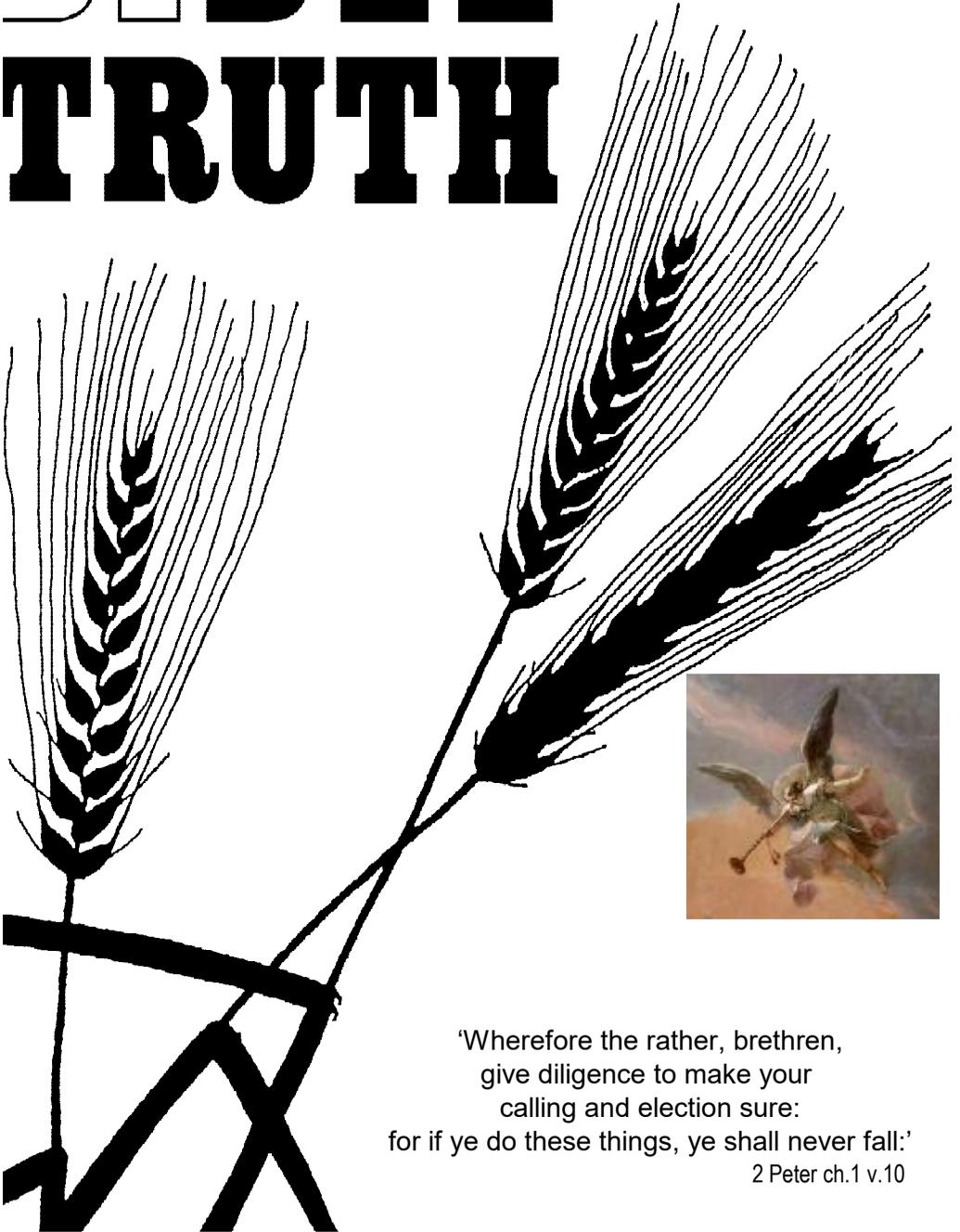


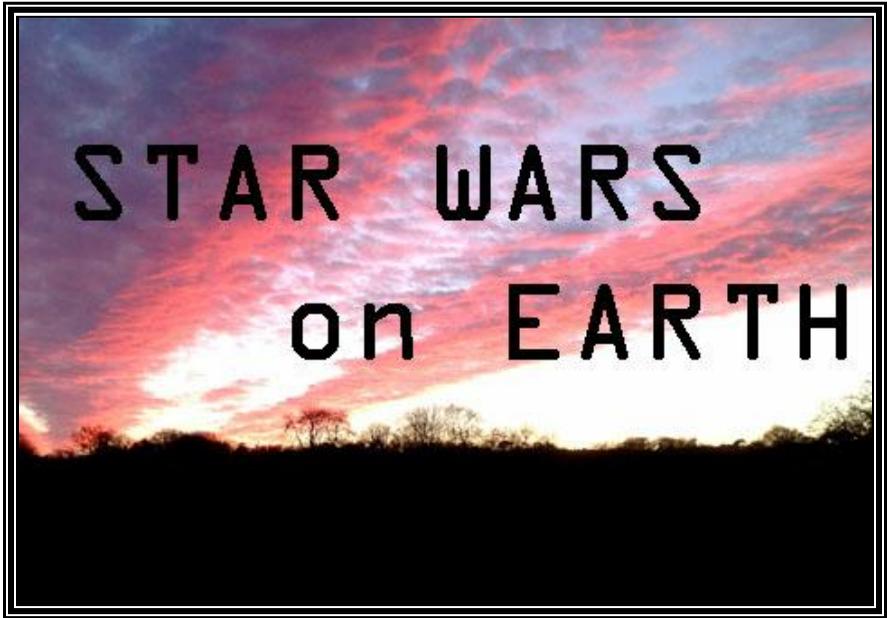
# BIBLE TRUTH

No. 281  
January/March 2016



'Wherefore the rather, brethren,  
give diligence to make your  
calling and election sure:  
for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:'

2 Peter ch.1 v.10



by Paul Boyd-Lee

The latest Star Wars film, opened at UK cinemas last December in readiness for Christmas audiences by smashing the biggest box office debut weekend globally. It was filmed at England's Pinewood studios and is said to have added £150m to the British economy.

Because it was to be shown during Advent the Church of England purchased advertising space to precede the feature with a short film featuring the Archbishop of Canterbury and members of the public reading The Lord's Prayer. However, just weeks prior to its release Odeon and Cineworld owned Digital Cinema Media (DCM) which handles cinema advertising in the UK, withdrew consent for its showing on the grounds that its policy precluded political or religious commercials that might offend audiences. The outcome of all this has not only been more publicity for the film but also highlights the ridiculous situation the country has got itself into with recent legislation relating to equality and that causing offence. Even the Prime Minister, David Cameron, waded into the ensuing discussion calling the move by DCM as 'ridiculous'.

The Church subsequently lodged a complaint with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) on the grounds of discrimination and restricting religious freedom. The EHRC say they are alarmed by DCM's policy which raises issues of freedom of religion beyond the advertisement itself, and have urged DCM to reverse their decision. Something that at the time of writing they are not willing to do. So in essence this is but one example to show the state of play between religion, political correctness and mammon in 21st-Century Britain.

What has the film to do with planet Earth and the Bible? Quite a lot. The names and intentions of its characters read something like Pilgrim's Progress because they have their counterparts in earthly and spiritual beings.

### **How logical is a Star War?**

- In scientific terms stars are suns, so clearly this is not a battle fought between them. Just think of the huge amount of heat generated if it were, and a terrifying thought at that!
- So, in one way it is nonsense to talk about Stars or Suns warring against each other. Interestingly though, scripture does make a connection between them which will unfold later.
- In short, the films portray a galactic conflict, a war in the heavens rather than a solar one. The latest film is called 'The Force Awakens'; the trailer starts off with the words '... in a galaxy far, far away ...' i.e. in the heavens somewhere. This in itself gives hint of conflict between heaven and earth which is a very biblical matter.

Many science fiction stories base their theme on good and evil; in most of them good wins over evil and this film series is no exception. Because the outcome of evil tends to corruption and corrupting itself, that leads to its end. So there would be no more in the Star Wars series if 'good did not win'! As it happens, corruption features early on in the Bible and is significant here.

'... for all flesh **had corrupted his way upon the earth**. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.'

Genesis ch.6 v 12-13

But that was not the end of the matter, its head rises again with a similar situation and outcome prophesied for the Last Days.

‘... then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And **except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved.** ... But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.’

Matthew ch.24 vv 21-22 & 37

*(Noe is the Greek name for Noah)*

In Star Wars there are safe places; likewise Noah had the ‘Ark’ daubed with pitch signifying salvation, and today Christians find safety in salvation so another similarity is found here.

### **How much are the Star Wars films fantasy?**

Most people see Star Wars films as pure fantasy, yet many of the people that watch them will also be found at a computer games console actively playing out a similar drama. In other words while at one moment they passively watch fiction, at another they are actively engaging with fantasy. Later the same people could well be on a public road engaging with high speed traffic with the same zest as they had been doing with computer games. This sort of behaviour can be found in Board Rooms, pressure groups and so on; ‘domination’ is the name of the game. Thus in this respect we are already seeing a sort of ‘Star Wars’ behaviour on earth.

So the films not only mirror much of the world around us but perhaps the world of the ancient past from the aspect of ‘as it was in the days of Noah’ as well.

The film also opens up the subject of a dualism that exists between the ‘realm of Heaven’ and the ‘realm of Earth’.

As we look up into the night sky, galaxies can be seen which are relatively tangible in as much that we can speculate on what they are made of, the number of their suns, planets and so on. Contrast this with praying ‘Our Father which art in heaven’. Clearly there is a dimension beyond what we are familiar with, compared with an Alice through the looking glass concept which opens up a whole new world. In essence then there are two different realms, one material, the other invisible and spiritual, but just as real all the same.

## The meaning of stars

The word 'star' normally makes us think of glittering diamonds in the night sky. The word can also be used in another way, such as describing a notable person like a footballer, an actor or someone who does brilliantly at something and becomes known as a 'star'. Note the term 'brilliant', they outshine all around..

This principle of brilliance introduces a way the Bible uses the word star, namely through symbolism. In this, the word is used in a very specific sense of representing a heavenly or other being. What sort of being is described in the biblical words and is found by its context, which makes the meaning clear.

For example, Revelation ch.1 vv 13,16 & 20 shows the principle.

' ... one like unto the Son of man .... had in his right hand **seven stars**: ... The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. **The seven stars are the angels** of the seven churches: ... .'

Thus from this passage and elsewhere it is deduced that stars can represent Angels. This interchange between angels and stars in the Bible is not unusual as the Psalmist shows in this comparison.

'When I consider thy heavens, **the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars**, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? **For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels**, ...'

Psalm 8 vv 3-5

Hebrews reiterates the same theme.

'... What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? **Thou madest him a little lower than the angels**; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, ...'

Hebrews ch.2 vv 6-7

## Jesus as a star

There are several indications of this use in scripture such as when Balaam prophesied concerning Israel and said regarding the coming of the King of kings,

' ... there shall come **a Star** out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, ... '

Numbers ch.24 v.17

It is worth noting how much emphasis was put on the star that led the Wise Men to the divine being Jesus, as well as on the Mount of Transfiguration where a voice uttered,

'... This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, **and the day star arise in your hearts:**'

2 Peter ch.1 vv 17-19

The idea of the Lord Jesus being seen as a star is confirmed in Revelation ch. 2 in the context of nations and government.

'And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And **I will give him the morning star.**'

Revelation ch.2 vv 27-28

To add weight to the idea the Apocalypse concludes with,

**'I Jesus ... am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.'**

Revelation ch.22 v.16

### **Satan is also symbolised as a star but of a very different sort**

Astronomers talk of 'black dwarf' stars describing them as 'white dwarfs' that have cooled sufficiently that they no longer emit significant heat or light. How did this come about in relation to Satan? What does the Bible say about it? Quite a lot as the following verses show.

'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, **I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: ...'**

Isaiah ch.14 vv 12-13

'And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, **I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.'**

Luke ch.10 vv 17-18

'And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it **cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground**, and stamped upon them.'

Daniel ch.8 vv 9-10

‘And the third angel sounded, and **there fell a great star from heaven**, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And **the name of the star is called Wormwood**: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.’

Revelation ch.8 vv 10-11

‘And the fifth angel sounded, and **I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth**: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.’

Revelation ch.9 v.1

‘These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; **wandering stars**, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.’

Jude vv 12-13

The last text suggests Black Dwarf stars hinted at by astronomers mentioned earlier. Prophecies such as these make it clear that there truly is a war of the Stars here on Earth as well as pointing to a time factor for the event. John the Divine gives great reason for this.

‘And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, ...’

John ch.14 vv 29-30

## The Great battle

We are already in an age of world wars and have been commemorating them of late.

Though the first World War was described as a ‘war to end all wars’, sadly that has not been the case. In fact shortly after the second World War nuclear arsenals appeared and space exploration began. These events have led some people to see fulfilment of Obadiah’s prophecy as hinting at some future war from space.

‘... concerning Edom; ... Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set **thy nest among the stars**, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.’

Obadiah ch.1 vv 1 & 4

Indeed the many satellites now circling the earth give some credence to this idea.

## The line up of the armies in this Star Wars

Who are the Commanders? On one side is Satan, the 'fallen star', on the other Jesus Christ, 'the bright and morning star'. The Bible gives clues to how the great battle of the stars begins.

'And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and **in the stars**; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;'

Luke ch.21 v.25

'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the **stars shall fall from heaven**, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven.'

Matthew ch.24 vv 29-30

'And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the **stars of heaven fell unto the earth**, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.'

Revelation ch.6 vv 12-13

'Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and **the stars shall withdraw their shining.**'

Joel ch.3 vv 14-15

It is difficult to assess how much of this happens literally, is spiritual, a mental battle, conscience, or heart, but it is a dramatic battle.

'And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels. And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And **the great dragon was cast out**, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, **and his angels were cast out with him.**'

Revelation ch.12 vv 7-9

Note that angels are symbolised by stars.

The idea of heavenly stars battling against the Earth is no new idea, it goes back to Old Testament times as this couple of verses show.

'They fought from heaven; **the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.**'

Judges ch.5 v.20

Similarly stars also participate in a more joyful way.

‘Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When **the morning stars sang together**, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?’

Job ch.38 vv 4-7

Does this refer to angels? Clearly it is great news where something magnificent is going on that we can only glimpse at the present time.

### **Outcome of the War**

Hell is often thought of as being the hot place but so are stars. It is notable that the prophet Malachi touches on this aspect as he foresees the Day of the Lord, note ‘suns’ are ‘stars’ and spelt ‘sun’ here.

‘For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall **the Sun of righteousness arise** with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts. Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.’

Malachi ch.4

In other words the generation gap will be closed. See also how there is a play on the words SON and SUN. How marvellously has God inspired us to craft our language in a way that displays His glory. In relation to stars Psalm 147 vv 4-5 spells this out.

**‘He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.** Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.’

This is a profound statement! It not only shows His vast omnipresence and omnipotence but ultimately He is in stellar control.

So to conclude, Star Wars on Earth is not so far fetched as may at first appear. Finally, the films often portray people girding themselves for battle and we can learn a lesson here in doing likewise. After all, that is precisely what the Apostle Paul instructed when writing to the Ephesians.

‘Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.’

Ephesians ch 6 vv 11-13

\*\*\*\*\*