all could emulate our Lord in this regard.

At times, we at Apologetics Press have been criticized for not responding to every comment on our Facebook page or choosing not to debate every person who wishes to engage us in a public debate (which apparently some do not realize happens often and would require several more full-time representatives than we have on staff). Of particular interest to those of us that study apologetics is the observation that, though Christ was always ready for a debate, He also knew when **not** to do so—whether because the timing was not right for a response, a response would be pointless (e.g., Matthew 21:27), or a response would even be detrimental to His ultimate cause. Just because a person challenged Him did not mean that He felt He needed to respond. Since the human inclination is to respond to every person, lest we be perceived as not having an answer and, hence, “losing the debate,” Jesus’ wisdom is awe-inspiring. In Matthew 7:6, while preaching the greatest sermon the world has ever heard, Jesus

(cont. on p. 116)



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warned His audience that some people do not care about the truth and are like “swine”—unworthy of the valuable information we might wish to impart. If we choose to proceed and reason with the “pigs,” they are likely not only to stamp on the valuable jewels we have given them, but they will likely stam-pede us as well. In Proverbs 26:4, Solomon admonished the wise, “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like him.” The principle is clear: if the person or people to whom we are talking are not genuinely interested in the truth, to spend time trying to convince them of the truth would

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be wasteful and potentially even dangerous or counterproductive.

In Matthew 10, Jesus again warned His apostles that there will be those who “will not receive you nor hear your words” (vs. 14). In such cases, they were not to continue pressing the issue, but rather, “shake off the dust from your feet” and move on—a practice which Paul and Barnabas implemented in their evangelistic journeys as well (Acts 13:51). With that principle in mind, it is noteworthy to see Jesus’ implementation of that principle in His own life. At times, He chose to respond to challenges, depending on the audience, but

at other times, He chose not to do so, in spite of how He might be perceived. For instance, when challenged by the chief priests and elders in the Temple to announce who gave Him authority to teach, after posing a question of His own, Jesus chose simply not to respond to their question (Matthew 21:23-27).

Surely the most notable example of Jesus practicing what He preached about remaining silent at times was what was prophesied about Him in Isaiah 53:7 regarding His crucifixion: “He was oppressed and He was afflicted, **yet He opened not His mouth**; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.” All four gospel records highlight Jesus’ refusal to respond to various attackers in the illegal trials leading up to His crucifixion.<sup>11</sup> Again, His willingness to remain silent when most would respond defensively was a manifestation of such superhuman self-control that Pilate “marveled greatly” (Matthew 27:14).

The principle is clear: there are times when not responding to attacks is the best course of action. We would do well to gain the wisdom necessary to recognize those moments. We pray that God will grant to all Christians in the perilous times in which we live the wisdom to know when to fight and when to remain silent, as well as the boldness to fight when the time calls for it.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> In 2 Timothy 2:24 the text says that “a servant of the Lord must not **quarrel**,” which commentators clarify as meaning not “striving contentiously” [*Jamieson,*

*Fausset, and Brown Commentary* (2012), WORDsearch Corp, Electronic Database.]. The ESV, therefore, translates the word “quarrel” as “quarrelsome” (i.e., looking for a fight). One can “contend” without being “contentious.”

<sup>2</sup> James 2:8; 1 John 3:13-18; 4:7; John 13:34-35; 1 Corinthians 13:1-3; 16:14; Colossians 3:14.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 22:36-40; Galatians 5:14; Romans 13:9-10.

<sup>4</sup> Galatians 5:23; Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:10; John 3:16; John 15:13; Matthew 5:43-48; cf. Endnotes 2 and 3.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 7:12; 16:24; Philippians 1:15-17; 2:3-8; 1 Corinthians 10:24; 2 Corinthians 5:15.

<sup>6</sup> Hebrews 12:6; Titus 1:13; Proverbs 15:10; 20:30; 27:5; Hosea 6:5. Consider Jesus’ behavior in John 2—overturning tables and making a whip of cords to drive the moneychangers and animals from the Temple. Consider also that sometimes loving a child involves physically striking him (Proverbs 13:24). Note that the term translated “gentle” in 2 Timothy 2:24 (*apiov*) means to be “kind toward someone”—a significant distinction in this case [William Arndt, F.W. Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker (1979), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press), second edition revised, p. 348]. The ESV, NIV, RSV, and NASB renderings capture this meaning. One can be kind to someone and simultaneously not necessarily be gentle, as the above passages indicate.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14; Titus 3:10; Romans 16:17; 1 Timothy 5:20.

<sup>8</sup> John 7:24; 2 Corinthians 5:10.

<sup>9</sup> John 13:5-9; Matthew 16:22-23; 17:1-5.

<sup>10</sup> Dave Miller (2011), “Jesus Used Logic,” Apologetics Press, <http://apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=11&article=3755>; Dave Miller (2011), “Is Christianity Logical? [Part I],” *Reason & Revelation*, 31[6]:50-59, <http://apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=12&article=3869>; Dave Miller (2011), “Jesus Was Logical,” Apologetics Press, <https://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=10&article=653&topic=71>; Dave Miller (2011), “Jesus Was Rational,” Apologetics Press, <http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=10&article=1245&topic=71>.

<sup>11</sup> E.g., Matthew 26:62-63; 27:13-14; Mark 14:60-61; 15:4-5; Luke 23:9; John 19:9.



# People All Over the World Associate Atheism with Immorality



**R**ECENTLY, *Huffington Post* writer Antonia Blumberg penned an article titled “Anti-Atheist Prejudice Is Entrenched Around the Globe, Even Among Atheists.”<sup>1</sup> In the article, she commented on research that appeared in *Nature* magazine.<sup>2</sup> The summary paragraph on the *Nature* Web site describing the research stated that “people in most—but not all—of these countries viewed extreme moral violations as representative of atheists. Notably, anti-atheist prejudice was even evident among atheist participants around the world.”<sup>3</sup> The researchers wrote,

Combined, these results show that across the world, religious belief is intuitively viewed as a necessary safeguard against the temptations of grossly immoral conduct, and atheists are broadly perceived as potentially morally depraved and dangerous. Viewed differently, people perceive belief in a god as a sufficient moral buffer to inhibit immoral behaviour.<sup>4</sup>

Blumberg wrote, “The study echoes the findings of a report by Pew Research Center, published in 2014, which found that majorities in 22 countries say a person must believe in God in order to be moral

and have good values.”<sup>5</sup> In truth, Charles Darwin recognized this when he stated, “A man who has no assured and ever present belief in the existence of a personal God or of a future existence with retribution and reward, can have for his rule of life, as far as I can see, only to follow those impulses and instincts which are the strongest or which seem to him the best ones.”<sup>6</sup>

At Apologetics Press, we have written extensively on the fact that the philosophy of atheism absolutely cannot provide a foundation upon which to build a moral framework.<sup>7</sup> It is true that atheists can behave in more moral ways than people who believe in God. But atheists cannot appeal to atheism to honestly explain or defend such moral behavior. Atheism cannot really even define the terms “moral” and “immoral.”

It is interesting that in Blumberg’s article she quoted Bart Campolo, an atheistic activist who stated, “We secularists, who pursue goodness simply because we recognize it as the surest way to flourish, need to get a whole lot better at compellingly articulating our own good news, and maybe even learn to make it sing.”<sup>8</sup>

Notice the sentiment behind Campolo’s statement. He sees morality as “the surest way to flourish.” But what happens when the morally right thing to do does not coincide with an individual “flourishing”? What happens when “doing right” means a costly sacrifice even to the point of death to help someone who might never respond in kind? You can see that even in the context of trying to make atheistic morality appear meaningful, Campolo only succeeds in showing that it is a “means to an end” way of life based on a foundation of self-preservation. Imagine what would happen if people made their moral decisions based only on what would help them “flourish.” Campolo’s articulation of atheistic morality helps us to see why the foundational tenets of atheism are distrusted around the world.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Antonia Blumberg (2017), “Anti-Atheist Prejudice is Entrenched Around the Globe, Even Among Atheists,” *Huffington Post*, <https://www.yahoo.com/news/anti-atheist-prejudice-entrenched-around-203055330.html>.
- <sup>2</sup> Will Gervais, et. al. (2017), “Global Evidence of Extreme Intuitive Moral Prejudice Against Atheists,” *Nature*, <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-017-0151?ncid=edlinkushpmg00000313>.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Blumberg.
- <sup>6</sup> Charles Darwin (1958), *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin*, ed. Nora Barlow (New York: W.W. Norton), p. 94.
- <sup>7</sup> Kyle Butt (2008), “The Bitter Fruits of Atheism, Parts 1&2,” *Reason & Revelation*, 28[7&8]:50-64, <http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=12&article=2515>; Eric Lyons (2011), “The Moral Argument for the Existence of God,” Apologetics Press, <http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=12&article=4101&topic=95>; Antony G.N. Flew and Thomas B. Warren (1977), *Warren-Flew Debate* (Ramer, TN: National Christian Press), pp. 15ff.
- <sup>8</sup> Blumberg.





**S**OME 3,000 years ago, the psalmist extolled the faithfulness of God:

Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; it shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky (Psalm 89:35-37).

The context of Psalm 89 pertains to the covenant and perpetuity of David's seed line. God assured him that his throne would be established even as the Moon is established in its continual, unchanging, reliable function. But God added an additional remark concerning the Moon, describing it as "a faithful witness in the sky."

Is this remark intended to remind David that the Moon serves as a witness to the Creator of the Moon? Was He saying that David could rely on God's covenantal promise since He is the Creator of the Moon? It is most certainly true that "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). The Moon, as well as the planets, Sun, and other stars all testify to the Source responsible

for their creation, causing right-thinking people to stand in awe at His wondrous works (Psalm 8:1-5). But why would the Moon specifically be said to be a "witness"? First, we must ascertain the precise meaning of "witness." The underlying Hebrew term means "witness, testimony, evidence" and refers to "someone who is witness to a fact or to an event, and who is able to confirm it in case of doubt."<sup>1</sup> Standard English dictionaries offer the following meanings:

*Cambridge Dictionary*: "a person who sees an event happening, esp. a crime or an accident."

*Dictionary.com*: "an individual who, being present, personally sees or perceives a thing; a beholder, spectator, or eyewitness."

*The American Heritage Dictionary*: "One who can give a firsthand account of something seen, heard, or experienced."

Witnesses, by definition, give "testimony," i.e., "firsthand authentication of a fact" (*Miriam-Webster*).

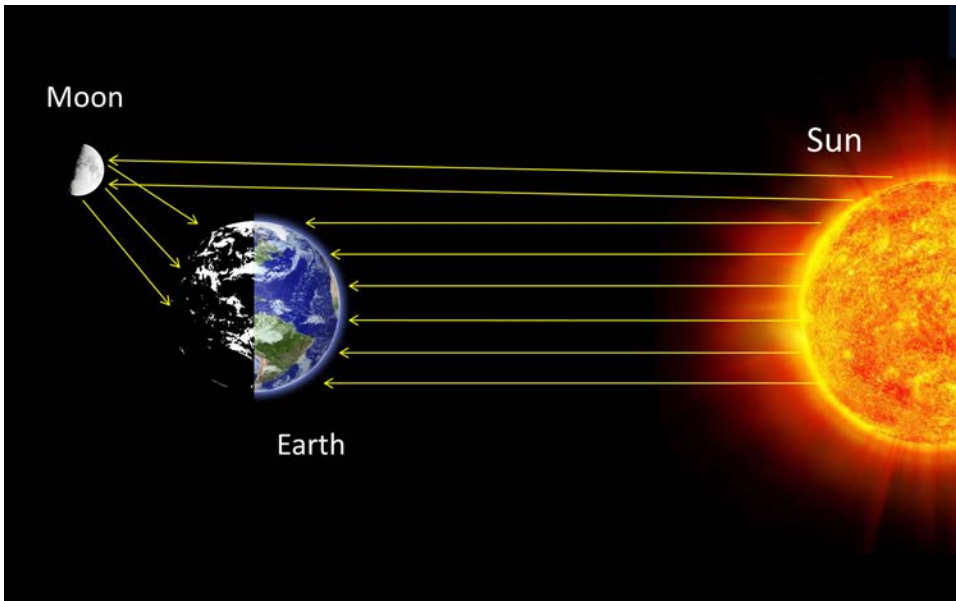
So the essence of what it means to be a witness is to see something firsthand that may then be reported to those who did not see it firsthand; to report something seen to those who have not seen.

In what way does the Moon "witness" to humanity, i.e., convey firsthand information to which it has access but to which humanity does not have access?

It is most certainly a stunning proof of the existence of an Almighty Power that made it. But the Moon did not see itself created. However, having been created, it now serves as a literal witness of something that it "sees" or "experiences" that humans on Earth cannot see: the light of the Sun. The Moon has no light of its own. Rather, it specifically reflects the light of the Sun that strikes its surface.<sup>2</sup> When the Sun "sets" in the West, the rotation of the Earth causing it no longer to be visible to that part of the Earth, those living in that region of the Earth may still "see" the Sun and be certain of its continued existence by means of the reflected light of the Moon. The Moon literally "witnesses" to the reality of the Sun, conveying to night viewers of the sky the sunlight that they cannot see firsthand. Returning to our definition of a "witness," the Moon literally "reports" what it is "seeing" firsthand to those who cannot see firsthand what is being reported. Every time we look up and see the Moon, we are simultaneously seeing its witness to the Sun. [Consider the image on the next page.]

How could the psalmist have known of this incredible astronomical reality?<sup>3</sup> His writing had to have been guided (2 Peter 1:20) by the Creator Who "set" the Moon in space "to give light on the earth" (Genesis 1:17). As the





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Sun reflected and witnessed to the perpetuity of David's throne, so the Moon reflects and witnesses to the reality of the Sun. Incredibly, like the Moon,

[t]here was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world (John 1:6-9).

You and I did not see with our own eyes the presence of Deity on Earth when Jesus came from heaven to fulfill His divine role, and John served as an eyewitness to that reality, reflecting His glory to us. Likewise, the majestic Moon with its reflective capacity enables us to see the higher reality of a Creator who designed the Universe in such a way that we are beneficiaries of His cosmic marvels.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs (1906), *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000 reprint), p. 729; L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner,

M.E.J. Richardson, and J.J. Stamm (1994–2000), *The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill), p. 788. The two other occurrences of the term in the Psalms refer to false witnesses (27:12; 35:11).

<sup>2</sup> Astronomers use the term "albedo" to refer to the reflectivity of the Moon and other celestial bodies. See, for example, G. Matthews (2008), "Celestial Body Irradiance Determination from an Underfilled Satellite Radiometer: Application to Albedo and Thermal Emission Measurements of the Moon Using CERES," *Applied Optics*, 47[27]:4981-93, September 20; Jeff Med-

keff (2002), "Lunar Albedo," *Notes on Lunar Features*, [https://web.archive.org/web/20080523151225/http://jeff.medkeff.com/astro/lunar/obs\\_tech/albedo.htm](https://web.archive.org/web/20080523151225/http://jeff.medkeff.com/astro/lunar/obs_tech/albedo.htm).

<sup>3</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Greek philosopher, Anaxagoras (499-428 B.C.), is credited with being the first to explain that the Moon shines by reflecting the Sun's light. David lived 500 years earlier. See J.J. O'Connor and E.F. Robertson (1999), "Anaxagoras of Clazomenae," School of Mathematics and Statistics, University of St Andrews, Scotland, <http://www-history.mcs.st-and.ac.uk/Biographies/Anaxagoras.html>.

## SPEAKING SCHEDULES

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October 29      Savannah, TN      (731) 925-4442

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**NOTE FROM***The Editor***New Book—*God & Government***

In its nearly four decade long effort to address the culture war raging in American society, Apologetics Press continues to remain dedicated to the guiding principle articulated by the inspired apostle Peter: “always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear” (1 Peter 3:15). Indeed, we remain relentless in our endeavor to identify and answer the key challenges to Christianity in our day.

One glaring feature of American culture and politics is the extent to which government, particularly the federal government, has strayed from its moorings. Hence, AP has just released a new book that constitutes a ringing call to re-examine the true function of government as envisioned by both God and the Founding Fathers. This 300+ page book challenges the reader to reconsider several crucial principles. It explains the meaning of “unalienable rights,” relying heavily on the biblical definitions of these rights. It stresses the extreme necessity for political leaders to possess very specific qualifications for the role they fill. It discusses the proper purpose of taxation, the societal effects of socialism, and whether socialism is scriptural. It offers a stark contrast between the biblical definition of “poor” and the

government’s distorted definition, while examining the spiritual propriety of welfare, work, and “entitlements.” It explores how government ought to discharge its function, including the validity of incarceration and capital punishment. It examines the matter of illegal immigration compared with God’s handling of immigration under the Law of Moses, including a lengthy discussion of the treatment of “native Americans” by Europeans who migrated to America.

Christians must not allow politicians, media, and liberal university professors to shape their thinking about these crucial concepts. We must go back to the Bible and rediscover the fact that God has spoken definitively about these matters. Though lengthy and packed with intriguing information, this book is priced far below market value. Please consider securing your copy and copies for those whom you want to influence for good.

**Dave Miller**

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