

The Bible: An Endangered Species?

Joe Slater

Quickly now! Who was King Jehoiakim? What outstanding facts are known about him? I suspect most of us would have to research that before answering with any confidence. But here's another question: Who was Jeremiah? Ah, that one's easier, isn't it? Almost everyone reading this article will at least have heard of Jeremiah, and many will know quite a lot about him and the Bible book bearing his name.

Why are we familiar with Jeremiah, but not so much with Jehoiakim? Did you know the two are associated? Wicked King Jehoiakim cut up the scroll of Jeremiah's prophecies and burned it! This arrogant, foolish king made quite a spectacle of his disdain for God's word. You can almost hear the laughter in his court as, after only three or four columns of the scroll had been read, Jehoiakim took his pen knife, sliced the scroll to bits, and tossed them into the fire burning on his hearth (Jeremiah 26:23). Today, however, 2600+ years later, hardly anyone knows who Jehoiakim is; but millions know Jeremiah and have repeatedly read the very words that the haughty monarch tried to destroy!

In the 1700s, the French atheist Voltaire pompously predicted the extinction of the Bible and of Christianity within 100 years. By the time 50 years were up, Voltaire himself was "extinct," and in the house where he had lived, the Geneva Bible Society was printing . . . you guessed it . . . Bibles!

Today, atheists and secular progressives of all stripes are in full-bore attack mode against God, the Bible, Christianity, and anything related to these. Hostility pours forth from politicians, entertainers, journalists, and even religious leaders. Rest assured, however, God's word is not an endangered species!

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" (Matthew 24:35). Like Jehoiakim and Voltaire, the current crop of critics will pass into the dust bin of history, but the Bible will remain!

<> <> <> <> <> <> <>

FAITHFUL?

A neurologist at the Children's Hospital of Michigan has done research that reveals the great capacity of growing human brains to absorb information.

He discovered that by age 2, the infant's cortex is operating at adult levels. At age 4, that child's brain is twice as active as the adult brain, and continues at that rate until age 10, when it begins to slow down. By 16, it has slacked off to the pace at which it continues through adulthood.

God's wisdom is seen in His stressing the importance of instilling in children the truths of His word at an early age (Proverbs 22:16; Deuteronomy 6:4-7). By exposing them to a large quantity of Bible teaching in their early years, we can be instrumental in programming their "mental computers" so that they know the mind of God and think as He does.

As they reach adulthood, they can then choose to have good, honest hearts that will make them followers of the Lord (Luke 8:15)

--Mike Mayes (via *House-to-House/Heart-to-Heart*)

() () () () () ()

I am often, I believe, praying for others when I should be doing things for them. It's so much easier to pray for a bore than to go and see him.

--C. S. Lewis (*Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*)

Whatever It Takes

Someone once noted that there are two kinds of people in this world: those who say, "whatever," and those who say, "Whatever it takes." "Whatever" is the response of the shrug. It is a "who cares?" attitude, one of indifference and apathy. "Whatever it takes" is the response of the committed. It is a "can do" attitude, one that is optimistic and refuses to give up or give in.

Think about those two responses when it comes to some of the commands Christians are given in the Scriptures. We are admonished to avoid sin and to pursue holiness (2 Timothy 2:22). "Whatever" is the reply of most. We are told to love our neighbors (Matthew 22:39). "Whatever," many respond. We are directed to help the needy (Ephesians 4:28). "Whatever," is the cynical reaction. We are instructed to fellowship with the brethren (Hebrews 10:24-25). "Whatever," some say. Jesus said to go and make disciples of all people (Matthew 28:19-20). "Whatever!"

Now, let's change those responses to "Whatever it takes." Avoid wrongdoing. Love your neighbor. Help the poor. Fellowship with the church. Speak to the lost. "Whatever it takes" should be the reply and the actions of the faithful. Can you truly say, when you read a command in the Bible, "Whatever it takes. Whatever it costs. Whatever the consequences. I will do what God wants me to do"?

Edd Sterchi (Campbellsville, KY)