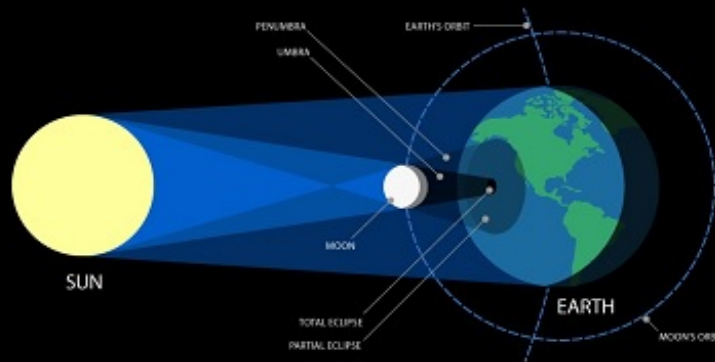




Solar Eclipse 2017 (6017)



Did you take time in your schedule to drive (if required) to view the full eclipse of the sun in person? I missed the solar eclipse in 1979, silently wondering where I would be, I privately made a commitment to see the solar eclipse in 2017." I did.

It was truly spectacular! And, surprising! The muted, truncated shadow lines, the coolness of the air, the eerie haze, the hushed crowd that gathered along the Nebraska cornfield, and the tree lined street filled with excited "like-minded" viewers.

There was giggling, fumbling with awkward cardboard "official eclipse glasses", strangers reading aloud the history of eclipses, taking "selfies" and reviewing the latest weather and email updates on cell-phones. Some people brought picnic lunches, lawn chairs, blankets, telescopes, and children. It was a great moment to share. It was a

special pleasure for me to see dads with their sons - experiencing this "once-in-a-lifetime."

The advent of special effects, 3-D movies and 30' IMAX screens, sound effects and loud music which raise expectations, fears, excitement, and drama do not match the pleasure of sharing everyday life with people.

Then, it happened - the sun was completely dark. Together, we gasped. The total eclipse brought involuntary shouts from the lips of everyone watching, near and far. I could hear the echoes of shouts from the hills. Horns were blowing! Some from the town were prepared with fireworks.

...The big surprise for me was how light the sky remained even in totality. Definitely cooler and not bright, but not the darkness I had expected. *(Hey, did you see the total eclipse? I'd love to hear about your experience.)*

Again, I was struck by how my expectation did not match the reality of the day. It was an ordinary day. And, yet it was extraordinary!

When the sun went dark, there was a moment of collective breath-holding... the moon *would* progress on its course, right?

What a relief it was to see the light streaming back across the sky! I excitedly announced a plan to come back and see it again tomorrow with my new friends. They agreed. Then, we all laughed. Ah, but if the occurrence were daily I suppose we would not go out of our way to stop and observe the heavens.

The ordinary days of life, the predictability of sun rises and sun sets, the comfort of being with people we know, or strangers who oddly may be easier to love; such are the days of man - like a vapor.

On one such day, our King will come. People will cry out and shout! Many will be shocked...such an ordinary day, but OH, SO EXTRA-ORDINARY... ("...encourage one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching").

Whew! The moon moved on. We packed our cars and got in the line of traffic. Somehow it seemed like this shared experience made everyone a little more friendly, more patient - more human.

Okay, it's over. Back to work everyone - the traffic streamed for miles in one direction, typically I was headed the other direction. Hmm..., the cars streamed past me for miles and miles, it was a little creepy, but not an unfamiliar feeling...

Hope to see you all at the Feast of Tabernacles in Pie Town!

"You know we'll have a good time then..."

Friendly,



[PS.REGISTER for the Feast of Tabernacles!!](#)



From Don's Desk. . .

"Why would anybody do such a thing?"

This year our gathering for the Feast of Tabernacles will once again be held at the TRI Headquarters in Pie Town, New Mexico (October 5th to October 13th). We have a [schedule](#) which incorporates worship, fellowship and day trips to area sites and places of interest so those who travel long distances can experience some New Mexico color.

Then, someone wrote saying, "Don't miss the Decalogue Stone if you get near Albuquerque." Wow! What's that - a deca-what? After a few keystrokes I found the information on the Internet. It turns out that in the middle of nowhere, in the dry deserts of Los Lunas, New Mexico, near the Rio Puerco, there stands an ancient stone testament, steadily marking the centuries - a man's recorded devotion to the Words of Life.

Soon, if you join our Tabernacles celebration, we will be on our way to discover this treasure in the "Hidden Mountain." You'll be glad you made the effort!

Memories from my first trip to the Decalogue stone....

...we arrived at the proposed site of the stone (where we were joined by several others who lived closer to Los Lunas than Pie Town). Although we had been required to get prior permission from the government and needed to purchase a printed permit to enter, we walked and walked into a deserted, unimpressive, and unmarked area. (Scouts sent ahead a few weeks earlier to find the stone were amazed when they found that there were NO markers, NO path guides - you simply have to find it yourself!)

Some rock-hunters who had visited the area previously had made natural markers of stones formed into arrows pointing the way, but we only found them as we were leaving.

You know, our government places large, interpretive, full-color, Plexiglas signs complete with brochures at prairie dog colonies; but, here - where the words of our Creator were inscribed in an ancient script - NOTHING!

After a quarter mile trek down a level road, we veered right toward "Hidden Mountain" where the "Mystery Stone" lay - just as it had for centuries for any passer-by to wonder, "Why would anybody do such a thing?"

We climbed up at a gentle slope that turned from 20 to 40 degrees upward. The rocky terrain allowed no inattentive climbing. Not long after we entered the wash, just ahead of us we found the controversial rock.

Controversial?

If there is anything as socially divided as a country church, it has to be in the area of archaeology. These guys can't agree on anything. If you really want to see them fight, just throw in the prospect that the subject at hand will somehow vindicate or vilify religion and watch the fireworks! Just such a case is the Los Lunas Decalogue Stone.

From Wikipedia: "The Los Lunas Decalogue Stone is a large boulder on the side of Hidden Mountain, near Los Lunas, New Mexico, about 35 miles south of Albuquerque, that bears a very regular inscription carved into a flat panel. The stone is also known as the Los Lunas Mystery Stone or Commandment Rock. The inscription is interpreted by some to be an abridged version of the Decalogue or Ten Commandments in a form of Paleo-Hebrew. A letter group resembling the tetragrammaton YHWH, or "Yahweh," makes four appearances. The stone is controversial in that some claim the inscription is Pre-Columbian, and therefore proof of early Semitic contact with the Americas.

The first recorded mention of the stone is in 1933, when Professor Frank Hibben, an archaeologist from the University of New Mexico, saw it. Hibben was led to the stone by an unnamed guide who claimed to have found it as a boy in the 1880s. The 1880s date of discovery is important to those who believe that the stone was inscribed by a lost tribe of Israel. The Paleo-Hebrew script was unknown to scholars in the 1880s, making a forgery at that time unlikely, and thus allegedly proving the stone's

antiquity. However, the Paleo-Hebrew script is practically identical to the Phoenician script, which was known at the time, thus not precluding the possibility of fraud. One argument against the stone's antiquity is its apparent use of modern Hebrew punctuation, though amateur epigrapher Barry Fell argued that the punctuation is consistent with antiquity. Other researchers dismiss the inscription based on the numerous stylistic and grammatical errors that appear in the inscription."



(...A human who has trouble with grammar and spelling?! Say it ain't so!)

All of the dispute and archaeology aside, the question remains, "Why would anybody do such a thing?"

We huffed and puffed ourselves into the washed crevasse between the mountains when the stone suddenly came into full view. We drew close enough to read the letters, if not the words, carved onto the stone. The intense labor of such an endeavor became apparent. It was at this moment, the question welled up and someone spoke it out loud, "Why would anybody do such a thing?"

Some people say this is a fraud, but the internal evidence would make such a fraud (necessarily) an insane enterprise. There is a large and obvious mistake, corrected in the inscription. A verse is clumsily added in-between the lines. The mistake was at the BEGINNING of the writing. If it were at the end, I could see the writer trying to salvage the project; but for him to continue? It is definitely as though someone intended to record the words more-so than perpetrate a fraud.

The land, now inhospitable, was once part of a large and navigable river bank, easily accessible by the ships of Solomon's adventurous fleet during the peace and prosperity given to Israel as he reigned. The time fits, the language fits, the purpose makes sense. There are many things to consider, but ...why would anybody do such a thing?

I asked the group, "If this were a modern "graffiti evangelist," he would not have bypassed the opportunity to inscribe "JESUS SAVES" or as the guy with the blue spray paint puts on nearly every interstate overpass abutment "TRUST JESUS." Fifty years ago it may have said, "Repent - The end is near!" (some just resort to a mere cross arranged in white rocks on the side of a hill - others might implant three crosses made of creosote posts) but, why would anybody inscribe the Ten Commandments on a stone in the desert?

The Ten Commandments

Would it be so hard for you to believe that these Ten Commandments are likely the most important words ever written or spoken to mankind? Just the fact that these words are called "COMMANDMENTS" make for an overbearing or imposing tone; but, you must remember that the culture that preserved these words did not hear such a tenor in them. Rather, they were words of comfort and beauty. They were words of relationship and safety. They were the Guideposts of Life that were to keep them from harm and bring

them into right relations with their Father God and fellowman.

In our society, we resent and are repulsed by anything that hinders our pursuit of personal happiness or freedom. The Commandments of God are despised more than the regulations of our government. The cry of the average evangelical is, "We are not under the Law! We are under Grace!" as if one is exclusive of the other. The Apostle Paul taught that the Law necessitates Grace AND Grace establishes the Law.

"The Law was our school master to bring us to Christ," says our Apostle. Just as a class may honor its teachers by hanging their portraits in the hall of the alma matter, we may (and, I believe, should) give such honor to the Commandments.

So, was this inscription made by an appreciating Jew and therefore of no consequence to us who are "New Testament" Christians. Has the Law been put into disuse by the Messiah? Is the love and appreciation that was exemplified in these most important words now to be considered extinct, antiquated or unnecessary? Do these words inscribed on a rock in New Mexico really deserve to be hidden from the public in a disused portion of a public landfill?

Although it pains me to see the disrespect that the Law of the Almighty God living in a dump in New Mexico receives, I can see the poetic side of this travesty. Somewhere along the continuum we call life, the One who created us took the time and effort to give us ten simple and easy rules by which we should live. Coincidentally, He carved them in rock like this traveler from a world on the opposite side of the globe did. When the Law of YHVH occupies the place in us that it did in the heart of the author of that Law, we also may well have a different world.

We are a spoiled people. We are spoiled by plenty, we are spoiled by our unlimited opportunity, and we are spoiled in our religion. We are now serving a God (religion) created by this spoiled generation who has gone so far as to say, "We have no need of rules, commandments, or controls."



On the way to Los Lunas we had passed by the antennas (made so famous by the movie Contact) 50 miles west of Socorro, New Mexico. Here stands dozens of antennas weighing 230-tons each, made with millions and millions of dollars and taking thousands of man-hours. Why? *Well, to listen to outer space.* I cannot help it. I must ask,

"Why would anybody do such a thing?"

This is all part of our spoiling. Essentially no one asks, "Why would anybody do such a thing?" because we EXPECT it.

We have our priorities so mixed up that we could pass the Very Large Array (VLA) antennas in awesome wonder and an hour later look at the laborious efforts of the Decalogue Stone and ask, *"Why would anybody do such a thing?"*

Featured Material:

The **Red Letter Edition** program is our feature this month. You can listen on **TRI Radio App**, the Listen Line 605-477-5075 or at **Think Red Ink TV!** Don't miss the show, "... *daily home-runs hit off the mountain!*" - the description of one chat room *ThINKer!*



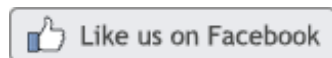
The LIVE show is broadcast at 6 am MT (M-F) and at 9 am MT (Sun.)



On the go? Scan this QR Code to upload the mobile THINKers Chat Room on your Smartphone. Say "Good Morning" or "Hello" and let me know you came to chat because of this note.

The Red Letter Edition Show

Hey, I need your help - share my "FB posts" to your timelines - and my "Tweets to your peeps!" Let's do this! People are dying out there! The biggest barrier we have in distribution of this message is exposure! People need to know there are answers to the problems of life, regeneration and honest faith - (*Christianity*). People must learn to ***have the mind of Christ!***



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