



# PARACLETE

ADVOCATING FOR THE TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

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## COMFORT ONE ANOTHER

By Dr. Don Bierle, *FaithSearch* President

I doubt if I have heard a newscast in the last few months without hearing the word “death.” **COVID-19 has put death on most people’s mind—world-wide.** The only place you can go to get **good news** about death today is the teaching of Jesus in the Bible:

- *“I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies...”* (John 11:25)
- *“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life...has passed out of death into life”* (John 5:24)
- *“...and He shall wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall no longer be any death...”* (Revelation 21:4)
- *“O death, where is your victory? ...thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Corinthians 15:55,57)



No wonder that Christian believers find **comfort in the face of death** at this time of COVID-19, especially compared to unbelievers who have no eternal basis for hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13)! In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus promised His own, *“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted”* (Matthew 5:4).

**Death certainly and biblically is an enemy** (1 Corinthians 15:25-26). It is ultimately (and originally) sourced in sin (Romans 5:12; John 6:23). The great news

for believers is that **Jesus’ death on the cross was our substitute** (1 Peter 3:18), achieved for us *“repentance for the forgiveness of sin”* (Luke 24:46-47), and placed us eternally and securely as children of God (John 1:12-13).

As a result of God’s grace, Jesus’ words in the Upper Room are **our inheritance**:

*Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me. There are many rooms in my Father’s house... I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am* (John 14:1-3 NIV).

The believer is assured that *“God comforts the depressed”* (2 Corinthians 7:6) because He is the *“God of all comfort”* (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). **If you desire this Divine comfort** but have never confessed Jesus as your Savior or lack assurance of a personal relationship with God, go to our Web site ([www.faithsearch.org](http://www.faithsearch.org)) and download or print the free Bible study, **“Becoming New in Christ”** (click on its slider on the opening screen). It will guide you through Scripture to a confession of faith.

I pray that you will do this so you can claim for yourself the comfort of God offered by the apostle Paul to the believers at Thessalonica:

*Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father,*

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## IN THE NEWS

### *Carpool Tomfoolery*



Last July, Nevada state troopers ticketed a hearse driver who claimed the corpse he was carrying should qualify his vehicle for HOV (high-occupancy vehicle) lane privileges!

### *World’s Worst Cat*

An animal shelter in North Carolina was having trouble placing a badly behaving cat. That is, until they posted the following description of the finicky feline:

*We thought Perdita was sick but turns out she’s just a jerk. She likes isolation, lurking in corners, jumping at people who pass her by, and staring into your soul until you feel as if you may never be cheerful again.*

They immediately received 175 applications from people eager to adopt the so-called jerk cat!

Source: *World Magazine*, Vol. 35, Number 4; Feb. 29, 2020, p 21.



## FOR REFLECTION

**Was Jesus Misinformed?**

The idea of Jesus being misinformed is preposterous to a believer who is informed by the evidence of His historical ministry. **His identity as the incarnation of God is attested by His own claims and His works recorded by eyewitnesses** (see my book, *Surprised by Faith*, chapter 3). As God, His knowledge of all things—including science and history—is impeccable.

**How could He possibly be misinformed?**

Some biblical archaeology scholars, however, do not believe in the inspiration of Scripture by the Holy Spirit, (i.e. they reject the evidence referenced above). As such, the words of Jesus regarding the global flood—or any other miraculous occurrence—are to them “misinformation.” They apparently cannot accept the veracity of Jesus’ words, recorded in Matthew 24:37-39, when He said:

*For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.*



Wood engraving by French illustrator Bernard Solomon, ca.1853, depicting the account of Noah's ark.

If the flood was not global, not only Jesus was misinformed. The apostle Peter was also repeating “fake news” (2 Peter 2:5; 3:6), as was Moses (Genesis 6:7).

The Biblical Archaeology Society publishes a journal (*Biblical Archaeology Review*) to which I often turn for discoveries relevant to the Bible. I also need to recognize that

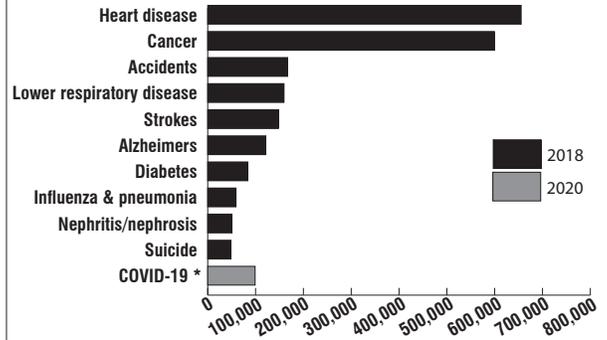
**many scientific scholars who contribute to the journal have a bias** regarding miraculous events. To them, Jesus’ miracles, the resurrection, and the creation itself must have naturalistic explanations.

One of their recent promotions, “Noah and the flood: Beyond Babylon, Beyond Hollywood,” includes statements like these:

- “Even if it didn’t happen, it’s a true story.”
- “...the Genesis tale...”
- “Although the great flood may not have happened exactly as Genesis relates it... even a relatively small flood can be catastrophic if it kills many people in your village, and from this local trauma a story can grow and grow, until it takes on cosmic proportions.”

It is obvious the authors have difficulty acknowledging the global flood miracle by God (as recorded in Genesis 6-8) and

the inspiration of Scripture (see 2 Timothy 3:16-17). The Christian believer understands that since a personal God exists, these biblical positions are not unreasonable. I advise Christians not to be afraid of scholarly research, but always to run its conclusions through the grid of a biblical worldview. God’s Word admonishes us to “Do your best to win full approval in God’s sight... [to be] one who correctly teaches the message of God’s truth” (2 Timothy 2:15, TEV). Scripture also reminds us, “We have not

**Leading Causes of Death in the USA<sup>†</sup>**

<sup>†</sup> Data from National Center for Health Statistics for the last complete year available, 2018, as reported in *World Magazine*.  
\* COVID-19 statistics for the partial year, as of May 27, 2020, as reported by the US Centers for Disease Control.

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*who has loved us and given us eternal hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17).*

Sources: *World Magazine*, Vol. 35, Number 8, 4/25/20, p. 15 (based on 2018 data provided by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)). COVID-19 death data from US Centers for Disease Control, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/cases-in-us.html>, accessed on 5/27/2020.

*“Our greatest work is still ours every day—the work of prayer. Prayer knows no boundary, no quarantine, no confinement.”* —SIM international director **Joshua Bogunjoko** in a letter to thousands of missionaries in thirty-eight countries who are isolated by COVID-19.

Source: *World Magazine*, Vol. 35, No. 9; May 9, 2020, p. 43

*received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given to us... we have the mind of Christ”* (1 Corinthians 2:12,16, NIV).

The universe, humanity, and history cannot be correctly understood without reference to God’s revelation of truth in the Bible, Jesus, and creation.

Source: Biblical Archaeology Society Online Archive: <https://www.baslibrary.org/biblical-archaeology-review/40/4/13>

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