

Icebergs, Spirituality and Religion – about People, World Religions and Christianity

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APPENDIX - Selected Bible references in support of the text

The easiest modern Bible to read is *The Message* by Eugene Peterson from which these quotes are taken. Reference is made to book in the Bible the quote came from and which chapter. A far more in-depth study can be made but that's not the purpose at present.

Monotheism

Mark 12

'Listen, Israel: The Lord your God is one; so love the Lord God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence and energy.'

Trinity

The New Testament refers to God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit constantly as the divine presence in the world. Apostle Paul ends his second letter to the Corinthians with the following blessing.

2 Corinthians 13

The amazing grace of the Master, Jesus Christ, the extravagant love of God, the intimate friendship of the Holy Spirit, be with all of you.

The Uncreated and Created

John 1

The Word in these verses refers to the Son of God as a Person of the Trinity and to God's creative purposes.

UNCREATED

The Word was first, the Word present to God, God present to the Word. The Word was God, in readiness for God to come one day.

CREATED

Everything was created through him; nothing – not one thing- came into being without him.

Everything created in the Son

Colossians 1

We look at this Son and see the God who cannot be seen. We look at this Son and see God's original purpose in everything created. For everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, rank after rank of angels – *everything* got started in him and finds its purpose in him. He was there before any of it came into existence and holds it all together right up to this moment.

Heavenly conflicts

These are just a few sentences that give insights about the heavenly realm. Much of it remains a mystery, like the timing of the information below. The reality of Heaven is undeniable as far as the Bible is concerned.

Revelation 12

War broke out in Heaven. Michael and his Angels fought the Dragon. The Dragon and his Angels fought back, but were no match for Michael. They were cleared out of Heaven, not a sign of them left. The great Dragon – ancient Serpent, the one called Devil and Satan, the one who led the whole world astray – thrown out, and all his Angels thrown out with him, thrown down to earth.

People created in God's image

Genesis 1

God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature."

The human birth of the Son

John 1

The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, Like Father, like Son, generous inside and out, true from start to finish.

An angel speaking to shepherds in the fields around Bethlehem the night Jesus was born.

Luke 2

The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger."

Tempted in the desert

Jesus' three responses to the devil at the end of a 40 days prayer and fasting time before starting his three years walk through Israel.

Matthew 4

"It takes more than bread to stay alive. It takes a steady stream of words from God's mouth."

"Don't you dare test the Lord your God."

"Beat it Satan" "Worship the Lord your God, and only him. Serve him with absolute single-heartedness."

The test was over. The Devil left. And in his place, angels! Angels came and took care of Jesus' needs.

The wisdom of Jesus

A spiritual perspective on life that may seem negative but that encourages toward God against the limitations placed upon people by the way society looks at things.

Matthew 5

"You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

"You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you embrace the One most dear to you.

"You're blessed when you're content with just who you are – no more, no less. That's the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought.

"You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God. He's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat.

"You're blessed when you care. At the moment of being 'care-full,' you find yourselves cared for.

"You're blessed when you get your inside world – your mind and heart – put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

"You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family.

The miracles of Jesus

Jesus performed a great many miracles. One of the most astounding may have been raising his friend Lazarus from the dead.

John 11

The sister of the dead man, Martha, said, "Master, by this time there's a stench. He's been dead four days!"

Jesus looked her in the eye. "Didn't I tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

Then to the others, "Go ahead, take away the stone."

They removed the stone. Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and prayed, "Father, I'm grateful that you have listened to me. I know you always do listen, but on account of this crowd standing here I've spoken so that they might believe that you sent me."

Then he shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" And he came out, a cadaver wrapped from head to toe, and with a kerchief over his face.

Jesus told them. "Unwrap him and let him loose."

Jesus in Gethsemane

Jesus prayed fervently the night before his crucifixion. It was a great struggle against evil and temptation, the option of stepping away from it all.

Luke 22

"Father, remove this cup from me. But please, not what I want. What do *you* want?" At once an angel from heaven was at his side, strengthening him. He prayed on all the harder. Sweat, wrung from him like drops of blood, poured off his face.

Jesus' last words on the cross

It tells us that Jesus knew when the battle was over and that then he left his body.

Luke 23

Jesus called loudly, "Father, I place my life in your hands!" Then he breathed his last.

John 19

Jesus said, "It's done Complete." Bowing his head, he offered up his spirit.

The Resurrection

When two women named Mary came to Jesus' tomb early morning they found the heavy stone rolled away from the entrance and an angel present.

Matthew 28

The angel spoke to the women: "There is nothing to fear here. I know you are looking for Jesus, the One they nailed to the cross. He is not here. He was raised, just as he said. Come and look at the place where he was placed.

"Now get on your way quickly and tell his disciples, 'He is risen from the dead. He is going on ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there.' That's the message."

Jesus resurrected meets the disciples

John 20

Later on that day, the disciples had gathered together, but, fearful of the Jews, had locked all the doors in the house. Jesus entered, stood among them, and said, "Peace to you." Then he showed them his hands and side.

The disciples, seeing the Master with their own eyes, were exuberant. Jesus repeated his greeting: "Peace to you. Just as the Father sent me, I send you."

A man born from heaven

Apostle Paul explains that the First Human Being Adam is of the earth as is humanity. The Second Adam, who is Jesus as he appeared after the Resurrection, is of Heaven.

1 Corinthians 15

We follow this sequence in Scripture: The First Adam received life, the Last Adam is a life-giving spirit. Physical life comes first, then spiritual – a firm base shaped from the earth, a final completion out of heaven. The First Man was made out of the earth, and people since then are earthy; the Second Man was made out of heaven, and people now can be heavenly. In the same way that we've worked from our earthy origins, let's embrace our heavenly ends.

A New Creation

Jesus, the Messiah, brings new life to people.

2 Corinthians 5

.... Anyone united with the Messiah gets a fresh start, is created new. The old life is gone; a new life burgeons! Look at it! All this comes from God who settled the relationship between us and him, and then called us to settle the relationship with each other.

Born from Above

Jesus explained that to enter the reality of this new life a spiritual birth needed to take place in the Holy Spirit that brings the dynamics of God's kingdom into a person's life.

John 3

Jesus said, "You're absolutely right. Take it from me: Unless a person is born from above, it's not possible to see what I'm pointing to – to God's kingdom.

The paramount importance of the resurrection

Apostle Paul exhorts not to forget that the fresh start offered to people is only possible because Jesus did rise from the dead as the Man born of Heaven.

1 Corinthians 15

Now, let me ask you something profound yet troubling. If you came believers because you trusted the proclamation that Christ is alive, risen from the dead, how can you let people say that there is no such thing as a resurrection? If there's no resurrection, there's no living Christ. And face it – if there's no resurrection for Christ, everything we've told you is smoke and mirrors. Not only that, but we would be guilty of telling a string of barefaced lies about God, all these affidavits we passed on to you verifying that God raised up Christ – sheer fabrications, if there's no resurrection.

A whole and lasting life

John 3

'This is how much God loves the world: He gave his Sin, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life.

Jesus' Return

Jesus assured his disciples that he would be back.

Acts 1

He told them, "You don't get to know the time. Timing is the Father's business. What you'll get is the Holy Spirit. And when the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will be able to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, all over Judea and Samaria, and even to the ends of the world.

These were his last words. As they watched, he was taken up and disappeared in a cloud. They stood there, staring into the empty sky. Suddenly two men appeared – in white robes! They said, "You Galileans! – why do you just stand here looking up at an empty sky? This very Jesus who was taken up from among you to heaven will come as certainly – and mysteriously – as he left.

The Holy Spirit comes on the disciples

Fifty days after the resurrection the Holy Spirit came on the disciples. It was the beginning of their zeal to spread the news of the Gospel. They spoke in prayer languages they had no idea about. This ability is still with the church and many people can speak prayer languages different from their own. Once comfortable with it, it isn't hard to do. The Holy Spirit can give ability to Christians today as happened to the early disciples.

Acts 2

When the Feast of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Without warning there was a sound like a strong wind, gale force – no one could tell where it came from. It filled the whole building. Then, like a wildfire, the Holy Spirit spread through their ranks, and they started speaking in a number of different languages as the Spirit prompted them.

God is Love

Apostle John encourages toward the central attitude of a Christian

1 John 4

My beloved friends, Let us continue to love each other since love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and experiences a relationship with God. The person who refuses to love doesn't know the first thing about God, because God *is* love – so you can't know him if you don't love.

Love expressed

Love is an emotive word with all kinds of connotations. How do we know we love God and also our neighbor?

Apostle John looks at it from a practical perspective.

1 John 5

Do we love God? Do we keep his commandments? The proof that we love God comes when we keep his commandments and they are not at all troublesome.

Avoiding the Antichrist

Apostle John recognizes an attitude that denies the full magnitude of Jesus Christ already amongst some of the early believers almost 2000 years ago. He speaks out against it with all its might calling it anti Christian.

1 John 2

So who is lying here? It's the person who denies that Jesus is the Divine Christ, that's who. This is what makes an antichrist: denying the Father, denying the Son. No one who denies the Son has any part with the Father, but affirming the Son is an embrace of the Father as well.

Faith in Jesus must include every aspect of the divine plan and not just part of it. That's not faith in Jesus according to Apostle John however pious and Christian one may talk.

1John 4

My dear friends, don't believe everything you hear. Carefully weigh and examine what people tell you. Not everyone who talks about God comes from God. There are a lot of lying preachers loose in the world.

Here's how you test for the genuine Spirit of God. Everyone who confesses openly his faith in Jesus Christ – the Son of God, who came as an actual flesh-and-blood person – comes from God and belongs to God. And everyone who refuses to confess faith in Jesus has nothing in common with God. This is the spirit of antichrist that you heard was coming. Well, here it is, sooner than we thought.

Wisdom from the Holy Spirit

There is no need to be led astray by antichristian teachings or behavioral examples.

1 John 2

I've written to warn you about those who are trying to deceive you. But they're no match for what is embedded deeply within you – Christ's anointing, no less! You don't need any of their so-called teaching. Christ's anointing teaches you the truth on everything you need to know about yourself and him, uncontaminated by a single lie. Live deeply in what you were taught.

New heavens and a new earth

When at some time a disaster of great magnitude will strike the earth and the universe Apostle Peter encourages towards hope in a far better future.

2 Peter 3

We'll be looking the other way, ready for the promised new heavens and the promised new earth, all landscaped with righteousness.

Apostle John had a clear visionary experience.

Revelation 21

I saw Heaven and earth new-created. Gone the first Heaven, gone the first earth.