



THE SASQUATCH & JOHNNY WHITING

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A PhD IN DOGMA

JOHNNY and I had never met, though as it just so happened, he lived a hop and a skip down Highway 17 with his family, precisely thirty minutes from my South Carolina home. As convenient and practical as our close proximity sounds, I was away on extended holiday in Europe at the moment, hunched over on the floor of a centuries-old cottage in the countryside of Ireland taking his call. Our meeting would have to wait.

Like so many others, Johnny had a head-on collision with my work while risking another reconnaissance mission in the Matrix, and in doing so, had heard my complaint that it seems as though everyone in the lower 48 has a Sasquatch resident except for my own state. His reply was that I shouldn't be too sure about that. Naturally, I wanted to know the ins-and-outs of Sasquatch, as they pertain to his own experiences, and in South Carolina, if at all possible, but there was something else that he wanted me to know first.

“I have a Doctorate in theology,” he said, making sure to bookend his statement with a pause for effect.

It was there, while earning his Doctorate in Biblical Exposition at Multnomah Bible College in Portland, Oregon, that Johnny began questioning many things that Christianity teaches as a point of dogma from the pulpit, though more often than not takes for granted among the laymen in the pews. When Johnny asked questions, the *wrong* questions among the *right* people (wait, reverse that), he would be told: “Well, that’s something you just need to pray about.”

Mm-hmm. Questions. As they regard things like Christmas trees. Martin Luther brought a tree into his home, you see, and quite suddenly it was all the rage, despite passages in the Bible which forbid such acts, such as what can be found in Jeremiah 10.

The way this supposedly works is that Johnny was supposed to pray about it, you see, and the authenticity of the responding voice on the other end of the line would depend upon whether or not he was still questioning the Christmas tree experience. “I don’t think that Yahuah would

leave us hanging like that. I don’t think he wants us to be without instruction. He gave us instructions. They’re in the Bible. So, I don’t think we are left without knowing how He wants us to do things.”

There were other observations, far exceeding the Christmas tree issue. “I started noticing in Malachi and in James, where in both places, it would say that *God does not change.*” But then, even with the Ten Commandments, Johnny noticed a glaring error. “Christianity was saying we didn’t need to pay attention to the Sabbath.” That’s the fourth Commandment, by the way. “But yet, what was the one thing that people would say to Yeshua when they would ask him: ‘What do I need to do to be saved?’ What did He consistently say? He would say, ‘Follow the commands.’ He wouldn’t say the first thing was follow Him. He would say, ‘Follow the commands.’ If they said they did that, *then* He would say: ‘Good, then come follow Me.’”

“Over time, I started noticing the correlation between what we call the New Testament to how the Apostolic writings are actually just teachings about the Old Testament and the Prophets. So, if all of these writers writing letters are writing

about Yeshua and then writing about what He did came from the Torah and the Prophets, and what Yeshua talked about was— He would say: ‘I do not give you a new command but an old command,’ then what is the issue with being obedient to His commands?”

His decision to pay attention to the fine print and the little details would bring him into conflict with the religious leaders.

SASQUATCH

IN 1985 he was 17 years old and living on the opposite end of the country. “I was always skeptical until I saw one,” he said.

His first encounter happened while exploring a place called Silver Falls in Oregon. “If you’re not sure where that is, it’s kind of towards Mount Hood. It’s south-east of Portland. It’s right on the edge of the National Park out there. One of the things the Pacific northwest is known for is hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of miles of just dense woods where practically no one has gone for hundreds of years. And I was walking along a forest service road out there by Silver Falls, because I wanted to go out and get some pictures of these

waterfalls that were along the trail. And there was a creek that was running along my right side, down the slope from the trail. And there was a hillside going up on my left. I was walking along the trail, and I came upon an opening in the trees. The hill on my left was covered in trees but the slope going down to my right was wide open. When I came out, I noticed in the middle of the slope, about halfway between where the trail was and the edge of the river, there was a big moss-covered tree stump. And if you’ve ever been in the woods of the Pacific northwest, you have moss covered tree stumps everywhere.”

The creature failed to take into account his peripheral vision. As Johnny moseyed along the trail, he turned his head, and in the corner of his eye he saw the tree stump which he had taken for moss a moment earlier stand up and start walking.

“And so, I whipped around, and this enormous upright ape was walking up the hillside and looking at me all the while. And he was covering that distance in the matter of a few strides. The trail that I was on was just a little bit wider than a single lane road. And when I got up to the edge of that trail it covered that distance in about a step and a

half. And it turned to the right to look at me and—now, I'm the smallest male in my family. I'm six feet tall. My brother was six foot nine. My dad was six foot five. My uncles are much taller than I am. So, I got a pretty good idea of height. This thing had to have been between eight and a half and nine feet tall. I was no more than 15 to 20 yards away from it, and it looked down at me. And it was walking as it turned to stare. I noticed that it didn't just turn its head. It turned its whole upper torso to look at me as it was walking."

It was at that very moment, given that a mossy tree stump with legs was taking two or three strides across the trail, that Johnny thought about a rather inconvenient truth. That *thing*

was between him and the car and the remaining populace of the state of Oregon. His only other option was to running through the woods, hoping not to scream as he did so.

"It was then that I had one of those 'Ob no' moments. Is it gonna kill me? Of course, I've seen bears and all sorts of other critters in the forest, and this was very distinctly nothing like that. It walked into the woods and walked up this very steep hillside and disappeared, and I could hear it going through the trees."

The creature wasn't climbing up the mountain slope as any normal bipedal human might. No, it was walking.



SASQUATCHES

JUST one state north of Oregon, 37-year-old Johnny Whiting was breathing in the crisp car mint scent of the Washington rainforest, just outside of Orting, contemplating his recent medical discharge from the Navy. He was living there, and it was something like 2005. Or perhaps it was 2006, he couldn't recall. Johnny paused to contemplate the year over the phone. What is far more reliable than any timestamp however is *the creature*. A person doesn't have an otherworldly encounter and then forget something like that.

"If you read anything about Orting, it has the highest

concentration of Sasquatches sightings anywhere in the world. Of course, I didn't know that moving there."

He was hiking through an old ghost town, though the name of the place now evades him. "It was out towards Mount Rainier National Park, and it was on a road that was an old ghost town," he said. He went along the road which led directly through the ghost town, pausing to inspect the inside of its buildings. And then he continued on towards the end of the town. "It had to have been early to mid-summer because the blackberries were in season. There were a lot of blackberries on the bushes."

Coming around the bend, he observed a group of trees growing on either side of the road, “and out from behind this large cedar tree, out stepped this thing. And I thought it was a person at first. And then, when I got a good look at it, I could see that it wasn’t any such thing. It was another Sasquatch. Only this one was a female.”

Instinctually recollecting what had happened some two decades earlier, Johnny stopped *dead* in his tracks. She kind of stood there in the way, he recalled, completely conscious of his presence but not moving. She then turned to her left, as though her mind was occupied with whatever waited in the bushes. Johnny waited. The creature waited. And then a juvenile came out from under the shadow of the tree line.

“She scooted him along as a parent would to get its child to move. And so, it started going along the trail behind her, and she turned and looked at me again, and then turned and started walking behind it.”

Johnny continued watching as the pair moved away from him at a rapid pace. The mother turned as well, curious as to Johnny’s curiosity. “After it had gone along maybe fifty yards, it

reached down without breaking its stride, and it grabbed a large tree branch that had fallen on the side of the trail. And it grabbed it as it was walking, and it turned towards me, and from sixty or seventy yards away, it threw this tree branch down across the trail.

CRACK!

The creature even made a noise of its own. Very loud. EWE-AH-HA! The sound of which echoed through the trees. *Don’t come this way. Don’t come follow us or you’ll get it, Mister whoever you are.*

What I wanted to know is how Johnny’s gorilla stacked up with the 1967 Patterson-Gimlin film.

“That one was also a female,” he said in regard to the footage. “It was very close to what I saw. I think the one I saw had more brown fur than the one in the Patterson film. The one in the film looked almost black. It had very distinct breasts on the front—on the pectoral area.”

Contrarily, with his first encounter, “you could definitely tell it was a male. Broad shouldered, barrel chested, and the arms were extremely long. But it still had a very long stride in its step. I personally think they’re some type of upright walking ape, kind of like a Gigantopithecus,” Johnny said.

“I don’t attribute any kind of supernatural forces to them. The ones that I’ve seen, they act and appear like apes. They had very ape-like features. If you combined a chimpanzee and a gorilla, you’d get how they appear in the face. And when that female made that sound, that’s the sound that I’ve heard gorillas make.”

“Now, I’ve gotten into scuffles with my brothers. I just thought how much bigger and heavily built it was. This thing is the king of the woods. If it and a grizzly bear had a scuffle, the grizzly bear, it seemed to me, would come out on the hard end of the stick. They’re very powerful. When I saw the female one, the wind was coming at me from the direction of where the female was, and I could smell the distinctive smell that people talk of having. It’s very musk—not a sickening sweet smell like a skunk. I’ve heard people describe it as rotting meat. I wouldn’t describe it like that. But it’s pretty close. It’s a very musky stink that they have. I’ve heard some people say they only put out that smell when they’re startled or they’re on edge in some way. Wherever these are at, they are the kings of the woods. That’s the one thing that I can tell you. I don’t think they’re

necessarily aggressive. But if they needed to be, they *could* be. But they don’t like to be where the people are. I think they try to avoid people at all costs.”

HOWL

NOT too far away from his Orting home was an old unused rock quarry. “These sasquatches would go into that rock quarry because it was shaped almost like an amphitheater. And they could go in there and do their howling. And from our house you could hear them. If we went outside at night, you could hear them when they were in that quarry doing their howling. And it would echo across the valley where we live.”

“A coyote or a wolf make that very distinct, WR-WWWWWW. But then if you were to say the word HOWL, very sharp and very loud, as loud as you can, that’s what it would sound like. Imagine if you were shouting in a very large hollow tube, like a 12-inch PVC pipe, that’s what it sounds like. It’s not at all a *howl* like a coyote or a wolf. It’s not that long trailing sort of thing. And at times, when I’ve been in the woods going fishing or hunting or something like that, I have also at times heard their

gibberish that they do. They communicate with each other in, I don't know if you really call it talking, but they make these mouth noises that they communicate with each other. When you're nearby and they don't know that you're there, they'll make these noises. And at times, if you're being especially quiet in the woods, and one of them is nearby, you can hear it."

The year was still 2005 when Johnny took his 4-year-old son down to the river to play. Johnny had made a leather sling and wanted to gather smooth stones from the water. On the other side of the river was a strand of trees, which formed on the bank but then continued on up the hilltop. His son gathered the rocks. Johnny then loaded them into his sling and let them rip. He chucked one stone into thickets. Crack-*crack*-crack went the sound of its ricochet. He loaded another and let her rip. And then another—and another.

"The river was about 30 yards across. So, it was a pretty good wide expanse," Johnny said.

The next thing he recalls is a very large *splish* in the water. He could then hear it cracking into the stones at the bottom of the river. Was it salmon? He looked around but couldn't see anything

else. So, he collected another rock from his son and slung it into the tree line on the opposite end of the river, taking careful notice of the *cracks* as it ricocheted against the bark of trees. "I then saw a rock, it was slightly larger than the size of a football, and it came flying out of the trees, up in the air. It was like someone launched it out of a catapult. It came sailing through the air, and it landed about 20 to 25 feet away from me."

GA-LOOSH!

He was standing in the splash zone.

"My son and I just stood there with our mouths open. In seeing the size of that rock, there's no way a human could have thrown a rock that big that far. I don't care if you're Dolph Lungren or Arnold Schwarzenegger, you could not throw a rock that big that far."

Quite unlike his last two encounters, Johnny chose the next selection as instincts go. "And so, I reached down and I grabbed a handful of pebbles, and I put them in that sling, and flung it across there."

A dozen or more rocks hailed down upon the trees, violently ricocheting among them.

Nothing came back at him.

“Whatever was over there on the *other* side started its retreat up the hill. I could hear the steps on the ground the entire way. As it moved up the hill, pushing its way through the forest, the trees were moving.”

It was his final encounter.