

Faith a Fruit of the Spirit

1. Faith in Christ alone is not only the way of salvation but (an essential) fruit of the spirit and especially difficult to come by when things “turn south.”
2. There are times when we all doubt and think God has somehow forgotten us.

Habakkuk a Case Study

1. In an Old Testament passage, Habakkuk wants God to wake up and help His people.

Hab 1:2 How long, o LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save?

Hab 1:3 Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds.

Hab 1:4 Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

1.1 Habakkuk was written by Habakkuk from Judah. The prophet identifies himself with the condition and circumstances of the people of God. It is Habakkuk who wonders why the evil prosper and the righteous suffer. God rebukes him for his self-serving message.

1.2 Nothing is known of Habakkuk except what may be inferred from this book which bears his name. He is described as "the prophet," and it is possible, therefore, that he not only had the gift of prophecy but that he was one of a professional group of prophets.

1.3 Certain musical notations to the psalm in chapter 3 suggest that he may have prophesied in the Temple, like the musicians who are mentioned in 1Ch 25:1.

1.4 It is precarious to say much about the prophet's character on the basis of his writing. His name seems to derive from a Hebrew root meaning "to embrace." Jerome (fifth century A.D.) stated that the prophet was called "The Embracer," either because of his love for God or because he wrestled with God.

1.5 This is purely fanciful, of course, and unless it be granted that the prophet's name, like that of Jesus (**Ieous**-from **Yeshua**---who will save His people from sin), was given in anticipation of his ministry (Mat 1:21), any conjectures as to its meaning, though interesting, are problematic.

2. Date of Writing

- 2.1 The book was most likely written in c. 650.

2.2 There are those who believe the book was written in c. 350 and thus the invading hosts described in the first chapter of the prophecy are not the Chaldeans but the Greeks under Alexander the Great.

2.3 Note the Babylonians are specifically mentioned in Hab 1:6. Which Babylonians however is not established but given our hindsight and historicity of Nebuchadnezzar's invasions and dispersions I think c. 650 is the better date.

Hab 1:5 Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days which ye will not believe, though it be told you.

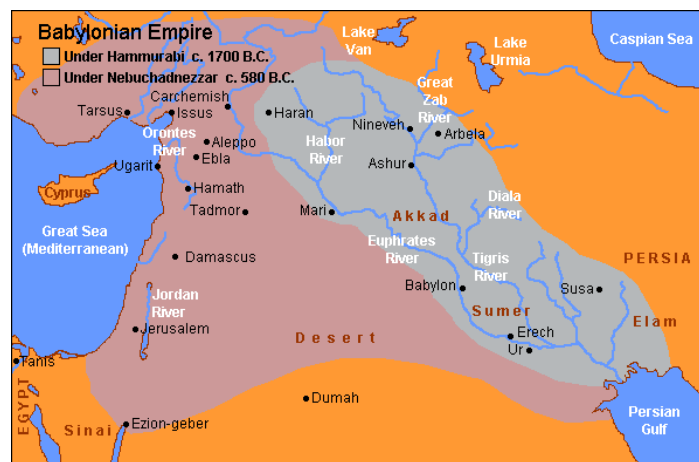
Hab 1:6 I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwelling places not their own.

2.4 The most satisfactory conclusion seems to be that the prophecy was written at a time when the Chaldeans or Babylonians were beginning to become restive against the Assyrian power. Let me review the **Doctrine of Babylon**.

Doctrine of Babylon

1. In the accounts of ancient history, the name "Babylon" occurs again and again, usually as a reference to a specific geographical location in the area of Iraq.

2. Historical Babylon is situated approximately sixty miles south of Baghdad on the banks of the Euphrates River near the present town of Al Hillah. The city of Babylon was the ancient capital of the Babylonian Empire.



3. The word "Babylon," as found in Scripture, has several connotations.

4. Not only does it refer to a particular city but also to a religious system so abhorrent to God that He will eventually destroy it completely (Rev 17, 18 and 19).

5. In the Old Testament, the term "Babylon" is given as "Babel," a derivation of the Hebrew root Balal, and means "to confound" or "to confuse".

6. God did not see fit to disclose the specific location of Old Testament Babel or eschatological Babylon; yet we are told that both had been built in the land of Shinar, more commonly known as southern Babylonia.

7. The oldest extant tower has been excavated at Erech (Gen. 10:10) and dates from the latter part of the fourth millennium B.C. Although the Bible does not identify the original Tower of Babel as a temple tower, later such edifices were used as such.

8. From archaeology and extant Babylonian cuneiform we know that the concept of religious Babylon has existed since the time of the great Flood.

8.1 All temple towers were dedicated to the various guardian deities in an attempt to assure their protection or to placate hostile gods of the pantheon.

9. Throughout its long history, Babylon has been the political center of many Gentile nations, and its prominence can be traced to approximately 2000 B.C.

9.1 As near as can be determined, the Sumerians were the first major inhabitants of Babylonia after the early descendants of Nimrod and Cush.

10. The most important ruler of the First Dynasty of Babylon was the remarkable Hammurabi (1728-1686 B.C.). Prosperity, as well as advances in literature, astronomy, mathematics and architecture, characterized his reign.

11. As was the case of Jerusalem, Babylon had its share of conquerors. Several generations after Hammurabi, came under the rule of first the Hittites, then the Kassites, and later the Elamites.

12. In 745 B.C. the yoke of the Assyrian Empire was felt, and the city itself was sacked and looted by Sennacherib in 689 B.C. Esarhaddon, Sennacherib's son, rebuilt the city about eleven years later.

13. When the Chaldean Empire was united under Nabopolassar in 625 B.C., Babylon became its capital city.

14. Under his heir, Nebuchadnezzar, this oft fought-over piece of real estate reached the height of its glory and became the most glamorous city of the ancient world.

14.1 In his turn, Nebuchadnezzar contributed vast fortifications, wide streets, canals, stunning temples and palaces.

14.2 Not the least of his beautifications were the Ishtar Gate and the famous Hanging Gardens (considered by the ancient Greeks to be one of the seven wonders of the world).

15. Yet the future of this once magnificent city was far from secure; it would be vanquished again and again.

16. On October 13, 539 B.C. Babylon fell to the army of Cyrus the Great of Persia. Later it was partially destroyed by Xerxes I of Persia (486-465 B.C.) in retribution for their continued rebellion.

17. I have described for you briefly how the Medo-Persians conquered the "impregnable" city. Before leaving our study of Babylon the Great let me provide a series of points from Merrill F. Unger's Bible Dictionary which will document much of that which I have earlier related.

18. All of this to answer the question "how could Babylon be taken without a shot being fired?" I shall quote from Unger's Dictionary:

"First to be considered was the geographical fact that the Euphrates River flowed through the center of Babylon. According to the Greek historian, Herodotus, a large bridge spanned that river and connected the eastern and western sections of the city. Another Greek writer, Diodorus Silucus, reveals that a tunnel had been laid under the river bed. Numerous canals which existed on the outskirts of the city were used for irrigation purposes and also constituted a part of the defense system. In fact, all of southern Babylonia was laced with these canals whereby water could be diverted at will for the needs of the people. Second, was the engineering feat which Herodotus records of the Persians rerouting the Euphrates by constructing a dam some distance from the city. Thus the river was caused to flow around Babylon rather than through it. After this daring exploit, the Persian Army approached the fortifications by night. Because of the general state of lethargy which had lulled the population into a false sense of security, the army slipped past the sentries without difficulty. As you may recall from Daniel, Chapter five, Belshazzar's notorious banquet culminated in the shocking events of the handwriting on the wall.

"The evening had been characterized by debauchery and drunkenness, a condition which had permeated every social milieu in Babylon. Thus because of a distracted citizenry and a relaxed military vigilance, it was a simple task to march by way of the riverbed into the city proper! Babylon had once more been conquered. A decadent national entity and its ruler had been judged and replaced by another. (Dan. 2:21)"

19. God describes the ferocity of the invading army.

Hab 1:7 They are a feared and dreaded people; they are a law to themselves and promote their own honor.

Hab 1:8 Their horses are swifter than leopards, fiercer than wolves at dusk. Their cavalry gallops headlong; their horsemen come from afar. They fly like a vulture swooping to devour;

Hab 1:9 they all come bent on violence. Their hordes advance like a desert wind and gather prisoners like sand.

Hab 1:10 They deride kings and scoff at rulers. They laugh at all fortified cities; they build earthen ramps and capture them.

Hab 1:11 Then they sweep past like the wind and go on-- guilty men, whose own strength is their god."

Hab 1:12 LORD, are you not from everlasting? My God, my Holy One, we will not die. o LORD, you have appointed them to execute judgment; o Rock, you have ordained them to punish.

Hab 1:13 Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?

Hab 1:14 You have made men like fish in the sea, like sea creatures that have no ruler.

Hab 1:15 The wicked foe pulls all of them up with hooks, he catches them in his net, he gathers them up in his dragnet; and so he rejoices and is glad.

20. In Hab 1:16-17 we will find "They sacrificed to their sword and burned incense to their nets." What is meant is that the Babylonians ascribed divine honors to their weapons and, therefore, to themselves. They worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator. Habakkuk could see them coming long before they came.

Hab 1:16 Therefore he sacrifices to his sword and burns incense to his dragnet, for by his net he lives in luxury and enjoys the choicest food.

Hab 1:17 Is he to keep on emptying his net, destroying nations without mercy?

21. In Hab 2:1 we find the prophet's expostulation comes to an end. He seems now to slowly recognize his place as the clay before the potter; a man who is to live by faith and not by sight.

Hab 2:1 I will stand at my **watch** and station myself on the **ramparts**; I will look to see what God will say to me, and what answer I am to give ...

22. He had presented his complaint to God, but in faith, he is now prepared to wait upon the Lord, assured that an answer would come.

23. The assertion sometimes made that Habakkuk is the supreme example of an angry doubter perhaps has been over taught.

24. Indeed, his prophecy ends on a note of sublime faith.

25. It is one thing to face the problems that confront everyone who believe in a good and omnipotent God and ask why things are so, or how they can be so.

26. It is something quite different to question the divine righteousness or justice, or the very existence of God, simply because one does not agree with God's manifest destiny. Recall + R and Justice are two of the ten essences of God.

27. Habakkuk seemed inclined to only question why the condition and not the existence of a good and gracious God.

28. Several interpreters understand the rampart or watch tower (**Mishmar**) to be an actual tower or elevation built into the wall. Habakkuk may be using only a figure of speech.

29. Habakkuk records only his determination to wait for an answer; he does not know when it will come.

30. Verses 2:2-4 contain the Lord's answer to his now pliant prophet.

Hab 2:2 Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it.

Hab 2:3 For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.

Hab 2:4 "See, he is puffed up; his desires are not upright--but **the righteous will live by his faith--**

31. Whether or not the prophet actually wrote the vision on tablets for public reading (Hab 2:2) has been disputed, but it is agreed that he was told to record the vision.

32. The purpose of recording the vision is for an appointed time and must be preserved so that its truth may be proved. The year being c. 612, was just six years from the day when someone on the watch tower would see off in the distance the coming of a mongrel horde of the finest fighters of that day.

32.1 The watchman on the tower would be dismayed to see the army stop and bivouac outside the city as though to ponder "which way should we go"—to Egypt or to Jerusalem? Keep in mind Nebuchadnezzar had to get his answer from Satan—guess what?

33. It may reasonably be supposed that Habakkuk made a record of his vision on a clay tablet, which he brought to the attention of many.

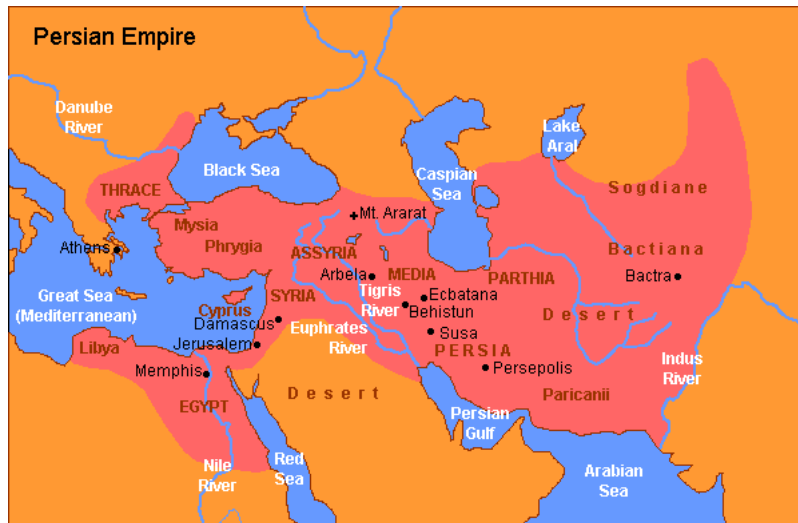
34. It would seem to be that the matter was to be made so clear that whoever would later read it might run and publish it or read it on the run from the meanest army ever.

35. That God will answer in the future and rebuke Babylon is a certainty but when it would occur was not revealed to Habakkuk. It would take place in three stages: 606, 597 and then the ultimate defeat and destruction 586 B.C.

36. God demanded faith from Habakkuk, just as He does from us.

37. From hindsight we know not only when the defeat took place but also we know when delivery and freedom would be bestowed and who would do it.

38. Babylon later falls when Persia becomes a world power under Cyrus the Great. The rise of Persia was not only predicted by Daniel in Daniel chapters two and four but so also did Isaiah and Jeremiah; Cyrus the great was even named as the first Persian king who would authorize the Jews to return to the land.



Isa 45:1 Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

Isa 45:2 I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

Isa 45:3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.

Isa 44:26 That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof:

Isa 44:27 That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers:

Isa 44:28 That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

2Ch 36:22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

2Ch 36:23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.

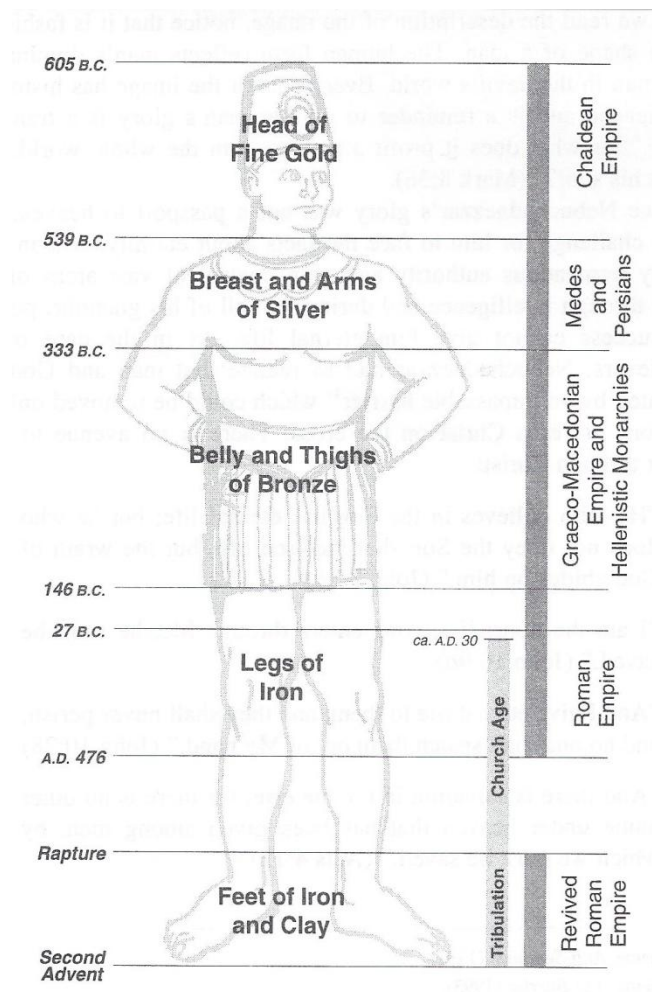
Ezr 1:1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

Ezr 1:2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Ezr 1:3 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.

Ezr 1:4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.

39. Although the prophecy concerning Cyrus is most impressive; think of Daniel's predictions concerning Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, the Roman Empires and the Age of Christ.



NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S IMAGE

39.1 The Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream:

Babylon the First Kingdom

Dan 2:36 This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

Dan 2:37 Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

Dan 2:38 And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

Medo-Persia and Greece

Dan 2:39 And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

The First Roman Empire

Dan 2:40 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

The Second Roman Empire

Dan 2:41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

Dan 2:42 And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

Dan 2:43 And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

The Divine Kingdom---the Age of Christ

Dan 2:44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Dan 2:45 Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

Now let's leave Habakkuk and return to our categorical study of *Faith a Fruit of the Spirit*.

40. All the merit of faith to be effective must be in an object with the inherent power to produce be it Old Testament faith or New Testament faith.

41. Faith therefore is often misunderstood for you see the mere act of having faith is useless if there is no object capable of producing.

Jam 2:19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

Acts 4: 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

42. Faith in doctrine as we have seen is our method for temporal sanctification, i.e., spiritual growth in time, and the faith in doctrine should be more real than reality.

2Co 4:18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2Pe 1:18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

2Pe 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed ...

43. Faith itself, says the Scripture, comes from doctrine, the mind of Christ.

Rom 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Phi 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

1Co 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

44. Faith in the sense of a relaxed mental attitude is one of the fruits of the Spirit of God.

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

45. Faith is enhanced when we are tested and proved.

1Pe 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

1Pe 1:8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

46. Faith in Christ is the means for overcoming the world. It is avoiding condemnation and the means of obtaining salvation. It then is the source of avoiding the bad and gaining the good.

1Jo 5:5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

46.1 Several passages in the book of Revelation make this clear. Keep in mind "who is he that overcometh ... he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God."

Rev 2:7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Rev 2:11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Rev 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Rev 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

46.2 A quick point or two about the importance of doctrine in this faith process. If Peter were a lawyer, he might call 2Pe 1:3-8 his best summation.

Expanded Translation

2Pe 1:3 For you see God's divine power has provided everything that pertains to your life in time. Your spiritual life is a product of the doctrine you have in your soul. God called you for the solitary purpose of glorifying Him,

2Pe 1:4 to facilitate our progress in the Christian life, God has provided in Scripture many great and precious promises; by the inculcation of these marvelous promises, you can become a partaker of a divine nature, having escaped the control and domination of your old sin natures.

2Pe 1:5 And for this reason you must assemble a special cast of characters: add to your faith in Christ a consistent intake of knowledge and moral excellence and to this excellence you must add motivation and a positive attitude even in the most difficult of circumstances demonstrating a courage to continue learning,

2Pe 1:6 and to your knowledge add that special self-control which comes from organized thinking and to self-control add a stubborn persistence to learn even when many distractions attack and to this persistence apply what you have learned for living the Christian life and realizing your divine destiny,

2Pe 1:7 and to the persistent application of resident doctrine add a love for God, love of family, love of friends and a right mental attitude for even your enemies as you live your unique spiritual life;

2Pe 1:8 if we continue metabolizing Bible doctrine we will escape the corruption that is in the world sharing God's divine nature.

47. Conclusion

47.1 The scientific ways of thinking are "quite naturally" rationalism and empiricism. Often however the scientist finds himself in "mystic" or "spiritual realms" where it is impossible "to be scientific." This understandably creates a dilemma.

47.2 An example of such a dilemma is evolution. Today we have no fossil evidence of an orderly evolution of man; in fact what we do have indicates (at best) great gaps in the order of development from animal to man. Even some data supports an evolution from man to primate.

47.3 Most agree today that from the fossil evidence it seems that man began and then became extinct and then man's evolution began again because the oldest likeness to man ceases and a gap of animal fossils span long periods of time and then suddenly man "appears" to develop again thus making clear the adage "you can't keep a good man down" or perhaps better said "you can keep a very old man down but not for long."

47.4 Writing for the New York Times in 1999 John Noble Wilford spoke to the point that a new trunk on the genus of the human tree had been discovered or whatever happened on the way to mankind's orderly but inexorable evolution. In the Times he writes of a significant problem for the thinking Paleontologist.

"Paleontologists in Africa have found a 3.5 million year old skull from what they say is an entirely new branch of the early human family tree, a discovery that threatens to overturn the prevailing undocumented supposition that a single line of descent stretched through the early stages of human ancestry ... Humanity's family tree, once drawn with a trunk straight and true, is beginning to look more like a bush, with a tangle of branches leading off in many directions. The new skull was discovered ... by a research team led by Leakey [1999] ... "After careful analysis, scientists concluded that the nearly complete skull and partial jaw represented not only a different species but also a completely new genus - virtually a new trunk on the tree of human evolution."

47.5 To maintain a belief in evolution requires significant faith given not only no evidence of evolution but significant evidence to the contrary; such as was discovered in 1999.

47.6 Faith in the field of evolution has become the most important source of learning simply because certain fixated scientists have long concluded (most deductively I might add) that no other explanation of man's beginning will be accepted except "evolution."

47.7 Several quotes will help explain:

- W. W. Wheeler in his book *Creation by Evolution* writes: "no plea for the supernatural origin of anything is valid so long as there is a possibility of a natural explanation of its origin."
- George F. Hutchinson, in the 1957 *Encyclopedia Britannica* writes: "if there is no choice, instead of accepting the supernatural acts of God, the Scientist may have to assume that there have been changes in the laws of nature and again in reference to a number of studies of evolution he goes on:

- "If the results are persistently negative it may be necessary to fall back on some hypothesis as to secular change in the laws of nature."
- Arthur Thompson in *The Outline of Science* has written: "But frankly the only scientific way of looking at the present day fauna and flora is to regard them as the outcome of a natural selection."
- Ernest Hooten writes in *Up From The Ape*: "Just how fins developed into limbs is still a mystery but they did."
- Calvin S. Hall writes in *The Inheritance of Emotionality*: "You may question, of course, whether rat intelligence is the same as human intelligence, but if you do put the question you are really not an evolutionist and, therefore your view deserves little consideration."
- Horatio Newman in *Evolution, Genetics, and Eugenics* writes: "There is no rival hypothesis except that outworn and completely refuted idea of special creation now retained only by the ignorant, the dogmatic and the prejudiced."

47.8 Finding incontrovertible evidence that fossils, be they human or primate, refute rather than support the theory of evolution is old hat. The find in "1999" about which we just read in the New York times was not the first fossil anomaly. In 1973 another member of the Leakey family made an unusual discovery; he called her "Thoroughly Modern Milly." Let me quote some of that which has been written about this find:

"Dr. Leakey ... dated her at 2,800,000 years thereby blowing the sanctity of evolutionary theory. The gap was now something which must be somehow explained away. Worse however the copious orderly charts showing man's evolution from ape to man must now be destroyed hurriedly lest the world find out the hoax is on us." Dr. Leakey himself with reference to his find said: "Either we toss out this skull or we toss out our theories of early man." See *National Geographic*. June 1973. Thoroughly Modern Milly was either misdated or she was to be a cause for great alarm to the former postulation that the oldest ape preceded man by 500,000 years. She was said to be as modern as any fossil man ever found and yet she preceded earliest fossil man by thousands of years and worse she was 1,800,000 years older than homo erectus - the ape who walked ... "

47.9 One Saturday, April 20, 2002 an article appeared in the Washington Post under the headline: "New study says primates roamed with dinosaurs". In the article Guy Gugliotta threw a significant monkey-wrench (no pun intended) into formerly hard and fast "evolutionary" theory.

"We are told in this article: Primates - the mammals from which humans evolved emerged on Earth much earlier than had been thought, originating perhaps 85 million years old ago during the age of the dinosaurs ... Paleontologists ... place the origin of primates at 55 million years ago ... the researchers developed a statistical model that builds an evolutionary tree based on the number of primate species alive today (235)

and the number of recorded fossil species (396) and their ages. By assuming each primate species would live approximately 2.5 million years the team was able to estimate the length of time that elapsed between the oldest known fossil primate ... by this technique the lead researcher Robert Martin concluded former theories of dinosaurs predating primates by millions of years were in error ... "I've been arguing for years that there's so many gaps in the fossil record that primates are probably much older than we thought ... "

47.10 As you can see scientists are finding need to make profound and wild assumptions and projections over millions of years but still the basic premise is "Primates - the mammals from which humans evolved emerged on Earth much earlier than had been thought ... "

47.11 Such leaps of faith are common place when it comes to the origin of man. It is a paradox I suppose that evolution provides such a useful example in our quest to understand faith.

47.12 In the spiritual realm we Christians stipulate up front that faith is the most important method of learning about God; for without faith it is impossible to please Him. Faith is especially important in this realm because no one can prove or disprove God.