

Camels

READING

Matthew 23

Proverbs 16

1 Kings 10

Isaiah 38

Isaiah 39

Deuteronomy 17

Blind guides, those who strain out the gnat but swallow the camel!

We spend billions of dollars trying to work out how galaxies came to exist. But we're missing the point.

Of course it would be interesting to find out how they form, but the big question is not how, but who.

Who made them? And why are they there in the first place?

I think we want to have a scientific explanation for everything because then we don't have to have a god who created it all.

But even if we completely understand "how", we still will not have any clue about "who". It's like Yeshua said, we're straining out gnats and swallowing a camel.

I had a friend who was a dedicated Christian, a specialist surgeon, who helped countless people.

One day at a Bible study he announced his retirement, and then almost broke down in tears.

"I wonder if I wasted my life on the wrong things".

Science spends literally billions try to find those gnats and strain them out, but I wonder how many scientists have died and suddenly had the realisation that they wasted their life studying the wrong things.

How many suddenly realised that the lump in their throat they had their whole lives, that nagging doubt about how they were spending their life, ... was a camel.

Don't get me wrong, I think science is fascinating. I have several university qualifications in science. Even in advanced mathematics. But then I met Yeshua. And the focus of my entire life changed.

I still enjoy science. But it isn't my explanation for everything.

I'm way more focused these days of finding camels. And if I swallow the occasional gnat - no big deal.

The biggest risk of science is that it gives us knowledge which falsely makes us think that we know everything. When actually we know very little. It makes us proud, but it should make us humble, because it highlights to us how little we really do understand, and how little of what we see we can do ourselves.

But it's not just science.

So many things can take our attention. Things which really aren't important.

We can be obsessed with building wealth. With owning "stuff".

These days we can be obsessed with the number of followers we have on social media.

Or the size of our house. Or the car we drive. Or the brands of the clothes we wear.

If you think of yourself as "getting somewhere" or worse, you think you've "arrived"... here's a chapter for you to read...

Proverbs 16 has a very well known phrase: "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

King Solomon was incredibly wealthy.

Even just counting his annual gold revenue of 666 talents, (that's 25 tons!), that's currently about US\$2Billion - just in gold he received, every year.

But we see that Solomon had his camels too. Probably some literal ones, but the figurative ones were super abundant.

Back in Deuteronomy 17 we see the 3 things a king was warned he must not do.

Do not collect lots of horses. Do not have lots of wives. And do not have lots of gold.

Solomon failed all 3. He had more of each one than anyone before him had ever had.

It's a wonder he could breathe - he would have been choking on those camels every day.

And Yahweh took the kingdom away. He divided it in two.

Later on, there was another king, Hezekiah.

Hezekiah is an interesting person when it comes to gnats and camels.

Early on in his life it looks like he had things in the right order. He was putting Yahweh first.

He was walking in truth and had a good heart.

To the point that one day he got pretty sick, and Isaiah the prophet came to him.

But with bad news, "Yahweh says you're going to die. Set your house in order".

But Hezekiah begged Yahweh for more time, because of his good life so far.

And Yahweh gave it to him!! He gave him 15 more years.

But he wasted them chasing gnats. And he ended up proud, and choking on camels.

He was even so proud that he showed some random foreigners all his wealth, and didn't even credit Yahweh for it.

So Yahweh brought them back as invaders, and they took it all away.

He really would have been better off just accepting when his time had come 15 years before.

He ruined his life's legacy in his final years.

(Instead of begging God, these days extra time is something we tend to rely on science and medicine to give us.

But I wonder if it's worth it? I wonder if we also spend that extra time straining gnats and swallowing camels, or if we really do use it to glorify God?)

It's so easy to lose focus. It's so easy to drift into thinking like the world, and valuing what they value.

It's so easy to focus on things which really are little gnats, and to choke on camels.

Next time you feel like you're choking. Check for a camel. And use it to remind yourself of what your life priorities should be.

And if they're wrong. Ask Yahweh to help you change them. He will.