

Going Up To Jerusalem

By Van Yandell
Exodus 29: 43&45 “And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God.

Much of the terminology in the Bible is based on first century, (and previous centuries), knowledge at the time.

Also, many of the Bible usages concerning such things as geographic directions are based on factors we may not consider today.

For example, the Bible often states “going up to Jerusalem.” (Matthew 20: 18, 1 Kings 12: 27, John 2: 13) We may think of “going up” as meaning going in a northerly direction.

In Bible speak, “going up to Jerusalem” is because Jerusalem is a high point in that specific geographic location. Mt. Moriah, the location of the first and second Jerusalem Temple, is 2700 feet above sea level. Jericho is 850 feet below sea level and only seventeen miles from Jerusalem. The trip is definitely uphill all the way.

The Dead Sea is 1200 feet below sea level and only twenty-five miles from Jerusalem. The coastal cities in Israel are of course, at or near sea level. It doesn’t matter where one is traveling from (walking in Bible times) the trek is up hill; thus “up to

Jerusalem.” We must also consider the Bible reference to “the world.” Their world was less in area than the eastern part of the U.S.

Matthew 24: 9 “Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake.”

“All nations” would have been different from today. Whereas there are 195 countries in the world today, how many nations were there in 33 AD? We could probably come up with a close number but with over 2000 years passed, the history of nations could easily have been convoluted.

We continually try to make the Bible fit into our current day conditions of speech, geographic, social and economic conditions.

At times, considering the differences in usages (then and now), the meaning we glean from our Bible studies can completely change. Most Christians believe the Holy Bible was written by forty men over a period of 1600 years, and their inspiration came from God.

Since such an opinion may be true, we still should consider the time factor involved. The knowledge of the planet earth possessed by those forty writers and the interpreting in the King James Bible (Published 1611) and those compiling other

versions was limited. Understanding these and other considerations are open for opinions, it becomes logical to regard the differences in time and space.

Personally I have to think that if God inspired the writing of the Holy Bible, He would possibly have inspired the translating of the numerous versions. While those were mostly composed with a “sell-the-product” motivation; whether or not God inspired them is certainly up for opinion.

The examples of changing understandings throughout the Bible are numerous. Conditions currently identified as such as epilepsy, blindness or mental illnesses were thought to be demonic possession.

This, of course would be impossible to disprove but current “medical wisdom” indicates injuries, chemical imbalances or short circuits in the brain as being the causes of such conditions.

I was in a village in East Africa and saw a little boy with numerous one inch scars on his chest and belly. The attending physician (witch doctor) had cut holes in him when he was ill, to let out the evil spirits.

The child survived and appeared healthy when I saw him. Consequently, the people of the village believed

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the doctor’s treatment cured him.

Such beliefs are in the thousands and we seldom consider all the possibilities. Our presumptions are sometimes not logical but we also know we believe what we want to believe and researchers usually publish findings that agree with their points of view.

There is one Bible teaching we can take at its face value. That would be the Biblical plan of eternal life. Regardless of one’s denominational affiliation, the fundamental of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the same.

The Bible teaches there is only one eternal salvation; that is by a faith based belief (Ephesians 2: 8) that Christ Jesus was crucified (Matthew 27: 35) for the remission of sin (Romans 4: 25), resur-

rected (Matthew 28: 6) and ascended alive into Heaven (Acts 1: 9).

In today’s world, the church places value on many conditions and situations the Bible does not support. The Bible says nothing about the church accumulating wealth for the sake of “having wealth.”

The only reference to buildings is in 1 Kings 6, the building of King Solomon’s Temple. The building of cathedrals and large elaborate church buildings is not supported by scripture. Many of us believe (Matthew 16: 18) the church is the people, not a building.

One such example of changed meanings is the word “tabernacle.” That word is currently used in the name of many churches but in Old Testament times (Exodus) a tabernacle

was a portable/movable structure (tent) that adapted to the nomadic nature in the middle-east of the people in that day and time.

Passage of time and generational handed-down information is many times misleading or inaccurate. Always read the Bible to determine what it really says and consider the passage of time.

Does it matter what we believe about the issues that divide Christians? Only eternity and how to be a part of it does matter.

The next time you go “up to Jerusalem” be prepared for an uphill trek; and you may not be heading north.

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Source: Pulse of America Research Study, February, 2017

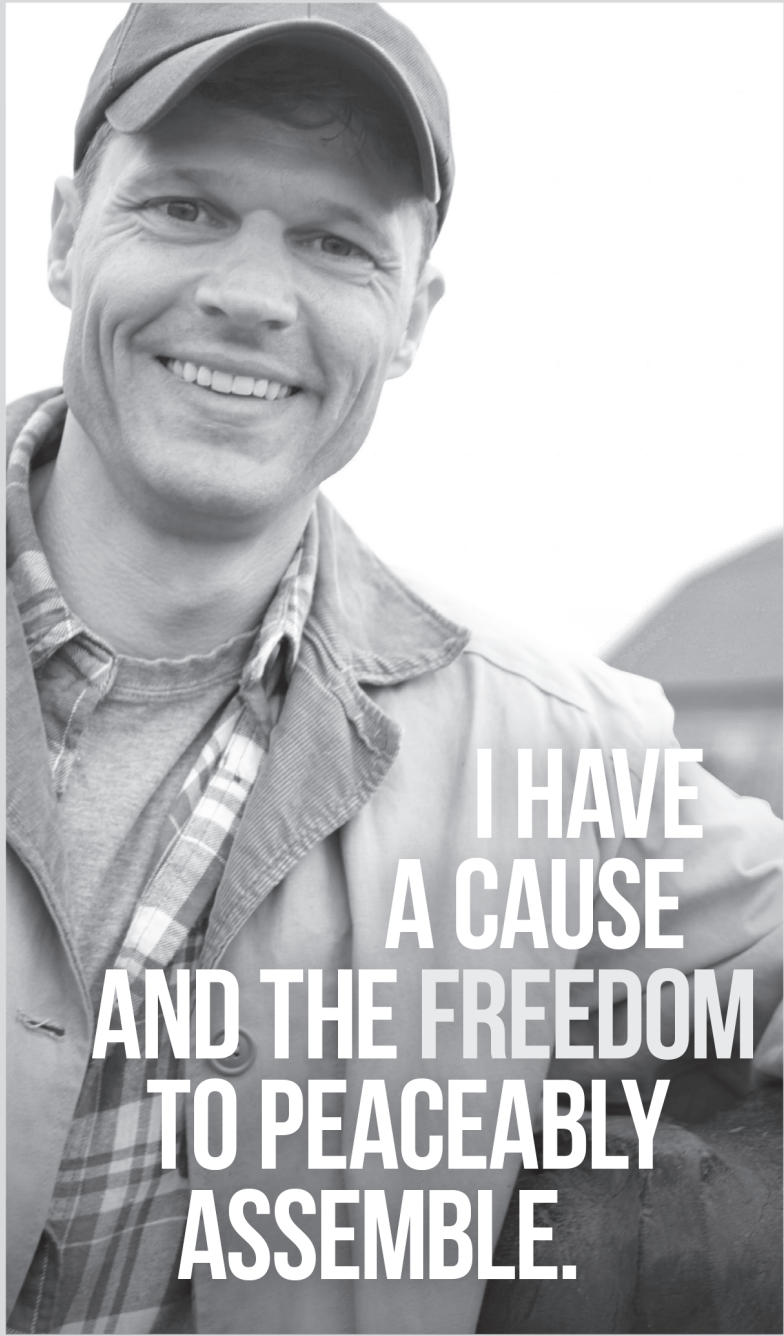
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