

Assessment of the TV Drama, 'The Bible'

No doubt there will be a flurry of articles worldwide on this subject, but I have been asked to write up mine. I won't take too much time to do this as I see the whole thing as somewhat trivial.

Introduction

'The Bible' is a television documentary, first aired in the UK on Channel 5 on Saturday 30 November, to be screened in five ten-hour parts. It was developed by the successful producer of 'The Voice' and 'The Apprentice', Mark Burnett. At first I was pleasantly surprised that a mainstream channel was open to broadcasting an untouchable subject that is constantly derided in the media, but I didn't expect much and I wasn't surprised at the outcome.

What we must first understand is that a key part of the end-times is the brainwashing of society to be amenable to the satanic agenda, something I cover in other papers. One of the chief means of doing this is the domination of television programmes to produce attitudes and beliefs that comply with the devil's agenda. For the devil's programme to succeed he needs the majority of the population to support it, thus he needs to take over the minds of people. In this way Satan gets people to do his work thinking that they are doing the right thing because their rationale has been corrupted.

For example: a multitude of TV dramas, soaps and discussion programmes tell people to follow their heart, by which is meant a superficial but strident selfish desire that contradicts rational wisdom. In the light of this advice I have known women leave their husbands and children, creating a world of pain for many. Such advice is devilish.

So, when a sin-saturated medium decides to broadcast a series on the Bible, one has to have very serious reservations. If producers and controllers under the sway of the enemy have sanctioned this, then it is likely that the result is not going to be very spiritual and is possibly going to be dangerous.

We do not need the world to prop up the work we are called to do in service to the Lord.

However, since the series intends to cover the entire Bible, including Revelation, I suspect that there will be much worse impacts on truth in the episodes to come. The devil's strategy is to advance slowly with error so that one is ensnared. If the worst aspects were broadcast in the first episode, many would turn off and ignore the rest; but if the errors slowly accumulate to a significant conclusion, then people are damaged like the proverbial frog in the slow boiling pot.

Aesthetics

Firstly, have you noticed how Hollywood always seems to adopt this monochrome brown tint when they want to imply reality to ancient cultures? It is so boring to watch everyone dressed in shades of brown and dirty beige. Apart from this not being good television, it is also not good history. Ancient cultures were filled with colour. Remaining edifices that appear to us with no colour, such as statues and temples, were originally filled with gaudy,

bright shades of blues, blacks, gold, reds, greens and yellows. Even the Parthenon in Athens was originally painted in vivid colours. In fact we would shun such gaudy aesthetics, but the ancients loved it.

Even in the wilderness the Israelites were able to fill the Tabernacle with a variety of colours: fine white linen, scarlet, blue, gold; indeed the garments of glory and beauty for the High Priest were an array of dazzling colours. If they could do this in the wilderness, how much more could a developed urban population produce many colours? While some dyes were expensive, such as the scarlet that required cochineal beetles, other dyes were readily available, such as yellow ochre, iron oxide, plant dyes and such like.

So this is not just an aesthetic matter that makes better viewing it is also a factual matter that makes the general appearance of almost every depicted scene completely inaccurate.

Then there was the mud hut that Abraham emerged from in Chaldea. Ur of the Chaldees was an important and superior ancient city that had pumped water and under-floor heating in stone built houses. Abram was an important man with servants and herds who would certainly have lived in a high quality home. This made his decision to obey God and live the rest of his life in tents even more sacrificial. The production got this matter completely wrong and gave the wrong impression of life at that time.

The *raison-detre* behind this is the commonly held evolutionary viewpoint that pictures ancient civilisations as stupid, primitive peoples who were unable to read or write until quite late in history. In fact the ancients were more intelligent than moderns (the gene pool has deteriorated) and many of their achievements are beyond our understanding. For instance, even with modern technology, we can't build Cheops' pyramid. How did ancients know the mathematical steps required to make the sound holes for flutes? How did they move and lift huge stones weighing many tons that moderns could not move as the substrate is too soft for mechanical machines? Most people don't realise that the ancients had dental surgeons and even performed brain surgery, let alone colonising the world in ocean-crossing boats.

This whole picture of a brown, dull, dirty, primitive society is erroneous. So, the general background to the drama is wrong and creates a false impression.

Factual mistakes

However, the real problem with this production is its many factual mistakes. Though it tried to avoid responsibility for this with a disclaimer that it was only true to the spirit of the Bible, that is not good enough to fill the script with avoidable mistake after mistake.

One of the problems with this is that it will confuse and damage young believers so that the wrong mental picture will fill their mind when they read Scripture.

The Ark of Noah

Noah is seen parading on the deck of the ark and looking around, there being some kind of living quarter's structure on the deck, which also implies a hatch. However, there is no indication that the ark had this facility. Indeed, God shut the door behind the family when they went in (Gen 7:16) and the whole thing was sealed shut for safety. Later, when releasing the birds, they did this through a window in the side and not on the deck.

This is what Scripture says:

And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it *with* lower, second, and third *decks*. Gen 6:15-16

Thus the ark had lower decks but the only openings were a window and a door in the side. Nobody promenaded on the top deck of the boat and neither were there structures on it; which would have been susceptible to damage from the strong winds of the flood cataclysm.

Abram

From the start we are introduced to Abram as 'Abraham', even though his name was changed to Abraham only after he left Ur and Haran.

Sodom

This whole interlude is riddled with errors. Lot was actually a respected man who sat in the gate with the elders (Gen 19:1). Again the city is shown as mud huts with broken wicket doors. In fact, Jericho is perhaps the oldest settlement known to archaeologists and would have had the same level of civilised development as Ur.

In Scripture, the angels were attacked because they were beautiful and the Sodomites wanted to rape them (Gen 19:5; hence the name for homosexual sex). This was ignored; in fact there was no reason given for the inhabitants to attack the two men (angels) in the drama.

The angels

Where do we start with this nonsense?

Due to modern political correctness the drama decided to portray angels in a variety of ethnic types. The two in Sodom were black and Chinese. Now the Bible tells us that angels came in human appearance to saints so as not to be too shocking. We can presume that they take the appearance of a perfect man, which would be Adam before he sinned. Adam was neither black nor Chinese, which are both human traits that appeared after sin and after human genetics were altered by local adaptations. Adam was most likely similar to Ancient Near Eastern ethnic types; generally white but with a swarthy skin colour, slightly dark with dark hair. If anything he may have been slightly reddened in appearance based on the Hebrew meaning of 'dust' or 'ground' [Adamah = ground, reddish dust]. Whatever the details, it is certain that angels are neither black nor Chinese.

Then there was the whole Bruce Lee type fight that erupted, devised to add some unnecessary action in a dreary script. The idea of a Chinese, double sword-fighting, angel leaping around to defend himself is laughable. In fact the plot is not explained; why would the angels resort to physical fighting when they had, moments earlier, simply struck an opposing aggressive bunch blind?

Samson

The trailer for the next episode appeared to show that Samson was a large black man. What was just said about angels applies equally here. Not only is this ethnic portrayal stupid, but I would imagine that it will serve to alienate and anger Jews.

What this does is to over-emphasise political correctness above truth.

The Red Sea crossing

This section was filled with mistakes.

There was no mention of the divine provision of the Angel of God and the cloud to defend the rearguard of Israel (Ex 14:19). This prevented the Egyptians from reaching the Israelites in the night. Both were encamped all night (Ex 14:20), the cloud gave light to Israel but darkness to the Egyptians.

There was no mention of the wind that God sent through the night to part the waters of the sea (Ex 14:21). Instead they parted immediately in the daytime according to the drama.

There was no need to rush and run from the Egyptians (as shown) due to the provision of God; indeed, how could the old, lame, and sick have run anyway? Israel could only move as fast as its slowest member; there was no mad rush. There is no mention in Exodus of the need for torches. There is no mention, in the drama, of the Egyptians admitting that God fought for Israel or that he slowed down their pursuit by taking the wheels off the chariots (Ex 14:24-25).

Then God's word clearly states that all the army was destroyed in the waters that rushed back and not a man was left. This includes Pharaoh and all his chariots (that is every chariot in Egypt – Ex 14:7). The drama had Pharaoh and all his chariots on the bank watching the destruction of the infantry and cavalry. In fact, under the TV scenario, how could Israelites on foot carrying baggage have outstripped Egyptian cavalry at their heels in the middle of the Red Sea?

The complete destruction of Pharaoh and his whole army is very important, both as a fulfilment of prophecy and also a severe warning to the nations. In fact this event explains why Egypt's dynasty fell victim to foreign invaders at that time – it had no defence left.

Moses

Moses is shown rejoicing at finding his family of Aaron (wrongly pronounced as 'A-ron' not a-har-one, *Aharown*) and Miriam but there is no mention that Moses had a wife and child.

Joshua and the Ark of the Covenant

The trailer showed Joshua seeking God standing in front of the Ark in the camp standing in the open air. All of this is mightily wrong.

Firstly, no man could approach the uncovered Ark without being smitten with death. When being transported it was covered in various coverings and skins by the Levites alone. No ordinary man ever saw the Ark. An Ephraimite like Joshua had no right to approach the Ark directly.

Secondly, when in the camp, the Ark was hidden in the darkness of the Holy of Holies in the heart of the covered Tabernacle. Only the High Priest, and even then only once a year with blood, could go near the Ark.

The idea of anyone seeking the Ark, and especially Joshua going up to it in the camp, is deeply erroneous.

Interim conclusion

I did not watch this with a pen and paper making notes and did not intend to comment, but I am doing so because I have been asked to. Thus I did not watch it intently and these points are merely what come to mind. If I wanted to waste time, I could study the drama again properly and find many more mistakes. These mistakes are indefensible.

Jesus

The trailer also showed the face of Christ. Now this is controversial but one can make a good case for never doing this on various grounds.

Firstly, God commands that we make no image of him at all. Jesus is God in the flesh and this command equally applies to the man Jesus as well as the Second Person of the Trinity. Unless one can overcome this with some sort of apologetic, then we should not portray Jesus.

Secondly, there is no physical description of Jesus in the Gospel for a reason. God never intended that icons, statues or paintings should be made of Christ.

Thirdly, as the perfection of humanity mixed with god-hood, no man could ever come close to portraying the Lord and any drama doing this would be irreverent for that reason alone. I note that when Robert Powell portrayed Jesus in the highly acclaimed 1977 Franco Zeffirelli TV drama, 'Jesus of Nazareth', he was at the very pinnacle of his dramatic career, which appeared to be skyrocketing with Hollywood beckoning. After this his career slowly dwindled to doing a poor TV comedy, bit parts in TV soaps and voiceovers. That is merely an observation of fact; I leave you to consider the reasons. For trivia hunters, Powell is the narrator in the current drama under consideration.

When I was a young Christian I went to see Ben Hur again and was profoundly affected by it. If I remember correctly, the film never showed you the face of the Lord, just his hand or his back or a distant view. At least this film was trying to comply with God's commandment, and thus it worked more effectively.

Conclusion

Needless to say, watching this drama will do Christians no good whatsoever; in fact, it is more likely to do some harm by trivialising facts or falsifying events.

The very basic requirement for a telling of the Biblical story is that the basic facts are true. This drama fails even this basic test and cannot be recommended.

What is worrying is that evangelical groups, such as Spring Harvest have sponsored this production; they should be ashamed of themselves.

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