

Drosnin, a reporter by trade, is neither a scientist nor an archaeologist and does not speak Hebrew. Therefore his books are rejected by many as baseless fantasy no matter how creative.

His latest book posits that space aliens made a trip to our planet in the distant past and left behind obelisks near the Dead Sea. These obelisks bear secret messages written on them, says Drosnin. He does not say what the messages are about. He offers no archaeological evidence for these claims.

One code word that Drosnin produced was the Hebrew *lashon*. He says the word should be interpreted *Lisan*. The *Lisan* is the prominent projection of moon-scape-like marl that juts into the Dead Sea from east to west and is easily visible on a map of Israel. It is chalky, inhospitable, and riddled with deep valleys and high projections. It is a crumbly mix of gypsum, limestone, clay, sand, and shell. It has worn down considerably over thousands of years and any buried "treasure" would have been exposed long ago. Geologists in Israel for years have known its makeup. All the aliens would have accomplished by putting the obelisks there is a guarantee that no one would ever find the buried treasure. The location is too remote.

Drosnin says — and wouldn't you know it — that the Jordanian Government, at the last minute, without explanation, withdrew permission for him to do the archaeological research on the *Lisan* (pg. 94) in Jordanian territory where it rests. So, in the end he admits he has not been there.

Drosnin then creates other mean-nothing phrases (by letter skipping) and somehow comes up with the idea of aliens seeding our planet, which is his answer to where life on earth began. Though he claims to be working in the Hebrew Bible, any thought of a Creator in Genesis 1 is out the window. Drosnin also says that some words have double and triple meanings. The words mean what Drosnin wants them to mean.

Because Drosnin wrote the book in 2001 (with a copyright of 2002), he "found" nothing about weapons inspectors, the Iraq war, and other current events, such as United Nations Embassy bombings. Perhaps he will find them in *Bible Code III*.

Drosnin sees himself as someone who has been chosen to be the decoder and may be able to delay the world's end in 2006. Drosnin also claims to have an "in" with the Mossad, Israel's secret service. He says he has met with the advisors to Yitzhak Rabin, Yasser Arafat, Bill Clinton, and with Ariel Sharon, but he offers no documentation.

Drosnin (like the Raelians) also lays out a scenario of aliens bringing their DNA to earth via a spaceship (see pp. 143-145). He does admit that these wild ideas were brought forth by Francis Crick as far back as 1973. Crick put himself out on the lunatic fringes of science with his ideas.

The evil genius of Drosnin's book is that there is absolutely no documentation for his claims, nor is there any objective way to check his claims. Jesus talked about truth being established by two or three witness. Apologetics groups, like PFO, could never get away with undocumented assertions.

Drosnin's work is clearly sci-fi futurism sprinkled with archaeological mystery, spaceships, and obelisks no one has ever seen that have the key to the end of days. He clearly knows what drives the American mind and that people are looking and longing for myths. That Drosnin talks about terrorists is no surprise. Suitcase bombs were being talked about in the 1980s in the novel *The Fourth Protocol*.

Reviewer Randall Ingermanson concludes: "His 'codes' are not science. They are not codes. They are so bogus it hurts." Other critics say Drosnin's original book "was based on a fundamental misunderstanding and misuse of science." His sequel hasn't fared much better. One reviewer wrote, "If, like me, you found his first book to be entertainingly silly, this one will be a real treat."

—GRF

## WILL THE REAL AUTHOR PLEASE STAND UP?

In *The Prayer of Jabez*, Bruce Wilkinson explains "how the remarkable prayer of a little-known Bible hero can release God's favor, power, and protection." But now, the first-person, autobiographical framework of the phenomenal best-seller of recent years is being disputed.

For more than a decade, Edward Plowman has kept his eye on what he labels "an exercise in deception" in the arena of Christian writing. What is this exercise? It is "ministry celebrities who cede most or all of their prose to [ghostwriters] who receive little or no acknowledgment."

In "Ghostwriters in the Machine," his recent article for *World* magazine, Plowman discloses that it was "Multnomah Publishers editorial executive David Kopp, 53, who wrote Bruce Wilkinson's blockbuster, *The Prayer of Jabez*." Plowman further notes that "Missing from the cover of the first 8 or 9 million copies of *Jabez* is Mr. Kopp's name; it now appears as a 'with' byline in small print." In later editions, Kopp's name appears on the inside title page, and Wilkinson acknowledges Kopp as "his writing partner" on the acknowledgement page.

The Evangelical Christian Publishers Association adopted a set of standards for members which includes, "co-writers or collaboration should be clearly identified as such." Kopp told *World* that he "wishes the ECPA had used the word 'accurately' rather than 'clearly.'"

—MKG