

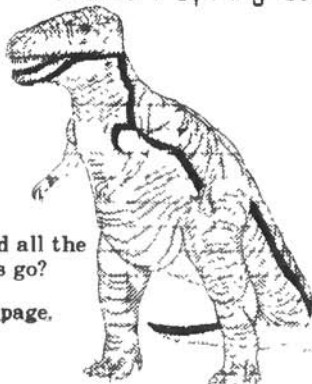
Concern

Topics and News from First & Last Ministries

No.16

Winter/Spring 1996

SALVATION BARMY



Where did all the
Dinosaurs go?

See back page.

Watch Tower Society's attempt to speed up conversion of new members.

ANYONE familiar with the Watchtower's doctrine of salvation will know how vastly remote it is from the evangelical doctrine of salvation of grace alone through faith.

But not only does the Quasi Watchtower gospel differ from the evangelical doctrine of grace in that it requires "works" as a prerequisite for "justification" but it also differs in the time it takes for a person to come into a "saved condition".

One of the marvels of the gospel of grace is that a person can be lost today and eternally saved by tomorrow by stooping at the cross in humble repentance and

by
Phillip Mawson

surrendering all to Christ.

But anyone knows that in the Watch Tower scheme of things one cannot be considered "in a saved condition" until a long period of pre-study (indoctrination) and, finally, baptism etc, etc has been completed.

In the past this "preparation period" for the JW convert would take from at least six months to a year or more, and at least two

study books would need to be covered during this period.

But as of the Watchtower magazine of January 15, 1996, and the internal bulletin "Our Kingdom Ministry" December 1995, things have been changed by the WT Society to shorten the study period and material, as it is well aware that the Watchtower doctrine of salvation and the long study requirements are unlike anything found in the Bible.

But, as we shall see, the new position adopted by the society offers no real solution and only amounts to shifting the furniture around in a condemned house.

MORE ON PAGE 10

WELCOME

Dear Reader,

MAY we thank you for the gifts and letters that many of you have been sending to us recently. It is good to know that **CONCERN** is appreciated by you and it really help to keep **CONCERN** going.

Work commitments will probably mean that this copy of **CONCERN** will reach you slightly later than usual. Hopefully things will settle down shortly and the next issue will arrive sooner.

To partly make up for the delay many of you will now know that **Aware No.6** is available to order from our Carlisle address which is printed elsewhere on this page.

Although the tracts are free, please order only as many as you can prayerfully use.

Now for a short appeal. Can any of you supply the answers to the following questions?

Is Michael Jackson still a Jehovah's Witness or was he shown the door quietly by the Watch Tower Society?

Those of you who watched the recently held Brit Awards on television may have noted his mock crucifixion. Given the Jehovah's Witnesses' hatred of the cross, and the rock star's recent marriage and divorce to a Scientologist (Marie Presley), something tells us that the answer is probably no.

Also, can anyone throw any light on former Wolves footballer Peter Knowles. He gave up his career prior to the 'end of the world' in 1975. No doubt today he would deny the fact. But if anyone does know what become of him, and if he is still a JW, we would like to know.

Finally, for those of you with a

regular contact with JWs, a careful reading of Judges 2:1-2, 6:11-23 and 1 Samuel 2:27-30 could provide you with some interesting questions to put to them the next time they knock on the door.

Let us know what you come up with.

Lee Kerr and Bill Bacon,
First & Last Ministries.

FIRST & LAST
MINISTRIES

READERS NEEDS

CONCERN reader Lou Dyba is currently searching for two books published by the Watch Tower Society.

If anyone has or knows the whereabouts of "JWs in the Divine Purpose" or Insight Into the Scriptures then Lou would like to hear from them.

Lou, who can be contacted on 0181-597-1456, says he is willing to pay for the books.

JUST OUT

NEW products from First & Last Ministries may mean you never losing your keys, or your place in your favourite book, again.

A new range of bookmarks and keyrings are now being produced by First and Last Ministries. Made from hard wearing bonded leather these smart items come in a variety of colours. For more details, and prices, contact Lee Kerr at -

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6 Chertsey Mount
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CA1 2PH.

LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR

IT seems absolutely ages since I last corresponded - how time flies.

Many thanks for keeping me up-to-date via CONCERN and Aware!

Just thinking about it for a moment, yours is the only U.K. newsletter I receive, so keep it up.

Since I last wrote, I've had the pleasure of visiting California and actually getting to see "Beth Sarim" from the outside. While I was there I was also able to meet up with Peter Barnes and Randy Watters.

Looking at Aware! number six, I was delighted by your caption "Why Christians are not Jehovah's Witnesses".

It hit the spot perfectly for me and I'm thinking of developing the idea further when time permits.

In spite of all the literature I read these days - and lots of it is scanned rather than digested - I don't seem to meet many Witnesses to talk with.

I'm happy being kept informed via your bulletins just in case opportunities arise.

Must end now as I'm running out of conversation. Don't be surprised if you don't hear from me for another year or two - letter writing is no longer my strong point. It's so much easier to pick up the phone.

Take care,

With every blessing,
John and Irene Mayor,
Heywood, Lancashire.

TO THE EDITOR

IT was a nice surprise to see the article regarding True Gospel Ministry's work at JW Conventions in the Autumn issue of CONCERN.

It would be good if it encourages others to go to these gatherings and, even better, if it brings us any helpers for the coming summer.

Yours sincerely,
Stan Howard,
Huyton, Liverpool.

•If any readers would like to contact Stan with a view to witnessing at JW conventions this summer then contact him at 24 Bruton Road, Huyton, Liverpool L36 8EF.

TO THE EDITOR

PLEASE find enclosed an article highlighting the interesting inconsistencies employed by the "translators" of the New World Translation with regard to the addition to the NWT of the Divine Name.

I despair as I think how what now seems so obvious did not occur to me for nearly two decades.

Yours In Christ,
Dave Adame,
Lemington, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne.

•Dave's article can be seen in a future issue of CONCERN.

FIRST & LAST
MINISTRIES

PLEASE SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

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DOES THE WATCHTOWER BOOK KNOWLEDGE ~~Not~~ Lead to Everlasting Life



A SERIES OF ARTICLES
BY
PASTOR GARY HALL

RELEASED by the Watch Tower Society last year the "Knowledge" book contains a number of new teachings among its usual contents of old chestnuts.

This month Pastor Gary Hall, of Liverpool, shares his own thoughts on this latest publication and asks "Does the book really lead to everlasting life?"

AS with other Watch Tower publications mention is made of a future paradise earth.

"What the Bible says about the future of the earth and mankind might be summed up in one word - paradise" (page 8).

Also, "The Bible.....It informs us that God placed the first human pair, Adam and Eve, in a paradise called the Garden of Eden."

The fact is that the Bible never mentions either Eden or a future re-created earth as paradise.

Jehovah's Witnesses often remark that the word "Trinity" is nowhere in the Bible to disprove the doctrine of the Trinity (see page 31 of Knowledge), but fail to realise that many of their own words do not appear in scripture. Such is the case with "paradise earth".

To connect Eden with paradise is foolishness since the word only appears three times in the Bible, each

time in the New Testament.

Before we look at the misquote of Luke 23:43 on page 8 let us find out what the Bible really says about paradise.

In Revelation 2:7 Jesus says, "To him who overcomes I will give him to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

Because Jesus makes mention of the tree of life does not automatically place paradise in Eden or a future earth as we shall see.

Although God put the tree in Eden it is evident that since Eden no longer exists that the tree was removed.

If it is not on earth then it can only be in Heaven - where it originated!

How do we know that paradise is the same place as Heaven? Simple, the Bible tells us so.

Read what Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 12:2 - "I knew a man in

Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth;) such a one caught up into the third Heaven."

We readily see that Paul was caught up into Heaven. He adds in verse four - "How that he was caught up into paradise...". To hide the fact that Heaven and paradise are one and the same place and are "up", the New World Translation mistranslates these verses.

It adds "caught away as such to the third Heaven" (:2), and "caught away into paradise" (:4) and, in doing so, removes the fact that paradise is Heaven.

Of the forty translations of the Bible I have only the NWT translates the Greek word "HARPAZO" as "caught away."

reads, "The mention of paradise no doubt brought to that man's mind the happy state of our first parents, Adam and Eve."

This is false since his thoughts were clearly upon Christ's Kingdom - "Lord, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom" (Luke 23:42 Mk.16:7.)

Page 9 of "Knowledge" makes a remarkable statement...."They and their offspring were to extend the borders of paradise until the entire planet become a place of beauty and delight" and try to back this up with Genesis 1:28.

This verse does not even suggest that Adam and Eve were to extend the borders of Eden and why should they? Have the Watch Tower Organisation forgotten to read Genesis 1:31?

The Bible says, "God saw"

"To hide the fact that Heaven and paradise are one and the same place...the NWT mistranslates these verses."

While the meaning of the word can mean "Caught away" it does not fit the context of these verses. Besides this, since Eden was not on earth, Paul must have been caught up into Heaven.

As Heaven and paradise are one and the same place where do we think Jesus was referring to when he said to the thief on the cross, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43 NKJV)?

Regardless of the fact that the NWT mistranslates these words as "Truly I tell you today, you will be with me in paradise", we have seen that the place called paradise is up in Heaven.

Therefore the man was going to Heaven with Jesus.

The "knowledge" book on page 8

everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good." (MKJV.)

To infer that Adam was to "extend" what God had created is to believe that he had some divine qualities and that all that God created was not very good. Maybe due to the weakness of the argument the book uses Isaiah 55:10-11 as a proof text (page 9.)

If we read these verses we shall find that far from referring to a future paradise earth they speak of the fact that the extension of Eden is to place him as a creator god - exactly what Satan wanted him to believe!

Next edition

Was Jesus born
The Christ?

FAULTY

TOWERS

AFTER recent events, revealed to them in their favourite magazine, poor JW's have seen their hopes dashed once again.

Our Inspector Berean has been on an imaginary visit to the Wet Towel Bungle and Quack Society to see just what is going on.

When he arrived at the tottering, leaning Tower of Pennsylvannia he was greeted by a member of the Fretful and Dismayed Slave class, an elderly servant of the Organisation.

Inspector Berean cleared his throat, "I may as well tell you from the outset", he said. "I'm one of those trinitarians, you know, the freakish-looking three-headed type. Can I still come in and take a look around?"

"Well don't be too long," said the annointed one of the elite class. "I'm getting behind with my reading of the Wettowel magazine, and I won't have any real spiritual direction if I don't catch up. Perhaps you should have called in at our world headquarters, the Wet Towel Babel and Tricked Society of New York Inc."

"You could have taken a look at their wonderful printing plant at Bethel, it's just around the corner..."

He stopped suddenly and put his hand over his mouth, his face a

picture of horror.

"Oh, I shouldn't have used that phrase! Anyway, the print works is right up Adams Street."

"You can say that again," said Berean with a knowing look. "As you've been in the society most of your life, you must have met Pastor Russell?"



"Oh yes, a marvellous man," came the reply.

"Before he devoted himself to the work full time he was a haberdasher, you know".

"I also heard he was a bit of a pyramid salesman too," said Berean.

"At least he was always spot-on with his prophesies!" retorted the

slave.

"Yes he was certainly consistent," said Berean, as he turned to leave. "And it will probably explain why the Wet Towel is now on its fifth president."

"You 'born-again's' are all the same!" scowled the annointed one.

"Precisely," smiled Berean. "Cheerio!"

ON A SERIOUS NOTE

WHILE the current situation within the Watchtower is truly laughable, let us remember that hundreds of thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses will be affected by decisions taken by the Governing Body (a handful of men who are convinced they are being guided by "holy spirit", which to them amounts to nothing more than God's active force")

It seems that the god of the Watchtower is as potent as that which is described at Psa.115:4-8.

And Elijah mocked those who had put their confidence in a god who was just as useless (I Kings 18:27).

We know many Witnesses have no time for our gospel. But isn't that true of most non-Christians also?

The JW who will listen, who will check things out, who will look at things again, is possibly the man or the woman that the God of grace is working on.

Christian, be patient! Be understanding. Be loving.

There is no need to try anything complicated. Tell him of Jesus, the one who lived the life we couldn't live, and who died our death.

Our God can indeed save anyone. And that includes the Witness YOU may be in contact with.



COULD YOU WRITE FOR

Concern?

Could you write an article for a future issue of Concern?

We are currently seeking articles on various Watchtower subjects including news on the local congregations in your area. Perhaps you run a particular ministry and have hints and advice for others who could possibly start a similar outreach service in their area.

Or, maybe, you could share your testimony of God's wonderful saving grace with our readers.

If so we would like to hear from you.

No writing experience is necessary as we can advise and help you put an article together.

There is no limit to the length of article, but longer ones may have to be used in two or more editions.

Any article should be written or typed out and be double spaced between lines.

If you would like to submit an article, please phone or write to the address on the back page, just in case somebody else is preparing a similar article.

First & Last Ministries.

RESURRECTION

true or false?

THE Resurrection is a central doctrine of the Christian faith. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, then our faith is in vain. "We live because He lives" (see John 14:19).

There are many aberrant doctrines abounding concerning the afterlife. Reincarnation is very popular these days. Some people believe they will go "round and round", getting better each time. The Bible disagrees: "...it is appointed unto man to die ONCE, and after this comes judgement." (Hebrews 9:27).

Some lull their consciences to sleep with "soul sleep", denying the reality of Hell, thinking they will become blissfully unaware of their surroundings after death. Some prefer "annihilation", total destruction after their death. All fail to realise they are on an eternal road right now. Jesus said in Matthew 25:46: "And these (the wicked) shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life". Both situations are ongoing forever.

Jehovah's Witnesses, who have the ghoulish habit of scanning the death notices for vulnerable, hurting people, offer a variety of wrong teachings on the resurrection. Not only do they use scare tactics (God will get you at Armageddon), but they deny the reality of hell, substituting "annihilation", followed by "re-creation". They call this "resurrection", but it is not.

Jehovah's Witnesses deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. They teach that He was out of existence for three days, and then Jehovah recreated Him as the

By Lori MacGregor.

Archangel Michael.

The simple Bible truth that Jesus Christ died, and rose again has been redefined by Jehovah's Witnesses to become a re-creation, not a rising.

They explain that perhaps Christ's body was dissolved into gases by Jehovah (The Time Is At Hand, page 129). We might well ask at this point, "What about all those witnesses who saw Christ after he rose from the dead, and before His ascension?"

The JW publication, "Make Sure of all Things, Hold Fast to What is Fine" (1953 edition, page 314) states: "Jesus' Resurrection Not of Same Body; He Merely Materialised Flesh and Blood to Be Seen and Believed".

Can you picture it? Here we have Jesus Christ materializing a fake body complete with fake nailprints to fool His disciples into believing He had risen from the dead! The JW's claim this is so, since Jesus was not recognized on occasions. In doing this, they ignore the context of the scriptures in question.

For example, on the road to Emmaus referred to in Luke chapter 24, when Jesus walked with two disciples, verse 16 says, "their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him". Jesus then revealed Himself to

them as their "eyes were opened" (verse 31).

Jehovah's Witnesses also claim that "He (Jesus) appeared to Mary as a gardener" (The Time is at Hand, page 128). Jesus never appeared "as a gardener". Mary was in grief over Jesus' death, and John 20:15 says: "She, supposing him to be the gardener...". As she turned, Mary recognised Him.

Jehovah's Witnesses use 1 Peter 3:18 which says Jesus was "made alive in the Spirit" to support their doctrine that He rose a spirit creature. However the term, "in the Spirit does not mean "a spirit" as JW's are taught. We need to find further scriptures where the phrase "in the spirit" is used to clarify this matter.

The Apostle John was "in the spirit" in Revelation 1:10. Are we to assume that John lost his body and became a spirit? Hardly. Romans 8:9 tells us that the whole congregation was "in the spirit". Does this mean that the whole congregation lost their bodies and became spirits? No, of course not.

Jesus was made alive in the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:11 says this: "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you".

The account in Luke chapter 24 is devastating to JW doctrine on the resurrection. In this account, Jesus Himself appears in the midst of His believers. Verse 37 records: "But they were startled and frightened and thought they were seeing "A SPIRIT" (JW doctrine exactly!). Jesus then said to them in verse 39: "See my hands and My feet that it is I MYSELF; touch Me and see, for a SPIRIT DOES NOT HAVE FLESH AND BONES as you see that I have."

Notice also that the risen Jesus then proceeded to ask for something to eat. "And He took and ate it in their sight". A "spirit creature" could

hardly do this, even in "materialized body".

Yes, Jesus died and rose again and appeared to many witnesses in His resurrection body. This fulfilled a prophecy Jesus gave to the Jews. John 2:19-22 records this encounter. "Jesus answered and said to them. Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews therefore said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking of the temple of His BODY.

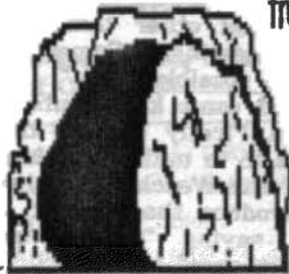
When, therefore, He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken."

Yes Jesus rose as He said He would, in His own body, not some fake, materialized one.

Romans 10:9 states a great truth: "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."

Christ died and rose again on the third day, and we live because He lives. Our faith is centred on the fact that Christ conquered death. He is the only one who has ever walked out of the grave alive, and remained so for all eternity. He has the keys of death and of Hades. We can trust Him completely in the hour of our death, knowing that we will live, even as He lives.

RESURRECTION
~~REINBODITION~~
true or false?



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SALVATION ARMY

The Watch Tower Society has recently made changes to its doctrine regarding salvation in an attempt to try and bring itself into line with Scripture. But, as Philip Mawson finds out, the changes still fall short.

The Kingdom Ministry of December 1995 says: "We were delighted when the new book "Knowledge that Leads to Eternal Life" was released! It is designed to help people come quickly to an accurate knowledge of the Truth".

This was followed by the January 15th 1996 Watchtower magazine which outlined the new indoctrination procedure, which mentions Acts 16:25-34. Here Paul and Silas had been imprisoned at Philippi but, in the middle of the night, a great earthquake opened the prison doors. Thinking that all the prisoners had escaped, and that he would be severely punished, the jailer was about to commit suicide when Paul told him that they were all there. The article continues: "Paul and Silas spoke the word of Jehovah to him together with all those in his house. That Jailer and his family were Gentiles who had no background in the Holy Scriptures. Yet, in one night, they became believers. More than that one and all, he and his, were baptised. These were unusual circumstances, but new ones were taught basic truths, and learned other things at congregational meetings. Something similar should be possible today."

I've underlined some key points in the above quote. Firstly because this passage in Acts 16 is unlike anything in the world of the Watchtower, they deliberately introduce the element of ambiguity by saying "these were unusual circumstances".

This is said only so the average JW doesn't see the striking difference

between the Acts 16 conversion to Christ and the modern Watchtower method of recruitment. But still the paragraph maintains that "Something similar should be possible today".

So what steps have been taken by the Society to make this so?

Well, regarding the new study book "Knowledge", page 13 of the Jan 15th WT states: "It is a new publication that can be covered rather quickly - perhaps in a few months."

And a further major change is introduced when the same article states that "It is not suggested that a study be conducted in a second book."

However, just to make sure new converts are well and truly towing the line, the Society later stresses that the congregation's presiding overseer will still need to review the questions in the Society's "Organisation" book with the WT convert.

I have to say, with a hint of sarcasm, that the scripturally ignorant Philippian Jailer in Acts 16 never had the "wonderful advantage" of Watchtower books and review questions to test him for worthiness prior to baptism and to make him "Marked for Salvation" as the article puts it.

So the upshot of all this is that the WT Society feels that it is now more in line with scripture because it has shortened its pre-baptism study to a few months. The average JW will welcome this change as "theocratic advancement". But, true Christians will recognise that it is still another gospel (Galatians 1:8).

144,000

or many more?

THE Jehovah's Witnesses believe only 144,000 people are in the New Covenant. What does the Bible say?

In Galatians 4:22-31 it mentions how Abraham had two sons, one by Hagar the bond woman and another by Sarah the free woman (the sons being Ishmael and Isaac respectively).

Verses 24 clearly states that these two women "stand as a symbolic drama, for these women mean TWO COVENANTS." New World Translation of JW's.

Verses 24 and 25 further tell us that Hagar symbolises the Old Law Covenant from Mount Sinai, while in verses 26 and 27, (Sarah) stands for the New Covenant and the Jerusalem above (i.e. the Christians mother).

In verse 27 Paul quotes from Isaiah 54:1, where Jehovah God is married to the Nation of Israel via the Law Covenant. Compare also Jeremiah 3:14 & 31:32.

Thus the barren woman, the desolate woman (the New Covenant) has many more children (NKJV) or more numerous (NWT), than the woman who has the husband (the Law Covenant between Israel and Jehovah).

So it is clear that the Law Covenant brought forth MILLIONS of children from the time of Moses to John the Baptist, Matthew 11:13 (a fact even the JW's wouldn't deny). Hence the New Covenant would bring forth

by Philip Mawson

MANY MORE than this, yee they would be **MORE NUMEROUS** as the NWT puts it.

This is because the New Covenant would comprise of Jews and Gentiles without any distinction (Romans 3:22).

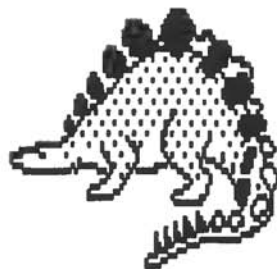
Thus it can be easily and scripturally demonstrated that the New Covenant is made with MILLIONS of persons and not just 144,000 as is taught by the Watch Tower Society.

When I was a Jehovah's Witness, I recall using this argument with the Witness elders of my congregation, no-one could refute it. I have never seen this argument used in any polemic literature on the Watch Tower Society nor used by Christians in debating this issue with a Witness caller.

I thus present the case here, as I find it easily demolishes the Watch Tower's argument that the New Covenant is made only between Christ and 144,000 members of the Church.

So Christians, let's use this effective and simple argument of Scripture with JW callers and pray the Lord will open their heart to receive these things (Acts 16:14b).

Dinosaurs - ALIVE AND WELL LIVING ON VENUS!



Extract taken from JW Research (Autumn 1994)

SINCE the discovery of their fossilized remains over 150 years ago dinosaurs have fascinated scientists and the man-on-the-street alike.

A major controversy that has persisted surrounds their sudden disappearance.

All the dinosaurs disappeared suddenly from the fossil record about 65 million years ago, as estimated by paleontologists and geologists.

Why did they all become extinct in a brief span of geological time?

While Christians may have their own ideas, many people have proposed serious and not so serious explanations. Today, the most commonly accepted hypothesis among scientists is the asteroid theory.

This holds that a large comet or asteroid impacted the earth 65 million years ago. This caused an enormous cloud of dust, etc. to envelope the earth disrupting photosynthesis, causing vegetation to die and become extinct.



This in turn caused plant eating animals to die, which in turn killed off their predators. Very few organisms survived.

However, others have come up with their own ideas. Among them is the one alluded to by the Golden Age magazine.

Yes, the Watch Tower Society had its own theory long before the asteroid theory.

It appeared, appropriately, in the Golden Age of April 1, 1931 on page 428.

In describing the planets of the solar system the writers then let their imaginations run riot by saying: "It will be very apparent to readers of Judge Rutherford's book Creation that the present condition of Venus is about what the earth was prior to the flood, and it is significant that some astronomers have advanced the idea that animals like the dinosaurs that once roamed this planet are now finding Venus a happy place in which to live."

Say what? Dinosaurs "are now finding Venus a happy place to live"? What on earth, or in this case venus, are they talking about?

Did they really believe that the dinosaurs actually left earth before the flood and were transported (via spaceships?) to venus where they are now "happy"?

Was the ark too small for them so the Pleiadian god by the name of Jehovah (no last name) drove a flying saucer and transported them to venus?

The mind boggles.

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