“You’re Mistaken About Islam”

Hi there Sue,

I was sent a copy of your article A Short Look at Six World Religions. Having studied most of them in school years ago, and then in seminary, I had a pretty good knowledge of things, but as with many things, I haven’t really thought about the Hindus or the Buddhists for some 30 years! While you read this note, keep in mind that I am a born-again Christian, who lives in Spain, works in Spain and Morocco and is professionally dedicated to translating texts (English/Spanish and a long list of etc.) so I do know a bit about languages.

I found the Moslem part interesting, but I do disagree about a thing or two. One must consider two things before getting into Islam….its founder married a rich widow, so by the time he was 20, he was married, and had no need to work (unlike us and the rest of humanity at that time), so he dedicated his time to meditation and searching….for God I would imagine. He entered into contact with Judaism, and with the early years of Christianity. Therefore, when you start looking at the Koran and the Moslem faith, there are many, many things that are taken out of Judaism….no pork, no shellfish, and a long list of etc, etc. When you see them praying, they use a string of beads just like a rosary! And there are also many, many aspects that are from the early Christian faith. (Remember that the first Christians were much more Jewish in their thinking that most of us could ever be!)

As I said at the beginning, my work is 100% dedication to translation and there is a clear translation problem with Allah/God when it comes to Islam. The word God for us who speak English is fine, but if you speak Spanish, the word is Dios, and if you speak Arabic, it is Allah (when written in English format, and if it is in the Spanish format, it is Al). Saying that the Moslems do not believe in the same God as us

Christians do is totally mistaken. The whole problem stems from a translation error. In Spain, most of the "modern" Moslems, when they say their prayers in Spanish, the use the word "Dios", and not the word "Al." Today, when it comes to translating, it is considered correct to not translate proper nouns in a text, therefore, when the Koran was translated into English, you translated everything, and the Arabic word Allah was made to sound English and therefore considered to be another god. (To give you another example….I live in Seville in southern Spain, but here in Seville, the name of the city is Sevilla, and most people want the city to be called Sevilla, and not Seville. Does this mean that Seville is one city and Sevilla is another? No, of course not) This is the same problem with God and Allah. How many born again Christian use the word Jehovah to describe the God of Abraham? Does that mean they are two different Gods? Of course not. Is the God of the Old Testament different from the God of the New? One again, of course not!

If you consider for a moment that Allah is not Yav nor God, then you are pulling the rug out from under the feet of the many missionaries who have spend years trying to take Christianity to the Moslems.

After being raised in the US in an active, church-going Christian family, and having lived abroad for 30 years, I have discovered that the western version of Christianity has become altered over the centuries to adapt to cultural implications of various nations. Our beliefs have incorporated heathen beliefs and customs, which are accepted, but are about as far from the truth as can possible be! (sorry about so many examples) We exchange presents at Christmas, and have a tree and the like, including Santa Claus, who was a saint. Where did it all come from?? First of all, Christ was not born on December 25. Based on the Bible description, and knowing weather conditions in the Mediterranean, I am sure that it was more like March or April, and according to my studies,

historically, the Wiseman visited Christ about July, so really, the best time of the year to have Christmas would be July, but change the business world on that point! Then, we have a tree….that all comes from the pre-Christian beliefs in northern Europe and England…the druids used to think that the (oak) trees died in winter because the gods left, so they decorated them to get the gods to come back….and they did, in Spring! Over the years, pine trees were decorated, and then people started bringing them into their houses, and the like. If you get down to the bottom line, then if you want to really celebrate Christ's birthday, then we'll have to throw out the heathen tree! The celebration in December 25….it is only 4 days later than the celebration of the coming of winter, a heathen practice in Stonage (UK). Personally, I would rather celebrate Christmas and gift giving in July, with no strings attacked, but then business is business!!

Thank you so much for taking the time to send such a thoughtful and educational letter! You have obviously gained a great deal of perspective in your time in Europe, and I appreciate all the things you've shared with me.

I would like to address your comment "Saying that the Moslems do not believe in the same God as us Christians do is totally mistaken." If you re-read my reasons for this statement, they have nothing to do with the word for God in English and Arabic, and everything to do with the character of Allah and of the God of the Bible. Because the article was written as a time-constrained radio transcript (aimed at a Christian audience), I was limited in what I could say. A strong case can certainly be made for the perspective that Muslims and Christians differ in our understanding of how God is revealed in the Bible and the Qur'an. I suppose it's something like the old story of the three blind men encountering different parts of an elephant: one felt its tail and said the animal was like a rope, the second felt its trunk and said it was like a tree, and the third felt its hide and said it was like a house. I do

believe that because the Bible is inspired and the Qur'an is not, we can trust what the Bible says and must see the Qur'an as a man-made book that, as you point out, borrows from both Judaism and Christianity. Thus, one view of God is correct and the other, while containing some truth about God, is incomplete and incorrect.

You mention the work of Christians trying to evangelize Muslims (an amazing task!). I see a parallel between their calling and Paul's sermon at the Areopagus, where he invoked the unknown god the Greeks worshipped and suggested that he could identify that unknown god for them, taking them from what they already knew to unfamiliar theological territory.

It's always hard, when we're trying to fit a large subject into a short amount of time, to strike the right balance between simplicity and accuracy. To be honest, my statement about Allah not being the same as the God of the Bible was directed at the well-meaning people who mistakenly believe "we all worship the same God with different names: God, Allah, Brahman, Buddha. . ." Certainly, Islam and Christianity have many points of similarity, particularly in terms of the fact they are both monotheistic, but there are too many Christians who don't understand the huge and significant differences.

I really appreciated your comments about the cultural aspects of Christianity. I think it's a challenge to Christians in every culture, in every time in history: to stick to Biblical Christianity and leave out what is cultural. As Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 4:6, "Do not go beyond what is written." A lot of people equate American (or Western) Christianity with Biblical Christianity, and they're not the same! You gave the excellent example of how we celebrate Christmas, by using imported pagan symbols and dates. I have also seen a difference in the way many American Christians view the use of alcohol compared to European Christians, and when one culture's taboos are imposed on another, misunderstandings occur and opportunities for bridge-building can be lost.

Thanks for sharing your thoughts with me.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"How Do I Witness About the New Age Movement?"

How do I witness about the New Age movement with firm intelligence but empathy?

There are a number of helpful books available which set forth a Christian response to the New Age Movement. I will recommend a few resources you might want to consider, but the bibliographies in most of these will direct you to many further resources as well.

1. *Embraced by the Darkness: Exposing New Age Theology from the Inside Out* by Brad Scott (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1996). Brad spent ten years involved in the New Age religion until converting to Christianity. He teaches at Golden Gate University.

2. *Confronting the New Age* and *Unmasking the New Age* by Douglas Groothuis (InterVarsity Press). Doug teaches at Denver Seminary.

3. *The New Age Movement and the Biblical Worldview* by John Newport (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998). This looks like a comprehensive resource by a distinguished professor of Philosophy of Religion at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

4. *Apologetics in the New Age: A Christian Critique of*

Pantheism by David Clark and Norman Geisler (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1990).

5. *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs* by John Ankerberg and John Weldon (Oregon: Harvest House, 1996).

6. I would also recommend checking out Marcia Montenegro's website at www.christiananswersforthenewage.org . Marcia was a former astrologer who was deeply involved in the New Age Movement prior to her conversion to Christianity. She has many helpful articles on her site. CANA stands for Christian Answers for the New Age. Please be sure to check out her site.

Finally, there is a brief article on the New Age Movement by Kerby Anderson on the Probe website. In addition, there are many other related articles in our "Cults and World Religions" section on our Web site at www.probe.org.

A careful study of some of these resources, combined with prayer and compassion for those you seek to reach, will be of great benefit to you as you seek to share Christ with those you love.

Best wishes in witnessing for Him,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

"You Are Too Harsh on Women Who Are Gender-Sensitive"

Dear Sue Bohlin,

In your article "Probe Answers Our E-Mail: What's Your

Position on Gender Neutral Bibles?" you write,

> *"I am also bothered by the unspoken assumption that women are too self-centered and hyper-sensitive not to be able to figure out that when the Bible—the very words of God Himself—uses the word "man" or "mankind" to refer to all humans, we can't figure that out without getting upset. Just about every language on the face of the planet uses the generic male pronoun to represent all people, but apparently our sensibilities are too finely-tuned to allow for readers of these newer translations to make the mental jump. . .! "*

I think it sounds a bit harsh. As a Christian woman, I have struggled for years to see that women have as much value to God as men because it seems to me that the Bible is mostly for men and about men. Women were created for men, must submit to men, and to be the help mate to men. I know that most people claim that women are not inferior to men but when I read the Scriptures, I see the inferiority very clearly. However – I find it helpful to read a Bible that uses pronouns and nouns that clearly show which verses refer to males only and which refer to all mankind. I don't appreciate the comment about not being able to make the mental jump to understand the idea that male pronouns are often inclusive. I don't think I am being self-centered, since I truly believe that women are inferior to men in God's eyes, but I am learning to accept that God has a right to make us for what ever purpose He chooses, even if this hurts very deeply and doesn't make sense to me. Was there really a need for you to be so hard on those of us who struggle with these issues?

Dear friend,

I regret that my article caused you pain. I'm not sure that it was me being harsh as much as your unfortunate (albeit understandable) tenderness and sensitivity at having been lied to about the inferiority of women. I think the high value of

women starts in the very beginning of the Bible when God deliberately makes Adam incomplete without Eve, and says it is not good for man to be alone. . . and then Paul fine-tunes that truth in 1 Cor. 11:7 when he says that man is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. If woman is the glory of the image and glory of God, then we are the best and most beautiful aspect of His creation! I love what John Eldredge writes in *Wild at Heart*: "Eve is the crown of creation, remember? She embodies the exquisite beauty and the exotic mystery of God in a way that nothing else in all creation even comes close to." Please also note the poignancy of his next sentence: "And so she is the special target of the Evil One; he turns his most vicious malice against her." I would respectfully suggest that your sensitivity may have been triggered by the arrows of the Evil One's "vicious malice" against you.

There is a strength and glory to men that is different from the strength and glory of women. When we look at the way the Lord Jesus treated women with such tenderness and respect and dignity, attributes totally unknown in the world at that time, we see what God REALLY thinks of women. He likes us; He loves us; He delights in us! He does not think we are, nor did He make us, inferior to men. We are different from men. He put the most beautiful and tender parts of Himself in US, to reflect His image in a way men cannot—just as there are wonderful parts of the Fatherhood of God that men reflect in ways we cannot. That is not a difference of value, but of function.

I truly ache that you struggle with the issue of women's value in the sight of God. My guess is that the way you've been treated by misogynistic men who do not protect and cherish women as God tells them to, has given you the wrong impression of what God thinks of us. I pray He shows you how very much He esteems you as a wonderful creation of His hand and heart.

I would like to invite you to listen to a powerful,

encouraging and comforting recording of the Lord Jesus speaking to His Bride, based on what He has said in His word and produced by a good friend of ours, Bob Singleton, here. This has been very touching to the people who have heard it, and I pray it will minister to your heart as well.

Warm blessings,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"I Heard a Radio Teacher Say Not to Go to Church Anymore"

I've been listening to a family radio talk show. The minister is saying on his show that you are not to go to church.

He said and I quote, "The Bible tells us that for 2000 years after the death of Jesus on the cross those who believe in Jesus were to go to church. But now we learn from the Bible that God is no longer saving people through the ministry of the churches. The church age has come to an end.

"Fact: God commands in his law book the Bible that the true believers are to leave their churches. This is because God is calling his righteous judgment upon all the local congregations as God prepares for Judgment Day, which is almost here."

My questions for you are:

1. How does this guy know that God does not want you to go to church?
2. Why would he say that? Isn't one of the Ten Commandments

“Keep holy the Sabbath day” and therefore means go to church? 3. How does he know that Judgment Day is almost here? Only God knows that, right?

Arrrgggghhhhhh!!! This would be a good person for you NOT to listen to anymore. He doesn’t know what he’s talking about. The “church age” has certainly NOT come to an end. The Bible is just as true today as it’s ever been, and it says, “…and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:24-25)

> *1. How does this guy know that God does not want you to go to church?*

He doesn’t. He got an idea in his head that’s not from God, because it contradicts God’s Word. God will never tell us anything that contradicts Himself.

> *2. Why would he say that? Isn’t one of the Ten Commandments “Keep holy the Sabbath day” and therefore means go to church?*
>
> *That is a very legitimate application of the commandment.*
>
> *3. How does he know that Judgment Day is almost here? Only God knows that, right?*
>
> *That’s true; however, Jesus told us that we would be able to see the signs of the end of the ages, and a lot of people believe things are so bad in the world that we must be getting near the end. But we CANNOT tell the future.*
>
> *The apostle John writes, “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” (1 John 4:1) I think this radio preacher is one of them. I think it makes God wince to have one of His people*

directing others to do something that goes against His word and His heart.

I'm glad you asked!

Cheerily,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"Can't Homosexuality Be Seen as Population Control?"

From an evolutionary perspective, wouldn't homosexuality be seen as a population control? This would then make it useful, contradicting to your assumptions made in the obviously biased partial commentary.

Many evolutionary biologists have wrestled with the widespread presence of homosexuality in human populations. Essentially, their quandry is not that homosexuality is present in large numbers (2-3% at most in any population), but that it is found in virtually all cultures and societies at least to some degree. Evolutionarily, this implies that there is some evolutionary benefit and some genetic component, which usually means it contributes to survival and reproductive success in some way. But how can that be when homosexuals reproduce at a far lesser rate than heterosexuals? The original sociobiologist, E. O. Wilson, stated the problem this way: "The homosexual state itself results in inferior genetic fitness, because of course homosexual men marry much less frequently and have far fewer children than their unambiguously heterosexual counterparts." (*Sociobiology: The*

New Synthesis, Belknap/Harvard, 1975, p. 555.) Evolutionary explanations require an immediate genetic benefit for the individual expressing the trait or behavior. Things such as "population control," as you suggest, require a cooperative spirit (technically referred to as group selection) that is normally considered outside direct genetic influence and is therefore rejected by most evolutionary biologists.

Most evolutionary biologists have tried to deal with the problem by one of two suggestions. First, the genes involving homosexuality (if there are indeed any at all, but so far there is no evidence for any) could be advantageous somehow in the heterozygous state (individuals who have one copy of a gene leading to homosexuality but not both and therefore not truly expressing the trait), and therefore the gene or genes are kept in the population that way even though when both copies are expressed in the same individual (homozygosity) reproduction is prevented. Second, some have suggested that homosexuals may gain a genetic fitness by being primarily helpers in raising offspring of their brothers and sisters, therefore preserving their own genes through aiding the survival of their nieces and nephews who carry about 1/8 of their own genes (technically referred to as kin selection). Aiding the survival of eight or more such nieces and nephews preserves a full complement of your genes into the next generation which is how natural selection supposedly works. Both of these options may at first sound reasonable but, neither of these options has a shred of evidence in support of it.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, Ph.D.
Probe Ministries

“How Do We Deal With Our Son’s Long Hair at Church?”

I have a teenage son who is wearing his hair long, just to the top of his shirt collar. He is an awesome son who loves God and witnesses along his daily walk in life. I have heard people at church say things to other kids like “If you don’t get your hair cut you’re going to look like _____.” And one parent even told their son “I don’t want you hanging around with the crazy long hair boy.” He has even heard things himself. I know him better than most, because he is my son. How do we as parents handle this within our church? I feel like everyone is looking to us to make him cut his hair. Are we as a Christian family setting a wrong example? I know God looks at the heart.

Well, I write this to you as the mom of a former teenager who came to church one Sunday with his hair not only long but GREEN . . . when my husband was chairman of the board of elders!

There are certain areas where it’s safe for our kids to display the fact that they are different and distinct from us, and hair is one of those areas. It’s not a moral issue, it’s not a character issue, it’s a cultural issue. When you can see that his heart is good and that he loves the Lord, the hair thing just doesn’t matter. . . because in a few years he will choose differently, I’ll bet.

If I were in your shoes, I would not say anything to the other people in your church because it really isn’t any of their business. And if they said something to me, I would smile and say, “You know, it’s not the way I would choose for him to wear his hair, but we’re so proud of his heart and his character that it just outshines the length of his hair. We’d rather have a son with long hair who walks with the Lord than

a son with short hair who ignores Him."

And then tell yourself that it's unfortunate that the people in your church are being judgmental and shallow, because they are.

For what it's worth,

Sue Bohlin

P.S. The Lord took care of the hair thing with our son in time. . . he developed severe male-pattern baldness while in college. He's now completely bald on top and, since he's in the Air Force, it's shaved WAY short.

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"How Do Christians Respond to the Fact of Evolution?"

After reading one of your articles on Creation vs. Evolution I understood every aspect of their respective arguments, I was just a little a confused as far as Christian responses to the arguments. Do Christians acknowledge evolution but then just say that God has pre-ordained this evolution to happen? Or do Christians just ignore the fact that evolution exists? Maybe I am making this too complicated. If Christians can see that an organism changes over time to adapt with the environment for absolutely no apparent reason, does this mean that they acknowledge this change happened for no apparent reason thus evolution, or just that God made this change possible?

Christians respond differently to the questions you propose. Some Christians, indeed, suggest that God ordained the

evolutionary process as His means to create. These usually refer to their position as *theistic evolution* or *evolutionary creation.* As far as I know, no Christian ignores that "evolution" happens. All recognize microevolution as a real process in response to environmental change. This does not require mutation or the establishment of new genetic or morphologic systems. Change over time is only one form of evolution, which no one objects to. What we believe there is insufficient evidence for, is the notion that all life forms today are descended from a single original life form that itself evolved from purely chemical precursors around 4 billion years ago.

I hope this helps.

Respectfully,

Dr. Ray Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"How Do I Find Someone to Mentor Me?"

Hello Ray!

I am not sure if you know who I am, but I was one of the participants in your singles conference at _____.

I just spent some time on the Probe website and was reading one of Lou Whitworth's articles on being God's man (king, warrior, mentor and friend).

I know you spoke to us about having a mentor in your life. Since then, I have heard two of our pastors and Chuck Swindoll

speak about the need for mentoring as well. I am really trying to allow God's will to direct my life and this subject keeps coming up. I believe this is a step He wants me to take, but I am not sure how to go about it. Would it be possible for you to help me find a mentor? If not, would you know someone who could help me?

Any assistance you could provide me is be sincerely appreciated.

Hi _____,

A mentor generally needs to be someone who is at least 10 to 15 years older and someone whose walk with the Lord you respect. Asking someone to be your mentor can be a little intimidating. But just asking if you can meet together to pray and enjoy some fellowship sounds a lot more doable to other men. Is there anyone you admire from afar? If no one comes to mind I would suggest inquiring of a pastor for suggestions. They often know of older saints who would be willing to enter into this kind of relationship but don't know of anyone interested.

It's a real problem in the church and there are a lot of men willing to be mentored but a shortage of those willing to share their life's lessons with someone younger (often for fear of not looking so good in the process—a mentor needs to be real enough to admit failures but also have a healthy view of their strengths). They have no model to follow themselves. All that to say it is not likely that this will be a quick and easy search. Above all pray for the Lord's direction and for Him to prepare someone even now.

I commend you for sensing this need and reaching out to try and fill it!

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin

“What Will Keep Us From Being Jealous About Others’ Rewards in Heaven?”

If Christians in heaven are given different amounts of rewards in heaven, what prevents us from being jealous over other people’s reward in heaven? I know that our body, mind, and soul all changed after we have got into heaven and that we should have no thoughts about jealousy. But if that is true, are we just like dummies, where we just think about good things? Are we prevented from thinking about jealousy in heaven? How can God prevent us from ever sinning again in heaven if He doesn’t mind control us, because Angels in heaven were once good, but Satan turned bad. How can an angel turn bad? If God wasn’t able to prevent angels from turning bad, how can He prevent people in heaven from turning bad without mind controlling them?

Boy, lots of questions! Let me do my best:

> *If Christians in heaven are given different amounts of rewards in heaven, what prevents us from being jealous over other people’s reward in heaven? I know that our body, mind, and soul all changed after we have got into heaven and that we should have no thoughts about jealousy.*

The best way to understand this that I have encountered is this: When we become a Christian, God gives us a new heart, and He comes to dwell in our spirits. Our spirits are the part of us that were designed to be indwelled by God, but ever

since the fall of Adam, all of us were born with our spirits dead. At salvation they become alive.

Now imagine that He plants a tiny seed of new life in our spirits at salvation. As we trust and obey Him, as we learn to love Him, as we pursue growth through prayer, Bible study, discipleship and submission, our spirit grows. Some people's growth is much greater than others who are content to coast along in spiritual mediocrity. (That has something to do with the differing rewards in heaven, too.) So our spirits can grow bigger and stronger inside. On the outside is our flesh, that part of us that functions apart from God—our own strength and power. This is the part of us where jealousy dwells (as well as other fruits of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21).

It has been suggested that at death, our flesh disappears, leaving our spirits and souls (personalities) to enter heaven. (That would make sense, since our flesh is unholy and only holy things can be in heaven.) So there we are in heaven, with whatever level of spiritual maturity and growth we had attained at death. No matter how "big" our spirits are, there is nothing in those God-indwelled, God-built spirits that can be jealous like our flesh was. It's sort of like what happens after you have an appendectomy or a tonsillectomy—there's nothing there to get infected anymore, so you can't get appendicitis or tonsillitis. It's gone forever. Our flesh is "infected" with sin, so after the flesh falls away at death, there's no spiritual infection anymore.

> *But if that is true, are we just like dummies, where we just think about good things? Are we prevented from thinking about jealousy in heaven?*

Let's go back to my appendectomy illustration. Would you remember the pain of appendicitis after your appendix is out? Sure. Would you want your appendix back? Not usually! We'll remember feeling jealous like all our other sins, and we'll be delighted to be rid of the infection of our sin. It will be

like returning to health after a long illness, except that it will be more like gaining a new dimension of health we have never experienced on earth. It's not that we'll be robots, unable to think anything but "happy thoughts". . . We will be free to ONLY think good thoughts and ONLY do good things, for the first time in our lives. That will be true freedom—to be the people we were created to be, without the dragging, disgusting, difficult influence of sinful flesh.

Or, to give another illustration, have you ever had a shopping cart with a wobbly wheel that kept veering off course when you wanted to go straight? It takes a lot of energy to make it go in the direction you want to go because of that corrupt, wobbly wheel. In heaven, it will be like having four perfect wheels that always take you where your true self wants to go—in ways that always glorify and please God. And you!

> *How can God prevent us from ever sinning again in heaven if He doesn't mind control us?*

This is a great time to point to the Lord Jesus as the perfect example of what mankind was supposed to be. The First Adam sinned and became so much less than what God intended us to be; but Jesus, the Second Adam, showed us what Adam's character would have looked like without sin. How did God the Father prevent God the Son from sinning when He was on earth? He didn't have to: the very nature of God the Son was to do the will of God and GLORY in that obedience and fellowship with the Father. Just as the nature of a fruit tree is to bear fruit and the nature of a domestic dog is to love and be loyal to its master, the true nature of man is to love God and enjoy Him forever. When we're in heaven, all the things that prevent us from being the people God made us to be will have been taken out of the way, and we will be free to be who we really are. There won't be anything in heaven tempting us or influencing us to sin, because the part that is vulnerable to sin (our flesh) will be gone. Just like the inflamed appendix.

because Angels in heaven were once good, but Satan turned bad. How can an angel turn bad? If God wasn't able to prevent angels from turning bad, how can He prevent people in heaven from turning bad without mind controlling them.

The angels, like us, had the gift of choice, to serve and obey God, or to rebel. God gave them the choice for the same reason He gave US the choice: because He wants to be freely wanted and pursued and loved, just like we do! They made their choice sometime between the creation of the world and the fall of Adam. They have been living with the eternal consequences of that choice ever since, either for good or for evil. When we're in heaven, we will be living with the delightful eternal consequences of our choice to trust Christ. It's not a matter of God mind-controlling us—it's a matter of God saying, "OK, the fight is over, now enjoy the freedom that comes with having made the right choice on earth. Your true heart's desire to BE good and DO good won't be compromised by your flesh here in heaven. Enjoy!" That's a long way from making us puppets. It's like my privilege as a parent to say to my about-grown kids, "I'm so glad you chose to spend the weekend here with us instead of out carousing with people bent on self-indulgence and destruction. I've made your favorite dinner and I'd like to take you to your favorite store and get you a gift. Enjoy the fruits of your wise choice!" That's not controlling my sons—it's lavishing love on them. You could ask them if they feel that their dad and I are controlling them, and they'd look at you like, "Huh?"

I hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin

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“When Was the Book of Job Written?”

When was the book of Job written? How do we know it was written then since we don’t know who wrote the book and when Job lived?

Top Ten Reasons Why We Believe the Book of Job was Written During the Time of the Patriarchs

1. Job lived 140 years after his calamities (42:16). This corresponds with the lifespans of the patriarchs. For example, Abraham lived 175 years.

2. Job’s wealth was reckoned in livestock (1:3; 42:12) which was also true of Abraham (Gen. 12:16) and Jacob (Gen. 30:43).

3. The Sabeans and Chaldeans (Job 1:15, 17) were nomads in Abraham’s time, but in later years were not.

4. The Hebrew word (qsitah) translated “piece of silver” (42:11) is used elsewhere only twice (Gen. 33:19, Josh. 24:32). Both times are in reference to Jacob.

5. Job’s daughters were heirs of his estate along with their brothers (Job. 42:15). This was not possible later under the Mosaic Law if a daughter’s brothers were still living (Num. 27:8).

6. Literary works similar in some ways to the Book of Job were written in Egypt and Mesopotamia around the time of the patriarchs.

7. The Book of Job includes no references to the Mosaic institutions (priesthood, laws, tabernacle, special religious

days and feasts).

8. The name (sadday) is used of God 31 times in Job (compared with 17 times elsewhere in the Old Testament) and was a name familiar to the patriarchs.

9. Several personal and place names in the book were also associated with the patriarchal period. Examples include (a) Sheba – a grandson of Abraham, (b) Tema – another grandson of Abraham, (c) Eliphaz – a son of Esau, (d) Uz – a nephew of Abraham.

10. Job was a common West Semitic name in the second millennium B.C. Job was also a name of a 19th-century-B.C. prince in the Egyptian Execration texts.

Kerby Anderson
Probe Ministries