

Clifton News

296 April - June 2022

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News

The wedding of our brother William Girard to Sylvia Lazarus went very well for which we give God thanks. It was held in Mumbai, India and many of us were able to attend virtually online. Will has returned safely back and prayer is valued for Sylvia's spouse visa application to be processed without delay.

Our brother Jerry is now staying in Crawley in a Home Office accommodation awaiting his interview regarding his situation and currently in fellowship with the saints at Horsham.

The midweek children's meetings continue to do well especially the Seekers Club on Wednesdays. Prayers valued as we look forward to conducting our first Easter Holiday Club since 2019.

We have been able to book another stall at the South Norwood Festival which will take place Sunday 3rd July 2022. We pray for the Lord's blessing on our summer outreach at the various festivals in the area.

Baptism service

Noah Rodger has asked for baptism and we will have the joy of baptising him on Saturday 9th April 2022 at 3 pm. Speaker will be our brother John Aston. All welcome to attend.



DARING DETECTIVES HOLIDAY CLUB

Every Day
10 am to 12 noon
Monday 11th to
Thursday 14th April
Prize Giving Thur 7 pm

Editor: Nitish Patel.

Clifton Hall, 45 Whitehorse Lane, South Norwood, London SE25 6RD.

Website: www.cliftongospelhall.com. Email: cliftongospelhall@googlemail.com

Meetings

Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread 11.00 am
(During outreach at local community events it is earlier so please check our website before coming)

Young People's Bible class 12.00 pm
Family Service 4.00 pm

Monday

Prayer and Bible Teaching 7.45 pm

Wednesday

Seekers 6.30 pm
(Term time only for under 10s)

Friday

Friday Club 7.30 pm
(Term time only for those over 10)

SUNDAY AFTERNOON FAMILY SERVICE

April

3	Alf Taylor
10	Jonathan Docksey
17	Alastair Rodger
24	Nitish Patel

May

1	Richard Catchpole
8	Alastair Rodger
15	Nitish Patel
22	Richard Catchpole
29	Ferranti Wong

June

5	Thomas Taylor
12	Andrew Hall
19	John Aston
26	Nitish Patel

MONDAY PRAYER AND BIBLE TEACHING

April

4	Nitish Patel
11	Easter Holiday Club
18	No meeting (Easter Monday)
25	John Aston

May

2	No meeting (Bank Holiday)
9	Roy Aitkin
16	Timothy Miller
23	Timothy Miller
30	Roy Aitkin

June

6	Nitish Patel
13	David Penfold
20	David Penfold
27	David Penfold

Our Monday night ministry meeting and Family Service is broadcast on Zoom. If any of you would like to listen to God's Word, please enter the following on the Zoom website to join Clifton Hall.

Meeting ID: 756 5533 4423

Passcode: 186868

Question Box

How can we know that the Bible is true?

In the last edition of Clifton News, we provided an answer to the question “How can we know Christianity is true?”. We took our answer from the Bible, because in it we learn about Jesus’ resurrection and the results of it. The next question someone might ask is “How can I know that the Bible is true?”. If we learn about God from the Bible, we need to make sure we can believe what we’re reading.

That leads to two sub-questions. Firstly, were the original writers such as David or Luke or Paul writing what was true? Secondly since the last book of the bible was written around 2000 years ago and the photocopier wasn’t invented until around 1950 years later, have those words been transmitted to us accurately or have they been changed?

For our first sub-question, let’s think of who wrote the bible. The books of the bible were written by at least 35 human writers, however they were directed by God in their writing (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 2:20-21), so we can describe God Himself as the author. When we look at the named men God used to write the books of the bible, we can see they were either prophets called by Him or writing eyewitness accounts of what they had seen.

In terms of prophets, we see that the children of Israel had directions from God on how to distinguish between prophets who were speaking God’s word and those who weren’t (Deuteronomy 18:21-22). So, the writers of the Old Testament books were men who were recognised as speaking for God. In the New Testament, the writers were all direct eyewitnesses of Jesus (Peter, John, Paul etc.) or those closely associated with the eyewitnesses (Mark with Peter and Luke with Paul). So, they again were writers recognised for who they were and what they had seen.

We can also see that the bible harmonises beautifully, the Old Testament points forward to events to come in the New Testament, the New Testament quotes from and frequently refers to the Old Testament. Any difficulties in harmonising between the different books have satisfactory explanations, it’s incredibly consistent given the number of writers involved.

Thinking back to our last issue, we also see the high regard that Jesus had for God's word (Matthew 4:4), He frequently quoted from the Old Testament and believed it to be the word of God (Matthew 19:4). His resurrection shows us we should believe it too.

Obviously, all this would mean little if we didn't know what we read in the bible today hadn't been changed in the intervening years. When the books of the bible were written, there were no computers or photocopiers, as mentioned previously, everything was written by hand. So, the scriptures would be copied and copied and copied. If you've ever played a game of Chinese whispers, you'll know that messages can get jumbled up very quickly as they are passed on. Has that happened with the bible if one of the copiers made a mistake?

If we were reliant on a letter being copied from one paper to another down a single chain, we would have reason to be concerned if a mistake slipped in, however that is not the case. We see that the letters Paul wrote were circulated around (Colossians 4:16) and would likely be copied by hand multiple times in multiple places. These copies could be compared with one another and the original version.

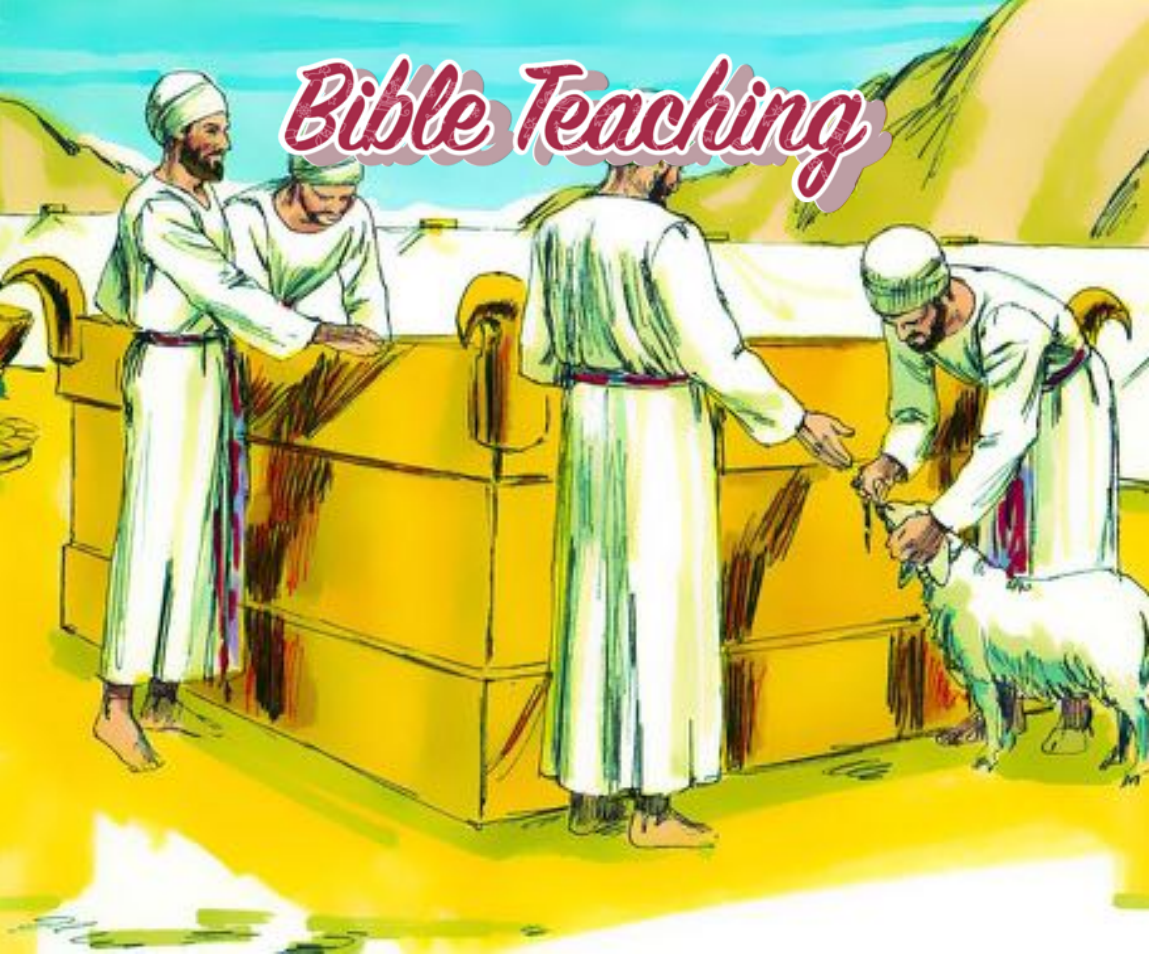
Having multiple chains of transmission puts us in the position of having 20,000 very early New Testament manuscripts. Many more than any other writing from that period. More than that we over a million quotes from the New Testament in early Christian writings.

With the wealth of manuscript evidence and the evidence of what the bible says for itself, we can be confident that we can trust the Bible.

Alastair Rodger

(PS Apologies from the editor. This question should have been in last quarter's magazine instead of the same question repeated from the previous issue.)

Bible Teaching



THE SIN OFFERING

(Part 2)

From edited Bible notes by the late Tom Ledger

THE ANOINTED PRIEST SINS (vv. 3-12)

v.3 “anointed” Set apart for God, to position and service. (Anointed priest not outside (Lev. 4, Lev 16)

“according to the sin of the people” “so as to bring guilt upon the people” R.V.

Note - nothing said about "though ignorance" as v. 13, "hid from their eyes" as v. 13, "when sin is known" as v. 14.
(Also vv. 22-23, 27-28).

Priest should not be ignorant. Priest expected to be sensitive as to sin. No lapse of time, really at once.

"Let him bring" "present" (JND) "shall he present" - Obligation, necessity, must! Act of confession.

"Bullock" "son of the herd" symbolising strength, vigour, patient obedient servant (the Lord Jesus).

"That our oxen may be strong to labour; that there be no breaking in, nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets." (Psalms 144:14)

"Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox." (Proverbs 14:4)

Psalm 22, Isaiah 53 bring before us the "Sin offering" aspect of Christ's death.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."
(Isaiah 53:6)

"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand." (Isaiah 53:10)

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2Corinthians 5:21)

Burnt offering aspect of Christ's death - "... the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11)

Sin offering aspect of Christ's death - "Father if it be possible let this cup pass from me" (Matthew 26:39). He could not delight in being made sin, to lose the light of the face of God.

(v. 4) "Lay [lean] his hand .. head. He relied upon the victim, helpless

apart from it.

(a) In the sweet savour offerings - acceptability of the sacrifice imputed to the offerer.

(b) In the sin offering - The sin of the offerer identified with the offering.

"Kill ... before the Lord" - The realisation that my sin necessitated His death.

(v. 5) "blood"

"But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." (Genesis 9:4)

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." (Leviticus 17:11)

(vv. 6-7)

(A) "dip his finger ... sprinkle of the blood seven times before the LORD, before the vail"

Application - The efficacy of the blood answering for that sin in perfection before God. The stain removed from before Him.

"In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:" (Colossians 1:22)

(B) "shall put [smear] some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense ..."

- 1) Bearing witness to the communion restored
- 2) The fragrance of Christ appreciated anew.
- 3) The approach of the priest now restored

"and shall pour all the blood ... bottom [foundation] of the altar of the burnt offering ..."

- 1) The approach of the people now restored
- 2) The service of the priest continues

3) Note service not restored until communion restored

The value of the blood establishes the altar.

(vv. 8-10)

"The fat that covereth the inwards ...the two kidneys ..."
The perfections , the excellence. The inward feelings, affections.

"burn them" as incense. Not said for a sweet savour offering. It was a sweet savour but here seen in contrast to our dishonouring, failing Him etc... In the burnt offering seen in itself.

(vv. 11-12)

"The whole bullock ... without the camp ... clean place, where the ashes are poured out ... burn him ..."

"For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp."
(Hebrews 13:11)

"outside the camp" - The place of distance separation. No cloud by day for protection or guidance, no pillar of fire by night for illumination.

"He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken." (Isaiah 53:8)

"ashes are poured out" - Word ashes is literally "fatty ashes", fat mixed with ashes from the altar of burnt offering.

- (a) It tells of wrath poured out and expended, satisfied
- (b) Excellence of the one upon whom it has been expended.

The empty tomb the witness of both!

To be continued ...

Good News

The Babool Tree

A Hindu said to a native missionary, "I am sure if I lead a good life and do what is right, giving up my bad habits, God will be pleased with me and receive me into heaven."

"That is the way most people reason today," replied the missionary. "You know the babul tree (a tree with long, sharp thorns).



Now, suppose you break off from its branches a hundred or more of the nasty thorns, then will the tree cease to be a babool tree?" "Certainly not." "Suppose you should apparently stop one or another or even many of your evil ways and habits, you would still remain the same like the babool tree. You must have an entirely new nature, must become a new man, in order to please God. Only Christ can give you a new heart."

The missionary's reply was sound and scriptural. Jesus said ... "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3)

Everyone is born with a sinful nature inherited from our father Adam who sinned bringing sin and death into this world (Romans 5.12). Salvation cannot be found in any works that we can do. The Bible speaks of them as "dead works" (Hebrews 9.14) and works done by sinners are such that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God (Romans 8.8).

Reader, are you depending on your own efforts for salvation? Then you will fail. You must be born again!

It won't sink

A fishing boat in days gone by was nearing the English coast one morning. The crew on board was on the watch lest the Revenue Cutter should be in sight, for they had a full cargo of contraband tobacco, sewn up in bags and easy to carry. They were smuggling, and if caught, it meant prison for them, the loss of cargo, and of the ship too.



Suddenly they saw the cutter bearing down on them, and realised all hope of escape had gone. The captain realising that they were in trouble told his crew that the officers boarding the ship should only see a clean hold and an empty ship. They should dump the cargo overboard. They used a sail as a cover so they could not be seen and every single bag was thrown overboard until they were worn out with exhaustion.

The cabin boy came to the captain looking as pale as death with the news that "Please, sir, It won't sink!" In the track of the rising sun was the cargo which came floating back up. The line of canvas bags rise reaching up to the bow of the cutter itself!

Like those tobacco bags, sin cannot be buried and forgotten by the sinner. God's judgment is fast approaching and every sin will be brought to account.

"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." (Romans 2:16)

Salvation is free for all, purchased by the Lord Jesus at the cross and available from a risen living Saviour.

Each must consider where they will spend eternity, in heaven or in hell and must consider that they will have to give account for their sin if they die without this forgiveness.

Design in Creation



THE BOBTAIL SQUID AND ITS “INVISIBILITY CLOAK”

By Nitish Patel

This tiny squid known as the Bobtail squid (*Euprymna berryi*, order Sepiolida) is about the size of our thumbs and spends the day buried in the sand. It awakens to hunt at night feeding on shrimp. In order to sneak up on its prey and to escape any predators that might eat the squid itself, it uses an amazing cloaking system to hide its own

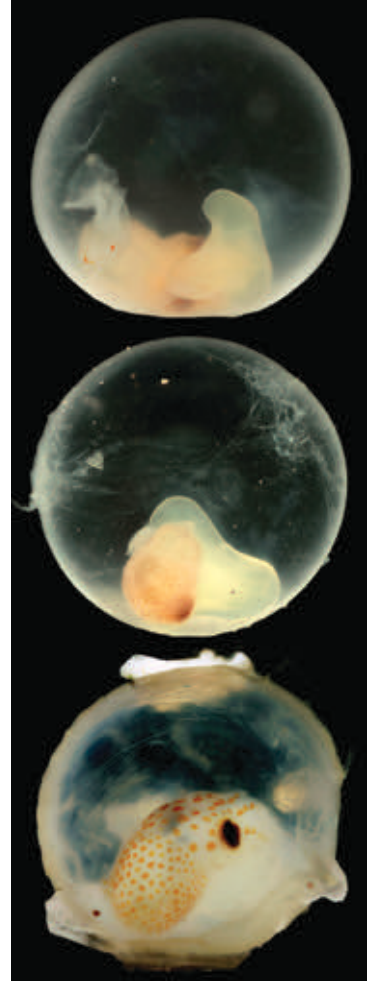
shadow from the moonlight and star light filtering down into the sea. It actually uses light to make itself disappear!

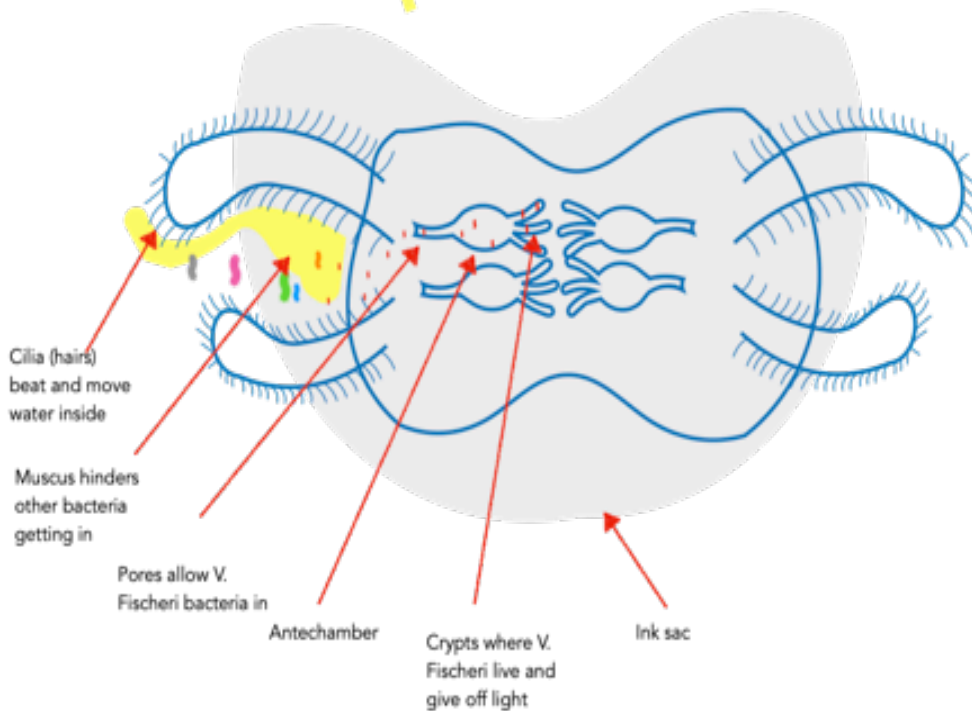
The light is produced by a single species of bioluminescent marine bacteria named *Allivibrio* or *Vibrio Fischeri* which produce a blue-green light. The squid are not born with this bacteria but recruit them from the surrounding water and within a few hours are able to produce light.

The bacteria are signalled to move inside its body into a specialised light organ where the squid will provide food in the form of sugars in exchange for the light giving abilities of the bacteria. Depending on the size of the animal it is estimated that they maintain an average population of around 100 million *V. Fischeri* in its light organ crypts. It flushes out any excess unwanted bacteria especially during day time when the squid is buried in the sand.

In order to obtain this glowing bacteria, the squid sucks in and flushes out sea water through it's body. Mucus hinders any wrong kind of organisms coming through. Then the *V. Fischeri* bacteria enter specialised pores in the light organ going through a long duct with hair like cilia which only allow the right bacteria inside.

These bacteria also don't glow unless they reach a quorum of numbers and are densely packed together. Then chemical signals known as autoinducers trigger them all to start expressing the gene that makes them produce light. This is possible in the closely packed space of the crypts in the light organ.

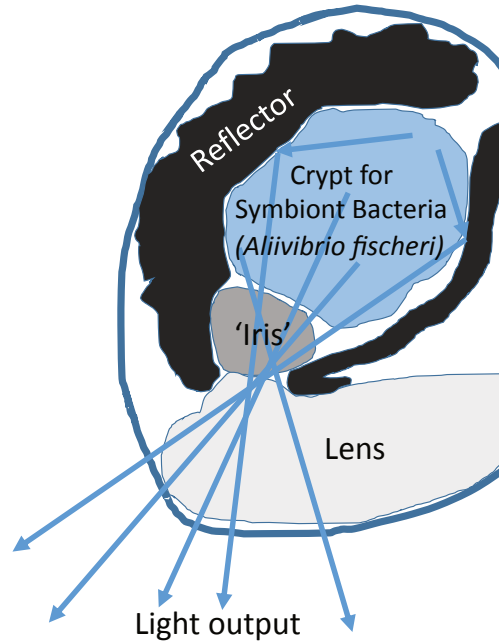




Once the bacteria are in the light organ, they receive chemical signals to collect in the crypt chambers and colonise them. Signals from the bacteria then help direct the maturation of the light organ. Once inside and fed, the bacteria rapidly reproduce. By dawn there are too many to sustain and the squid ejects 95% of them before going to

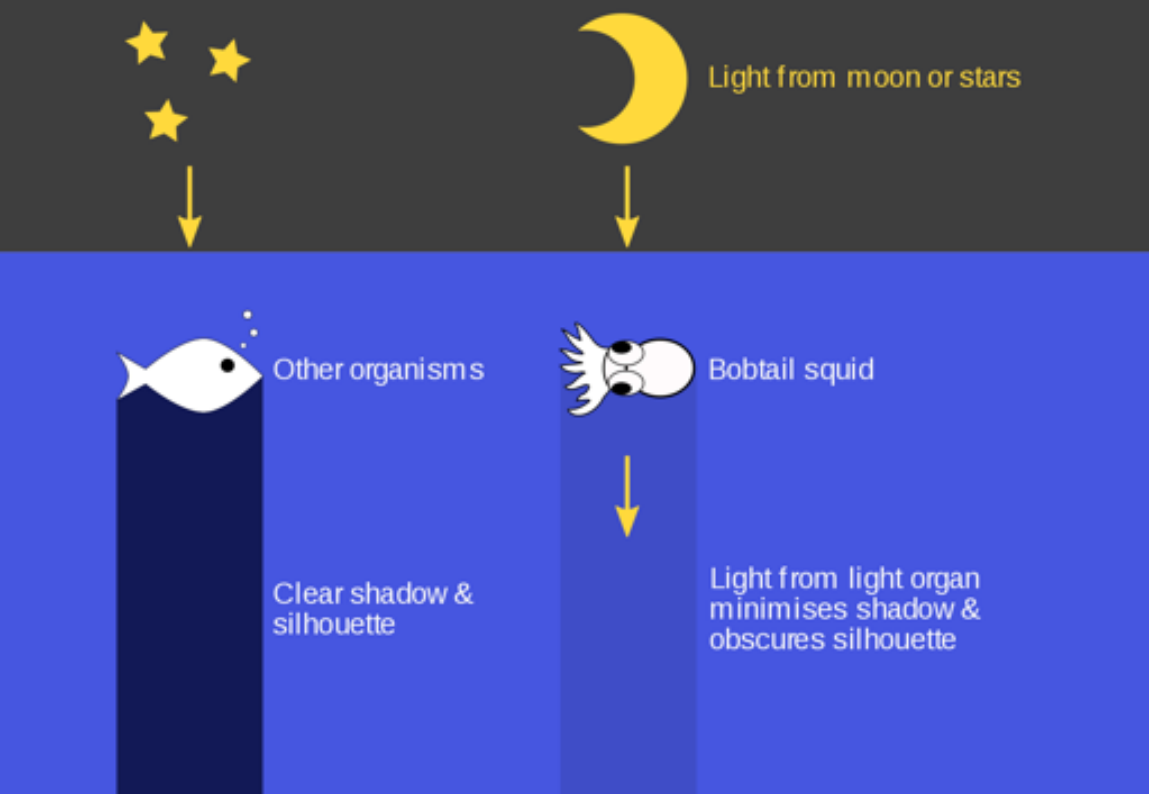
sleep on the sea floor under the sand. Having to feed so many guests when they are not needed is not energy efficient so they are expelled back into the sea. It replenishes the supply during the day ready for the next night of feeding.

The light organ not only feeds the bacteria but also regulates the amount of light and the direction the light so that it exits the body ventrally below not dorsally upwards. The squid achieves this by a structure very similar to its own eye with a lens, reflector and iris mechanisms (see diagram). The light intensity can be controlled by the positioning of the ink sac.



A reflector directs the light down through the lens which defuses the light and the ink sac absorbs any stray light. It is similar to the squid's eye except it is a backward eye where light comes out of this eye rather than going in. This light shines through the ventral muscles and skin of the squid downwards so that any predator looking up sees the light from the squid's body blending in with the light from the moon thus cloaking the squid just like a space ship in science fiction movies! This is called counter illumination camouflage. The organ contains filters which may alter the wavelength of the luminescence so that it is the same as the moon and star light above in the night sky.

Not only does the host control the guest in the 'Calamari Hotel' as some called it but guest also controls the host's body without leaving its room. The bacteria have been discovered to be able to control the squid's daily rhythm and what proteins it makes through its light.



Scientists are still seeking to discover how the squid and the bacteria recognise each other and communicate with each other. This article does not even deal with the wonder of how the bacteria produce light in the first place with all the complex chemistry involved but none of these wondrous designs in nature point to blind chance evolution. All these mechanisms had to be present working together in the first place. They all point to an amazing all wise, all powerful Creator God.

“They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep.” (Psalms 107:23-24)





Ein Gedi, Israel, where David hid from King Saul