



# The Caller

A Weekly Newsletter of the Elizabethtown church of Christ

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## Confidzncez

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**John F. Board**

Did the Israelites conquer Jericho? This is the question Dr. Bryant G. Wood addressed in the March/April 1990 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review* (originally *Biblical Archaeology*

*Reader*). This is also the subject of this week's *Confidence Corner*.

Dr. Wood who has served as supervisor on several archaeological digs in Palestine took another look at the evidence uncovered by Kathleen Kenyon (daughter of Sir Frederic Kenyon) from 1952-1958. Consider *the* information from *BAR*.

First consider the fact that Jericho was described in Scripture as a well fortified city (think the walls of Jericho and see Joshua 2:5,7,15; and 6:5). Archaeologists found an outer wall of stone that protected the city that they had found in their excavations. One area excavated showed the wall to be up to six feet wide and twelve feet high.

According to Joshua 5:10, the children of Israel would conquer the city in the harvest time (see Rahab's actions in 2:6). What was found in the houses of the city was quite interesting—large quantities of grain. This would be expected at harvest time. What would be unexpected though was that the Israelites did not take the grain with them when they invaded Jericho. How can this be explained?

Remember in OT times grain could be used as monetary exchange (1 Kings 5:11). Any normal invaders would have taken the grain. Yet Israel did not. You see Jericho was to be devoted to God according to the "cherem ban;" though the Israelites would have taken the valuable metals for the treasury of the LORD, they were instructed to take nothing for themselves (6:17-19). The fact that something as personally valuable as grain was left behind, fits well with the Biblical account.

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The Lord is not slow in  
keeping his promise,  
as some understand slowness.  
Instead he is patient with you,  
not wanting anyone to perish,  
but everyone to  
come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

## Sunday's Sermons:

**AM — Difficult Bible Passages**

**2 Peter 3:14-18**

**PM — Revealing Last Words**

**Luke 23:44-47**

## No Overturning the Case for Christ

It is amazing through the centuries to see how many people have tried to discredit the Christian religion. Since Christianity is based upon the resurrection, one of the earliest attacks took place just hours after Christ's tomb was found empty—Roman soldiers were told to lie to cover up that which was humanly unexplainable! Yet, here we are halfway through 2020, with no one person being able to drive the nail in the coffin of the Christian faith.

Some have tried to attack the Bible, the source document of Christianity. Many have claimed that there are contradictions and errors throughout the Bible. Of course, though there may appear to be contradictions, upon further study those apparent contradictions have a reasonable explanation. They do not contradict at all—they supplement a narrative or provide a perspective from another angle (even lawyers in court cases will discredit cases where the eyewitness account are too similar). If such is not the case, atheists and other opponents of Christianity would travel the world with their “proof case” of a contradiction or error that proves the Bible is a hoax. Yet never has such a “proof case” been made!

Others try to suggest that the Bible is unreliable; they suggest we cannot know that what we have today is actually what God revealed years ago. There are presently 5,686 Greek manuscripts in existence today for the New Testament. If we were to compare the number of New Testament manuscripts to other ancient writings, we find that the New Testament manuscripts far outweigh the others in quantity. There is also much less time between the origin of the Scriptures and the sources that support it. For example, consider Homer's *Iliad*. There are only 643 known copies of it and the oldest copy is dated 500 years after the time of the writing of *The Iliad*. Compare that again to the NT documents and you find that there are over 5600 known copies some of which date less than 100 years after the original time of writing. As you can see, there are thousands more New Testament Greek manuscripts than another ancient writing, *The Iliad*. This holds true in comparing numerous other ancient writings that are not considered questionable. In addition, there are over 19,000 copies in the Syriac, Latin, Coptic, and Aramaic languages. The total supporting New Testament manuscript base is over 24,000.

Others have attempted to claim that Jesus never really died on the cross and thus He did not resurrect from the dead. This is not the only attack upon the resurrection—a core doctrine of the Christian faith. Some claim that Jesus did not really rise from the dead but only that people hallucinated and reported such as evidence of a resurrection. When you consider 500 people at once saw Jesus (I Cor 15) it is highly unlikely that such was an hallucination. Dr. Gary Collins states that hallucinations by their nature are individual events. One Psychologist noted that it would be a bigger miracle for 500 people to hallucinate that they saw the resurrected Jesus than for Jesus to have actually resurrected as Christianity claims.

Some suggest that either the disciples of Jesus or His enemies stole the body out of the tomb. Such is easily refuted when there is no way to explain why disciples would die for something they know to be a hoax, nor why the enemies, if they wanted to defeat Christianity, would not simply produce the body of Jesus and laugh in the face of those who claimed He had risen from the dead.

I am afraid that still today Christianity remains the one true religion of the one true God. Jesus did just as He claimed He would—He rose from the dead! He is Lord. The only question that remains for you is do you recognize Him as Lord. If not, won't you do so today by putting Him on in baptism?