

Clifton News

298 October - December 2022

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News

The assembly outing to Littlehampton on Saturday 16th July was a very blessed time and enjoyed by all, especially the children. This was the first such outing in many years and we thank God for the good weather and fellowship.

The two festival outreaches went well with many tracts distributed at the South Norwood Community Festival on Sunday 3rd July and at the Grange Picnic in the Park on Sunday 11th September. The latter had less stall holders present due to the Queen's death but numbers of parents and children attending the event appeared to be the same as last year. A number of parents expressed interest in sending their children to our clubs and we pray that we will remember to do this.

We were sad to say goodbye to Vipul, Olga and Sarah as they left to move to their new home in Basildon. We wish them God's blessing on their new location. We welcomed into fellowship a number of new believers, Devender Parmar from India who works in animation. His wife Poonum and three children hope to join him soon. Jerome Matthew from Bournemouth who is studying at Kingston University and Chloe Buckeridge from Hurst who is studying at St George's Hospital.

The Seekers and Friday Clubs have restarted and numbers of children are starting to look encouraging. Sylvia Girard is still awaiting her visa to be granted to join her husband William here. Continue praying for those who are expecting babies soon, Olga in October and Feba in December.

Carol Service

*Sunday 18th December at 6:30 pm
(followed by tea and mince pies)*

Watchnight Gospel Meeting

31st December at 11.00 pm



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Meetings

Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread 11.00 am
(During outreach at local community events it is earlier at 10 am so please check our website before coming)

Young People's Bible class 12.15 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

October

2 Clifton young people
9 Richard Catchpole
16 Andrew Hall
23 Alastair Rodger
30 Nitish Patel

November

6 Clifton young people
13 Thomas Taylor
20 John Aston
27 Thomas Taylor

December

4	Clifton young people
11	Richard Catchpole
18	John Aston (Carol Service)
25	Christmas Day no meeting

MONDAY PRAYER AND MINISTRY

October

3	Nitish Patel
10	Nitish Patel
17	John Aston
24	Richard Catchpole
31	Daniel Rudge

November

7	Daniel Rudge
14	Richard Catchpole
21	Richard Catchpole
28	John Aston

December

5	Timothy Miller
12	Timothy Miller
19	Alastair Rodger
26	Boxing Day (No meeting)

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

Won't we be bored in heaven if we're there for eternity?

This writer also had similar thoughts many years ago while in Sunday school. The teacher spoke of how wonderful it will be sing to the Lord for all eternity. This writer pictured all the believers lined up in rows like in the gospel hall unable to move or do anything else except sing and sing and sing. It seemed like a very dull eternity ahead!

However, we are thankful to God that heaven is not going to be a boring place because of three things.

Firstly, we are going to see Jesus and we will never get bored of Him! He is going to give us what this world can never give, an everlasting satisfaction, "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." (Revelation 21:6)

Secondly, we are going to be changed so that we cannot get bored. It is sin that has caused us to be the way we are. We were never created to become bored but when sin entered this world when our first parents Adam and Eve sinned then not only sickness, suffering and death entered this world but also an emptiness and boredom with it.

Solomon the greatest king was so rich he could enjoy everything he wanted so he tried everything this world had to offer but afterwards wrote in Ecclesiastes, "Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit." (Ecclesiastes 2:17)

He learnt that God has made us for eternity and this world will only ultimately lead to boredom and despair, "He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world (literally 'eternity') in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

Our hearts were made for eternity and nothing on earth can really satisfy. When Christ will come, we shall be changed and become like

Him!

“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body” (Philippians 3:20-21)

Thirdly, having been changed and made perfect, sinless and able to enjoy God fully we will never tire of learning about Him because He is infinite.

Many explorers spend their whole life seeking new things in this world and never seem to get bored because they always find something new to get excited about. Many wish their life could be exciting and they could discover new things to enjoy. This is exactly how heaven will be like for God is infinite in love, wisdom and power. We will never cease to discover things about Him. The prospect of meeting the great believers of the Old and New Testaments, the believers who did great things for God throughout history and the billions of other believers each with their own testimony and experience of God will be more than enough to take any boredom away not that there will be any!!

Nitish Patel

Bible Teaching

THE HYPOSTATIC UNION

By Nitish Patel

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." (Philippians 2:6-7)

There is a story about King George V of Britain. Once he paid a visit to the city of Leeds. Elaborate preparations were made for his coming. Excited crowds filled the streets to wave and cheer. There was a large elementary school in Leeds with a playground which ran alongside the railway line. His Majesty agreed to wave to the boys and girls as the royal train passed by on the last day of his visit. The boys and girls with their teachers, crowded to the playground wall overlooking the railway. Presently from a long tunnel, the royal train slowly emerged and gradually drew alongside the playground. Then the king came outside the royal coach and stood on a small platform where they could all see him. He wore no crown or purple robe, but was dressed in a plain suit, just like an ordinary man. From his jacket pocket he plucked a bright handkerchief with which he waved to the cheering children. All too soon the train glided by and disappeared. Then the cheers subsided into silence, except for one little girl who sobbed bitterly, so much so that one of the teachers asked her, "Why are you crying like that dear?" The little girl sputtered through her tears, "I wanted to see the king and I only saw a man!"

Many who saw Jesus thought like this girl that they will see a great king but they saw only a lowly carpenter and were stumbled. They only saw a man! Though He had no beauty, no royal majesty that men should desire Him, yet He is "over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." (Isaiah 53:2; Romans 9:5)

For several hundred years following the beginning of the church age



there were many controversies resulting from the teaching of false, unscriptural, doctrines. The phrase “hypostatic union” was adopted as a theological term to describe how our Lord Jesus Christ is God and Man in one person. It simply means that when the Son of God became a man by the virgin birth, He remained fully God, but also became fully man (though not affected by Adam’s sin, and therefore a perfect man), having a divine nature and a perfect human nature in one person.

We must exercise care and reverence when considering the wondrous incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. The men of Bethshemesh lifted the lid of the Ark to look inside, which they were forbidden to do. The Ark is a beautiful type of Christ and God slew 50,070 men for this sin (1 Samuel 6:19). Therefore we must never seek to peer inside the person of Christ to speculate biological details, going beyond what scripture has revealed.

THE FORM OF GOD

Jesus Christ is God (John 1:1–4; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:1–3). The word “form” is the key word. It has nothing to do with shape or size for God is a spirit (John 4:24). It is the Greek word *morphe* and occurs three times in the NT (Mark 16:12; Philippians 2:6, 7). The word means “the outward expression of the inward nature.” The verb “Who being ... ” in the Greek means that Christ always existed in the form of God and did not cease to exist as God when He came in the flesh.

NOT ROBBERY TO BE EQUAL TO GOD

The word robbery in the Greek can mean to seize, to take something or to hold onto something like a treasure. Both ideas are true of the Son of God. It is true that the Son of God’s equality with the Father was not something He had to seize upon to make it His like a robber taking what does not belong to him. It has always been His position and right. This is what Satan tried to do. He tried to rob God and exalt himself as the Most High (Isaiah 14:14). Adam and Eve were tempted of the Devil to commit robbery, taking the fruit that did not belong to them so that they could be as gods (Genesis 3:5).

But the context of this chapter indicates it is the second meaning that is emphasised here. Paul gives four examples of humility beginning with the Lord Jesus who is the greatest (vv. 5-11); Paul himself (vv. 12-18); Timothy (vv. 19-24) and Epaphroditus (vv. 25-30). These four

servants gave up and sacrificed for the sake of others. When man needed to be saved, Christ did not consider His positional equality with God as something to be grasped onto forever and under all circumstances. He gave up the outward display of glory and majesty not the essential divine attributes. He briefly unveiled that glory to His disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:2; Mark 9:2).

Christ was always equal with the Father but was willing to leave the comforts and joys of heaven to come down into this world. As Jesus says of Himself in the parables of the kingdom, “for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field ...Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.” (Matthew 13:44, 46). He sold everything, gave up everything and utterly humbled Himself, taking the lowest place when He became Man but never ceased to be God Almighty.

*Out of the ivory palaces
And into this world of woe
Only His great eternal love
Made my Saviour go*

MADE HIMSELF OF NO REPUTATION

William Hoste wrote, “While literally this means “emptied Himself” (from the Greek Kenoo meaning “to empty”) it is “...explained by the words that immediately follow, ‘taking upon Him the form—or the mode of existence—of a servant.’ He did not divest Himself of His Divine attributes, but held them in abeyance: that is, He did not make independent use of them. He did not speak, act, or judge ‘from Himself,’ or on His own initiative.” He was all powerful commanding the sea and waves to be still (Matthew 8:27). He was all knowing, revealing what was in the hearts of men and women (John 2:25, 4:17-18; 21:17). He was omnipresent and present everywhere as Philip found out (John 1:48). Though He became a little child wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger and held in Mary’s arms, He continued to “uphold all things by the word of His power.” (Hebrews 1:3).

*No less Almighty at his birth,
Than on his throne supreme:
His shoulders held up heaven and earth,
When Mary held up him.*

THE FORM OF A SERVANT

The same Greek word used to describe Jesus in the form of God is now used to describe Him as in the form of a servant. Just as He is all that God is in His nature and essence, He became all that that a servant should be in His nature and essence. The word for servant is "bondservant". The Lord Jesus was the bond Servant of Jehovah, totally dependant upon His Father and obedient to Him.

He experienced new things not experienced in heaven when equal with God the Father. He humbled Himself for a season and He experienced what it was to obey (Hebrews 5:8). He let the Holy Spirit lead Him and He performed miracles by the Spirit's power (Matthew 12:27; Mark 1:12). He spoke not His own words but the Words that the Father gave Him to speak (John 14:10). He prayed daily to His Father as a dependent Man to hear His will and submitted to His Father's will even unto the death of the cross (Isaiah 50:5-6, Philippians 2:8).

THE LIKENESS OF MEN

God who made man in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26) now becomes a man Himself, apart from sin. The Lord Jesus became so truly man that those who knew His family wondered and said, "...Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" (John 6:42)

He was fully man in every way with a body, soul and spirit. He felt all that a human being can feel, weariness, tiredness, sleep, grief, disappointment, tears, agony, pain, thirst, hunger and even voluntarily lay down His life in death, which is the reason why He became man (Hebrews 2:14, 17; 4:15).

*Christ, by highest heaven adored
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of a Virgin's womb:
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with man to dwell
Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald-angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King"*

Good News

Reflections on the Death of Queen Elizabeth II

It goes without saying that the death of Queen Elizabeth II is an event that will be remembered by all who experienced it for years to come and will be written about in history books as a significant event of the 21st Century. There are some immediate lessons we can learn from her life and death.

Much has been said about the Queen's dedication to duty, throughout her reign she thought of herself as a servant. From hosting foreign heads of state to visiting factories, she was consistent in her service for the country even to the end of her life. Her attitude was motivated by the example of Jesus Christ – she spoke of Him as her role model.



He said of Himself: *For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.* (Mark 10:45).

Jesus didn't come into this world to be waited upon and treated as a king. He, being the creator of this world and equal with God, humbled Himself, taking the form of a servant and being born in the likeness of men (Philippians 2:6-7). He came into this world to heal and bless mankind, but more than that, He came to give His life.

Why? The Queen gave the answer to this in her 2011 Christmas

message – “Although we are capable of great acts of kindness, history teaches us that we sometimes need saving from ourselves - from our recklessness or our greed. God sent into the world a unique person - neither a philosopher nor a general, important though they are, but a Saviour, with the power to forgive.”

Each one of us needs a Saviour, someone who can save us from the judgement we deserve from our sins. Our sin shows itself in the harsh words we say and the cruel acts we do. Not only do we hurt one another, but all our sin is ultimately against God (Psalm 51:4). And from Him we need forgiveness.

As the Queen accurately stated, we are unable to save ourselves, what ever good works we do, however honourable our position in life – even a monarch. Therefore, we need someone to step in and save us.

Jesus Christ in dying on the cross and rising from the dead has paid the price to free us from our sin. We're not saved by contributing to this ransom price with our good works or religious activity, but by believing in Jesus.

As God's perfect servant, He has done all the work needed and through faith in Him, we can know that we will receive the eternal life that we trust the Queen is now enjoying.

Alastair Rodger

Design in Creation



OUR AMAZING MOON

By Nitish Patel

“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?” (Psalms 8:3-4)

After fifty years man is planning to return to the moon in 2024. Very soon the the most powerful rocket built by man since the Saturn V rocket of the Apollo moon program will blast off from Cape Canaveral in Florida, USA. Named the Artemis program after the Greek goddess of the moon (the same as ‘Diana’ in Acts 19:35), it is planned to land the first astronauts in 50 years including the first woman on the moon.

Of the twelve Apollo astronauts who landed on it’s surface, two

became believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. James Irwin (1930- 1991) who flew on the Apollo 15 mission in 1971 said, "God walking on the earth is more important than man walking on the moon."

Charles Duke (born 1935), the youngest human ever to walk on the moon, aged 36, flew on the Apollo 16 mission in 1972. He said, "My walk on the moon lasted three days. My walk with God will last forever."

God created the Sun, moon and stars on day four of the Creation week (Genesis 1:14-19). David describes the moon as the work of God's fingers describing it as the work of an artist. God has beautifully created the moon for His glory and for the benefit of His creatures on earth.

THE MOON IS ESSENTIAL FOR LIFE ON EARTH

The moon is 240,000 miles (384,400 km) away from the earth and is the fifth largest natural satellite and one of the densest in the Solar System.

The moon itself is barren and dead, devoid of any life. It has a very thin atmosphere called the exosphere and as a result the day time surface temperatures can heat up to 204 °C and can go down to -205 °C at night. No life exists upon it but it's very existence allows for life on earth to thrive though most are unaware of this. This is because of its effect on the earth due to its gravity acting on the earth as orbits around. It is tidally locked to the earth meaning that it rotates in exactly the same time as it takes to orbit the Earth. This is why we can only see one side of the moon and never the far side.

This closeness to earth allows its gravity to pull on the earth and stabilise the earth's natural wobble. The Earth is tilted at 23.4° in its orbit around the Sun. There is a slight wobble of 2.4° over time like the wobble of a spinning top. However, if the moon were to suddenly vanish then the earth over time will completely topple over 90° one side facing the Sun at a time. This would completely end the seasons of the Earth. There will be complete darkness one side of the earth

and that side will freeze cold and the other side will roast in the heat of the Sun. This will change over as it orbits the Sun until both sides of the earth are frozen and roasted year after year. No life could survive without the moon's presence !

LIGHT ON THE EARTH

The moon's first purpose is to provide light for the night by reflecting the light of the sun, "Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night ..." (Jeremiah 31:35).



It is able to do this because unlike the moons of other planets it is a quarter of earth's size and large enough to reflect a lot of light. It orbits just at the right distance so that in the sky it appears as the same size as the Sun though it is 400 times smaller. Because of this it can blot out the light of the Sun during a total eclipse. These eclipses are so mathematically predictable that mention of them in ancient days help us to precisely work out when historical events took place.

THE SEASONS OF THE EARTH

"He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down." (Psalms 104:19)

The moon was also created to provide a clock for mankind to indicate the months and seasons, to regulate the times of sowing, harvest and

reaping. It takes about 29.5 days (called the 'synodic' month) to orbit the earth and this is visibly seen in the phases of the moon from a dark new moon to mark the beginning of the month to a bright full moon in the middle of the month to back to a new moon starting another month.

This was also made part of Israel's worship for they were to worship God at the beginning of every new moon.

"Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day." (Psalms 81:3)

"And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD." (Isaiah 66:23)

THE TIDES AND THE MOON

Low tide



High tide



Another important reason for the existence of the moon is in how it affects the earth's oceans causing high and low tides. Its gravitational effect is double that of the Sun since it is closer so that it pulls on the oceans towards it. The tides help many living things that live by the sea that could not survive without them. Tides cleanse the earth's ocean shorelines and helps keep the ocean currents circulating. They

benefit man by scouring out shipping channels. The biggest tide in the world occurs in the Bay of Fundy in Canada. The difference between low and high tide there can be as much as 16.3 metres or 53.4 feet.

THE MOON IS MOVING AWAY

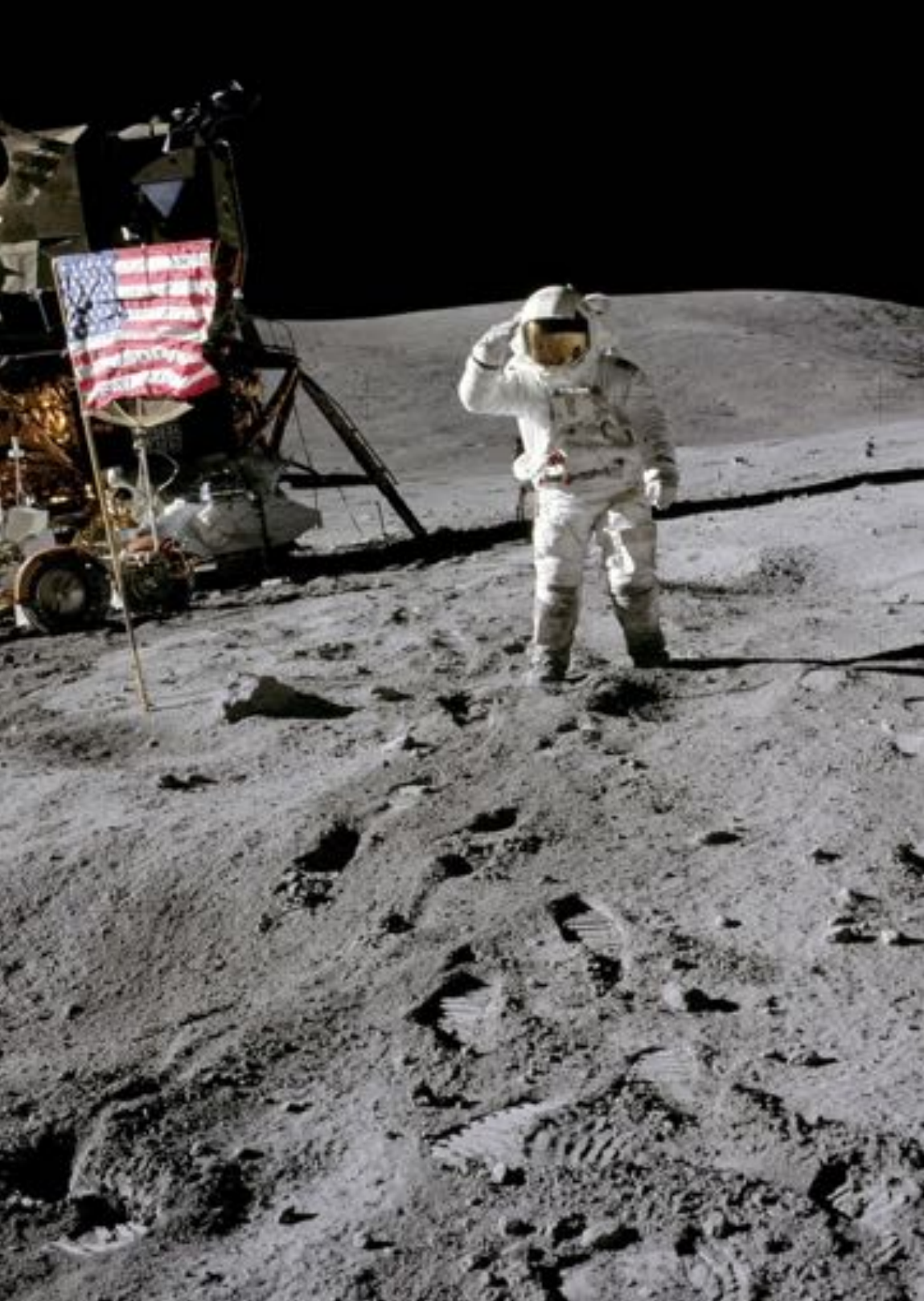
Because of the friction of the tides on earth, the rotation of the earth is slowing down 0.002 seconds per century. Because of the Law of Conservation of Angular Momentum the moon is slowly moving away from the earth at a rate of 4 cm (1½ inches) per year and this would have been greater in the past. This is called lunar recession. The moon cannot be billions of years old as Evolutionists teach because of this fact. If the earth and moon are 4.5 billion years old, we would have lost the moon into space long ago. Also if it was that old it would have been in physical contact with earth 1.4 billion years ago and destroyed.

According to the Creation account in the Bible this was around 6000 years ago and the moon would have been less than 1000 feet (300m) nearer to earth than it is now. We can trust the Bible's account of the origin of the moon!

The moon brings praise and glory to the God who created it,

"Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the LORD: for he commanded, and they were created." (Psalms 148:3-5)

(Opposite, Charles Duke salutes the flag, Apollo 16 mission)



Boats on the Sea of Galilee

