

Blogging with Dr. Barry, Part 4(Mike Heiser Responds)

Contributed by Administrator

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Blogging with Dr. Barry, Part 4

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Same format - my material is indented and prefaced by "MSH";.

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Michael Heiser

HERMANEUTICS: RAPE, ADULTERY AND BLINDNESS

MSH: It's spelled "hermeneutics";.

Moving to the present, on Sunday, October 3rd, 2009, the History Channel presented the James Fox program, "I Know What I Saw." This program is now available at the Strong Delusion Web Site. Astronaut Gordon Cooper testified that a UFO landed at an Air Force Base where he was stationed, it was filmed, he saw the film, it was sent by courier to Washington. He knows our government has been lying to us about UFOs from the beginning. The head of the French government sponsored UFO study testified, with scientific hedging, that his group concluded that

some UFOs are extraterrestrials, and hesitantly recommended the United States try telling the truth. For me, there is no question that UFOs are real, although a reality that is beyond our science to understand.

MSH: Why is there no question, Barry? Upon what empirical data is your belief based? Where's the hard science? It isn't that science can't understand that UFOs are ET in nature. It's that science cannot establish the idea as *real* because there is no hard evidence for it! But okay — science can't understand what it doesn't have evidence for. Some argument.

The James Fox program made it clear that the United States government has been, and still is, covering up this reality from its citizens.

MSH: Really? Where's the data? Suspicion is not hard data, no matter how strong that suspicion may be in someone's heart or mind. Feelings aren't facts. You've got the former, but none of the latter.

Here is my question. Why is it that in all the writings I have seen of Michael Heiser, or Guy Malone, or Gary Bates, they never condemn the United States government for its UFO lies?

MSH: I have a better question, why is it that, in all your research about me, you've never heard the Q&A sessions where I say things like that? Or the interviews? Nice work, Barry. But for the record, if the government has information that it ought to make public, they should pony up. If there is no real national security threat (and I don't believe there is, but I'm not privy to that sort of information), then it's morally wrong to withhold it. I assume Barry would allow that national security caveat as well. You'd have to be loony to think that the government owes us all the information it has on any given subject.

They condemn me for my unproven hermeneutical sins

MSH: Hardly “unproven” - show me a biblical scholar who isn’t institutionalized who agrees with your view. Show me someone familiar with elementary logic that agrees that your “it’s possible” hermeneutic - hiding behind our lack of omniscience as it does — is logically sound and coherent. Needing to prove your hermeneutic is nutty is like needing to prove I won’t be the next President, or the next American Idol. YOU are the one that has something to prove, since YOU are the one making the claim. It doesn’t work in reverse. If YOU make the claim, then YOU have the case to make, not me.

but do not condemn our government for withholding evidence that is extremely important for understanding what God is doing (or not doing, if you buy the demonic argument), in our time.

MSH: Again, you haven’t listened much.

My suspicion is that my critics do not have faith in their own stated convictions. I suspect they know that if the United States released all its known information, their theories about UFOs would be blown away by the truth. That is what I suspect.

MSH: I’ll add this suspicion to your other ones that you substitute for empirical evidence.

It may be that my theories would be blown away by that truth also, but I want to know. I want my government to stop lying about UFOs. The government is violating my Constitutional right to explore the truth of my Christian faith by its continued UFO lies. I cannot “freely” exercise my religion when government UFO information is locked away in the name of national security, and the History Channel film “I Know What I Saw” documents our government cover-up policy in a very convincing way, except to the doubting Thomas who will not believe until a UFO lands in his back yard.

I have no doubts that UFOs exist, and that they are some kind of intelligent reality from another world. But do these UFOs carry the angels of God, is this the reality that gave us the biblical religion? That is another issue, it is a hermeneutical issue. Do modern UFOs and the Bible go together, or is this “mixing seed,” is this hermeneutical adultery? This is not just my question, it is a question to every person who claims to hold to the biblical tradition. We should be seeking a collective answer, and in a sense I understand that is what

my critics, Heiser, Malone and Bates are trying to do, but they do not believe I belong in the collection. I believe Christians should be shouting for our government to release the UFO truth as they understand it. This is one thing we could do collectively. Why don't I hear this demand from the church?

MSH: Maybe because you've been on the sidelines for quite some time since your book. Show up at some conferences and ask those questions (they're good ones). That way, you'd have something besides "suspicions" to talk about.

Those in the church who are trained in biblical theology ought to be seeking the truth about UFOs, but when I have talked to those who are in positions of seminary authority, or try to publish in main stream religious publications, I am treated as if I were a spiritual leper.

MSH: This last paragraph shows how ill-prepared you are to talk about me. Take a break from reading this. Now go to www.google.com. Put in my last name to your search followed by these keywords: Why Christians should care about ufology. You'll find that I've published an article on just the subject you say we (I) don't talk about. You have to do some homework.

What is the task of those doing biblical interpretation (hermeneutics)? Jesus gave a very short definition of the hermeneutical task of the trained professional: "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old." (Mt. 13:52)
No one "scribe" I have studied is sure exactly what Jesus means by this. Welcome to hermeneutics. But the image suggests that the religious life must be a blend of understanding what God has done in the past, and what God is doing now. Study of Scripture deals with the history of God. But we have to open our eyes to see what God is doing in the present.

MSH: Did Jesus also recommend working with no data? I really can't believe that this has escaped you. For your hermeneutic to be a viable option, the thing that steers it — the belief in the reality of intelligent aliens who visited earth long ago — has to be rooted in REALITY. Without hard evidence for it, it is not rooted in REALITY. I could just as well adopt the belief that a long lost race of bipedal squirrels came here from a distant planet and did all that Bible stuff - my hermeneutic is just as groundless when it comes to reality as yours is. What do I win for that?!

With this in mind, let us consider Jesus at work in the field of hermeneutics. During the time of Jesus, the Pharisee Party believed in the resurrection and eternal life, but the Sadducee Party did not. Some Sadducees tested Jesus with a hypothetical situation in which a woman married a man, he died, she married one of his brothers, he died, this pattern continued for all seven brothers, and then the question: in the resurrection, whose wife will she be? Jesus answered that when we die, we become like the angels, we do not marry. "But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now he is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live to him." (Lk. 20:37,38)

Jesus took something old, the story of the burning bush, well known to all scribes, and put new light on it. If Michael Heiser had been there, he might have been justified in charging Jesus with eisegesis.

MSH: No, Barry, I wouldn't have. You see, Jesus is the son of God, but you aren't. He has the authority to say XYZ about a passage. Are you claiming the same authority?> I wouldn't pick on Jesus' hermeneutic because of his identity. Unless you have the same set of attributes as Jesus, it's another lesson in "Downing illogic" - apples and oranges, anyone?

If you did not accept the authority of Jesus, then you could say, "Come on Jesus, you are just reading your resurrection beliefs into the text. The text tells us God is alive, it says nothing directly about whether Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are alive, or not."

MSH: I accept Jesus' authority — not yours. He wasn't making anything up. He *knew* what he was saying was true because he had the advantage of divinity. You don't (they don't give real divinity out with MDiv degrees, not even at Princeton).

But Heiser's charge must be faced. It could be that I am "reading UFOs into the Bible," when such reading is not justified. My claim is that as Jesus "saw" resurrection information in the Burning Bush text, information that he brought to light, so I am saying that modern UFOs are throwing light on biblical UFOs, and new light on biblical angels, including the possibility that the biblical angels use technology. So this is the debate: am I reading false interpretation into the text as Heiser says, or have I discovered new information, in light of UFOs,

about the text?

MSH: Again, I'll trust what Jesus saw because he's Jesus - you're not.

If eisegesis (or hermeneutical rape, if you prefer), is one sinful way of dealing with Scripture, there is also a sinful way of dealing with "something new in the household," signs of God's presence in our times. That sin is to be deliberately blind to God's signs. A comical example of this is the story of Jesus healing a man born blind as related in John chapter 9. Jesus spit into clay, anointed the blind man's eyes, and sent him to wash in the pool of Siloam. His healing caused a huge uproar among religious leaders about how this could have happened. The religious leaders were so unwilling to believe the evidence in front of their own eyes that they put the healed man through a grilling that exceeded what Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke frequently goes through before the United States Senate.

If UFOs are carrying the angels of God right in front of the eyes of millions (14% of Americans or about 40 million have seen a UFO according to a 2007 Associated Press survey), and we in the church continue to be blind to this reality, what will be our excuse in the Day of Judgment? There are indeed false UFO stories, there are hoaxes, there are those who claim to "channel" truth from some higher power. I know the UFO field is full of weeds. But we need the hermeneutical courage to do the hard work of the scribe, and sort through the UFO story, keep the good fish, and throw out the bad, as Jesus explained. (Mt. 13:47-52).

MSH: It's hard to believe you're putting forth arguments this flimsy. "I'm going to base my hermeneutic on my belief in life forms that science can't tell us actually exist." "Jesus said something new about a Bible passage, so I can too — and Heiser can't object because Jesus did it." And now this one: "People see unidentified objects in the sky — that's proof aliens are real." This is anything but clear thinking. It catches me off guard a bit. I would not have expected it, given your educational record. It's kind of startling to be honest.

Yes, lots of people see things in the sky they cannot identify. I assume (and have said so repeatedly in public) that they are telling the truth. But the issue isn't the seeing - it's the processing of what is seen. Without hard evidence (real, ET life forms), it is *at best* a wishful GUESS to conclude the things seen are alien. I know you want them to be; I would love it, too - it would be very cool (assuming they aren't hostile or demonic). But feelings aren't facts. You've got nothing. And it's painfully clear.

<http://michaelsheiser.com/UFOReligions/>