



JESUS BRINGS A SWORD!

If one were to mention Mohammad's killing of people, instructing his followers to smite the infidels (you), or robbing camel trains to fund their efforts, one response is that Jesus said he was not bringing peace, but was bringing a sword so there is no difference.

Turns out in a little noticed verse Jesus does say "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. (Matt: 10:34)

In the 138,020 words in the New Testament, swords are mentioned a couple of other times.

In Luke 22: 49-51 it says "When those who were around Him saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, shall we strike with the **sword**?" And one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, "Stop! No more of this." And He touched his ear and healed him."

The one doing the striking was apparently Peter who had a sword of some sort. We don't think of Jesus as having a sword, but he went from village to village along some dangerous roads alone. Continued on page 2

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HOUSTON AREA ELDER'S WORKSHOP

The Oklahoma Christian Church Growth Think Tank is holding a Houston Area Elder's Workshop at the Memorial facility at 900 Echo Lane on June 6.

As was indicated in the lead article in the March issue of the Christian Array, the churches of Christ in the USA overall are declining rather than "taking the Gospel to the world".

This workshop is a part of the commitment of the Think Tank and the individuals involved to try to determine characteristic things which happen to change congregations from growing to non-growing, and assist in returning to real scriptural church growth.

The workshop is not restricted only to elder's in the Greater Houston Area, it is simply where the first one is being held. Elders from anywhere are welcome to come to the Houston event. Future events are in consideration for other cities, with Oklahoma City being the likely second venue.

That being said, there is still lots of work to be done to make this workshop a reality and on about 20 other projects the Think Thank is pursuing at the present time. If you want to **be an active part of a major effort** to try to assist churches of Christ in returning to scriptural church growth, please contact us at bbaugh@thearray.org.

See the attachment for further info.



JESUS BRINGS A SWORD - P. 2

It would be reasonable to think He had some protection. Although as the Son of God, he may not have needed it.

Another well known example is Ephesians 5:10-17 “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil *one*. And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the **sword** of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

These verses clearly figuratively refer to the sword and other parts of the soldiers armament as parts of the Gospel.

Now getting back to the scripture in question, is Jesus referring to the sword he is bringing to kill people, instruct his followers to smite the infidels (most except you), rob camel trains, or spread peanut butter on your sandwich. One verse pulled out of context simply does not tell you that.

The first thing to note is that the remainder of the 138,020 words in the New Testament tell us

to “do unto others as you would have them do unto you”. That certainly is not “smiting” them.

The actual context is Matthew 10:34-38 “Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a **sword**. For I came to SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW; and A MAN’S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD. “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.”

The verses are exclusively talking about members of your family rather than some remote “infidel”. He is basically saying that what he is doing is going to cause family problems, presumably because some will believe and others will not.

Your family are the very people for which no one would say to go home and use a sword on your own family to physically harm them.

READY ANSWER

Yes, Jesus does say in one place I bring a sword rather than peace, but reading the context clearly indicates that the sword is figurative and the application indicates that there will be a dividing apart of family members as a result of some believing and others not believing.

Benton F. Baugh

IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION #50: BLADDERWORTS

Bladderworts (utricularia) are an interesting aquatic carnivore with a unique innovation on how to capture their food. They live in fresh-water aquatic and wetland environments all around the world. Although they are carnivores, mosquito larvae and small tadpoles would be considered as large prey.

As seen in the photos, the plant's feeding device is a semi-clear shell with a mouth and some feelers. The bladderworts close the mouth, expel the water to pull enough of a vacuum inside the shell to collapse it, and open again when prey is near. The shells spring back, water rushes in, and the prey comes in with the water. Trigger hairs sense the prey, identifying when to open the mouth.

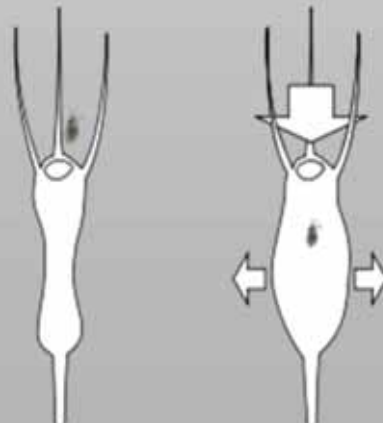
Once the bladder is full of water, the door closes again, the whole operation happens in one hundredths of a second.

Once inside, the prey will be dissolved by digestive secretions. This generally occurs within a few hours, although some protozoa appear to be highly resistant and have been observed to live for several days inside the trap. All the time, the trap walls pump out water, and the bladder can be ready for its next capture in as little as 15 to 30 minutes. (Wikipedia)

What this means is that a zero I.Q. plant invented a way to draw a vacuum inside its body and pop its mouth open when a prey tickles one of its trigger hairs.

It is amazing how many of God's creations there are around which we don't even notice.

Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E.



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DO
YOU
BELIEVE
THE
BIBLE?

The Bible teaches that you should do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

If your religious group teaches something else, you might like to visit your local Church of Christ.

The Churches of Christ attempt to speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent. (Rev. 22:18-19)



MY INSPIRATION? ELIZABETH BROWN

It was a bright sunny Tuesday morning in June 1959, and there I sat beside my mother-in-law. We were listening to Mrs. Haddock, at North Houston Church of Christ. Her lesson was on Psalm 139. It was my first Ladies' Bible Class and it had quite an impact. From that one lesson, I decided that I wanted to be a Bible Class teacher, just like Mrs. Haddock. And Psalm 139 has been my favorite Psalm ever since.

Whether days are delightful or difficult, this is my inspiration. The fact that God knows what I experience, that he knows me whether anyone else ever knows all about me, he knows me. He planned a time and place for me and knows when I get up in the morning and when I lay down at night. He is so familiar with me that he even knows my thoughts and before the words come out of my mouth, he already knows what I'm going to say.

I know his protective power because he came before and will always be eternally ahead of me, and yet he is right here in the present with me. It is not possible to live outside the presence of God. There is no time-out to misbehave because he even sees me in the darkness. Darkness is nothing to God, it is the same as light.

When I want to hide and feel insignificant as if I am nothing, I am reminded that God created me in love. God has a purpose for me and he has provided everything I need to be his person and fulfill his purpose. Every day that I live was planned by God. "How precious to me are your thoughts, O God."

And so, I say with David the Psalmist, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Psalm 139:23-24)

THE JOY OF THE LORD KIRK CASTLEMAN

When Ezra read the book of the Law to the people after their return from Babylonian captivity, they wept while listening to the sacred words. Nehemiah, the governor, comforted them with the above words from Nehemiah 8:10. Read the entire chapter to better understand the context.

How can the joy of the Lord be our strength?

1. Our sins have been forgiven in Christ. Joy comes from knowing our forgiveness of sins. We gratefully accept the forgiveness because of the promise of the word.
2. The joy of the lord is our strength because He is always with us. Hebrews 13:5 includes the phrase "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you".
3. He is our God is another reason the joy of the Lord is our strength. He is our personal "I AM". He is the God of Moses, Abraham, Jesus Christ and most wonderfully, He is our God. The joy of the Lord is our strength. Amen, Amen!

We are happy to announce that the 2015 Schedule of Daily Bible Readings and Questions is ready to print. Our printer tells us that it will be about \$15/copy. Please publicize this to your family and "circle of friends" through your internet contacts. This is non-profit and we want it to be to the Glory of God! We just want folks to read their Bible every day! We will be glad to mail/ship copies to you, so please help us. Each copy will average about \$5/copy, which includes postage and mail envelope. Kirk and Linda Castleman 7419 Bairnsdale Lane, Houston 77070
kirk.castleman1942@gmail.com
830-900-9771 Any extra funds will be used to print copies to give away for evangelism. Love and blessings to all, Kirk and Linda



HOUSTON AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES

2nd Tues. Houston Preacher's Luncheon, confirm with Dale Foster at dalefoster@gmail.com for address.

4/18/15 Houston Area Wide Singing, 6:00-8:00, Hidden Valley, 9522 Sunnywood, refreshments & fellowship to follow, further information Call David Waldrup 281-447-5422 (Office) 281-635-3135 (Cell), Song Leaders sign in as you enter building.

5/13/15 Houston Foster's Home For Children Golf Tournament—Blackhorse

6/6/15 Houston / OC Area-Wide Elder's Workshop

YAHOO GROUP

HoustonCofC is a Yahoo group hosted by Steve Sandifer [steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net] for the purpose of communicating Houston area news among the brethren. It is open to any member of the church at no cost.

The Christian Array E-Magazine

This e-magazine is sent to members of the church on a monthly basis as an attempt to promote scriptural teachings, area wide activities and church growth. If you do not want to receive this e-magazine, send an e-mail to bbaugh@thearray.org and it will be stopped.

If you know of anyone who would like to receive this newsletter, send their e-mail addresses to bbaugh@thearray.org. All past copies of the newsletter can be found on the website "thearray.org".

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

A goal of this newsletter is to develop a mailing list of as many members of the church as possible and to communicate church related information to as many members as possible. In that light, we would appreciate it if you would:

1. forward the church member e-mail addresses which you have,
2. send the directory of the congregation you attend or any other directories which you might have, and
3. give us an idea of how to collect church member e-mail addresses.

The Christian Array is dedicated to support the sustained scriptural growth of the churches of Christ. It is published by BCE Publications, a 501(c)(3) organization with Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E. as editor. BCE is solely responsible for the content. Any announcements, requests for publication, or comments should be e-mailed to bbaugh@thearray.org.