

Micro Chip and Mocking Bird

Peculiar Brother Bird #5

In the foothills of the Blue Ridge
Our peculiar Brother Bird
Met his match on being thorough
In a young computer nerd,

Who was quite a whipper-snapper
Just as smart as, well, a whip,
And his name was Chip McMaster
But his friends all called him *Chip*.

Micro Chip as some had dubbed him,
Big of brain, but small of size -
He could e-mail, surf, and download
Without o-pen-ing his eyes.

Was a high-tech, hard-drive whiz kid
And so clever, yes he was-
That he built his own Computer
That he named the Wiz of Oz.

Didn't have to go to college,
For the college came to *him*,
To upgrade their old computers
And to train and tutor *them*.

Farren Brimstone was quite certain
Micro Chip and Wiz of Oz
Would enchant the local young folks
And convince their Ma's and Pa's.

And so Dr. Brimstone hired 'im
To bring falsehood to an end,
And design a fail-safe program
Endless torment to defend.

And so Chip took up the challenge,
With his genius juices stirred,
And created all new software
That he called the *Mocking Bird*.

With his quick-draw browser finger
On his high-speed DSL,
He downloaded tons of info
Off the web concerning hell.

Ev'ry council and confession,
Quenchless fire and deathless worms,
Etymologies of key words,
And a glossary of terms.

And inserted works related,
Dante, Milton, and their lore,
Bavink, Munsey, Pink and Spurgeon,
Walvoord, Bartlett, and much more.

Peterson and Harry Buis,
Edwards, Gerstner, G.T. Shedd,
John R. Rice and J.N. Humphrey,
Both the living and the dead.

Put in per-ti-nent ideas,
Greek and Hebrew language rules;
Vines & Wuest & Strong's Concordance,
And more cool and brainy tools.

Poems and tracts and polls and surveys,
Art and myth and movie clips,
Documents and songs and clichés,
Cartoons, jokes, and comic strips.

Chronologic'lly he built-in
Ev'ry creed of Christian truth,
And a detailed sermon index
Analyzing all the proof.

Alphabetic'lly he listed
Ev'ry worthwhile art-i-cle,
And more relevant quotations
'Til it was completely full.

Then he organized it neatly,
Each and ev'ry font and file,
In a handy-dandy format
And a user-friendly style.

And he tied it all together
With internal master links,
And examined it intently
Just to work out any kinks.

Then there came the time to test it,
Check its ease of function, too;
Ask it any kind of question -
See what *Mocking Bird* could do.

Micro Chip and Farren Brimstone
Fed it info from the cults,
And the Doctor was delighted
With the pow-er-ful results.

And invited Benton Cherry,
Willie Waver, Ernest Ladd,
Sister Smoke and Okie Dokie
To come see just what they had.

So they quizzed it and they queried,
And they zipped from link to link,
And it was so interactive
That they couldn't help but think.

Benton Cherry was elated
With this high-tech priest of proof,
And was sure that what it stated
Was the everlasting truth.

Okie Dokie thought it nifty -
A Berean treasure chest! -
And was sure it would be useful
In a Bible study quest.

Sister Smoke was soon enamored
With the throng of able minds,
And rethought the subject matter
Down more systematic lines.

Willie Waver loved the graphics,
And the clever pop-ups, too,
And was certain that it maybe
Absolutely might be true.

Ernest Ladd was duly cautious,
And though bias made him doubt,
He was willing to continue
Searching all the data out.

Mocking Bird was quite impressive
With its output and its speed,
And its answers were persuasive,
As most everyone agreed.

And of any other effort
It was certainly the best,
And was ready for the challenge
Of its full and final test.

And so Dr. Brimstone scheduled
A debate with Brother Bird,
But of Micro Chip's creation
He had told him not a word.

Handbills posted through the foothills
Advertised the coming duel,
And invited all the Blue Ridge
To the Element'ry School.

And anticipation swelled up
Like a bullfrog 'bout to bust,
'Til the dirt lot by the old gym
Was just one big cloud of dust.

And the crowd filled up the bleachers
As the doctor took the stage,
And our brother sat behind him,
Like a bird inside a cage.

While the doctor gave his "Welcome,"
And his "Introduct'ry Word,"
Micro Chip snuck in the back way
With the cryptic *Mocking Bird*.

And he stayed behind the curtain,
Out of everybody's sight,
And installed a power-booster,
And was raring for the fight.

Larry Barry, Big B Baptist,
Had agreed to act as though
He was their side's chosen spokesman,
And was really "in the know."

And the Doctor orchestrated
Ev'ry detail from the start
As the MC-Moderator
To co-or-dinate each part.

And he had a sand-filled timer
And he'd turn it upside-down,
And when all the grains had emptied
He would start another round.

Micro Chip would slip the answers
To the waiting Larry B,
Who would read them off so smoothly
Like a great authority.

And the *Mocking Bird* was brilliant,
Reeling off the facts so fast,
And providing quick quotations
From the heroes of the past.

Everlasting was the key word
Larry Barry harped upon,
Everlasting and *eternal*,
And *forever*, on and on.

"And the creeds and great confessions
Larry said, "Do all confirm
That the soul is as immortal
As the never-dying worm.

"And the story of the Rich man
And of Lazarus, as well,
Clearly speak of endless torment
In an everlasting hell.

"If the *life* is 'everlasting'
Then the *punishment* is too,
For the same word modifies it,
And thus proves it to be true.

"So the torment's *everlasting* -
Without end without a doubt -
Everlasting as *forever*
Isn't hard to figure out!

"And the torment is 'forever' -
'Day and night,' to say the least -
Of the Devil (that is, Satan),
The false prophet and the beast.

"And just *where* does all this take place?
Well... *where is it?* I inquire -
It's the *same* place where the lost go -
In that dreadful 'lake of fire.'

"And the smoke ascends *forever*
From the torment mentioned in
Revelation, chapter fourteen,
Where it's obvious again.

"And the fire is everlasting -
Everlasting fire its name -
And *unquenchable, eternal*,
Say identically the same.

"And as Gerstner oft has stated,
Sins against the Infinite,
Or an infinite transgressing,
Demands endless punishment.

"And philosophy and reason,
And just jurisprudence side
With the Biblical expressions
Of a wrath that will abide.

"So the torment's *everlasting* -
Without end without a doubt -
Everlasting as *forever*
Isn't hard to figure out!"

In the foothills of the Blue Ridge
With the help of *Mocking Bird*,
A whole gym of all the hill folk,
Were impressed with what they heard.

"I agree," our Brother answered,
That the PUNISHMENT, indeed,
Is *eternal, everlasting* -
That's exactly what I read.

"*Everlasting* modifies *it*,
But the point I hope you get -
Is just what is *it* describing;
Of just what is meant by *it*.

"*It's* the *noun* that we're debating,
Not the *adjective*, you see,
It's a *noun*, and not a *verb*, Sir
Upon which we disagree.

"*It* is punish-*ment* eternal,
Not eternal punish-*ing* -
It's *destruction* everlasting,
Not an endless suffering.

"*It* is final, full *consumption*;
It is called the 'second *death*,'
It is what is meant by *perish*;
It is what the Scriptures saith.

"We agree on *everlasting*,
But an everlasting *what*?
Is the punishment *destruction*,
Is *it* that, or is *it* not?"

"You assume that *it* is torment -
But you should not so assume,
For the Scriptures say DESTRUCTION
Is the sinner's final doom.

"For a similar expressing
You may readily consult,
How 'redemption' is 'eternal,'
Not the *process*, but *result*.

"For Christ 'once for all' obtained it
ONCE for all, and in the past,
And that *it* is past-tense purchased,
Yet that *it* will ever last!

"Thessalonians confirms it,
Just the way it's worded there -
'*Punished with*, yes, EVERLASTING...'-
But now notice this with care:

"*Everlasting* modifies it-
Punished with *what* punishment?-
Yes, *destruction* everlasting;
Thus DESTRUCTION is the *it*!

"And it's not the word 'destroying,'
For it's 'punished,' as in past;
The *destruction* thus resulting
Is the *it* that e'er will last!

“And the fire is everlasting -
Yes, the *fire*, without a doubt -
But the *chaff* is said to burn up
In the fire that won't burn out.

“Yes, God's fire is everlasting,
And it shouldn't be thought odd
That the fire of God's *eternal*,
For it is the fire of *God!*”

“It does not need to be started -
And you couldn't if it would -
But it falls already blazing,
Without earthly fuel or wood,

“And God's fire is called *eternal*,
Not the cities which it burned,
As in Sodom and Gomorrah,
For to ASHES they were turned.

“It's the *fire* that's everlasting,
Not the *stubble* or the *chaff* -
It's the *fire* that is eternal,
Not the objects in its path.”

Then a flustered Farren Brimstone
Was a little more than gruff,
When the sand-filled timer emptied,
And the Doctor growled, “Enough!”

And while Brother Bird was talking
Micro Chip was on the sly
Tweaking *Mocking Bird* to come back
With a dynamite reply.

And ol' Larry was imposing
As he read the slipped-in notes,
And he sounded real convincing
In repeating others' quotes.

But he got a mite-bit haughty
And a little debonair,
When he gestured with such gusto,
That he tumbled in his chair.

And he landed on the curtain,
And the curtain slightly stirred,
And revealed the monkey-business
In the sight of Brother Bird.

But the monkeys were uncertain
If the bird had seen or not,
So they awkwardly proceeded
With their sneaky little plot.

And they focused on the wording
Of the legendary creeds
As the fruit of Bible doctrine
And the root of noble deeds.

“These were hammered by the faithful,”
Larry Barry said with pride,
“On the anvil of conviction
Of the martyrs who have died.

“Godly pastors; gifted teachers;
Theologians of renown -
Have the truth of endless torment
To their children handed down.

“Are we smarter than our fathers,
The reformers, wise and good?
Do we know more than our elders?
Do we really think we could?”

And then Brother Bird retorted,
“These dear 'fathers' weren't the norm,
For they challenged creeds in their day,
And were agents of reform.

“Would they say that they had figured
Ev'ry single doctrine out -
When with teachings of their own time
They had entertained some doubt?”

“And we're not in full agreement
With their words upon our shelves,
and these 'fathers,' bless their memory,
Disagreed among themselves!”

Then it heated up intensely,
Back and forth and toe to toe,
And the Birdies and the monkeys
Really put on quite a show!

Larry: “It's no PUNISHMENT to *perish*-
That's just what the sinners want!”
Bird: “Ask the inmates out on death row
And they'll tell you that they don't!”

Larry: “But a final, swift destruction
Cannot be the word's intent.”
Bird: “The *destruction* of Gomorrah
Scriptures calls a *punishment!*”

Larry: “But *annihilation* isn't
Anything of which to fear!”
Bird: “If we thought a bomb were present,
We'd be getting' outta here!”

Larry: “Will our children follow Jesus
If Hell's torments have an end?”
Bird: “Do you think they're truly Christians
If they wouldn't then, my friend?”

Larry: “*From the presence* means *away* from-
It's *away*- so face the facts!
Bird: “*From the presence* means *He's present*-
In the context and in Acts!” (3:19)

Larry: “But the WORM - it *never dieth* -
Not a worm down in a hole!”
Bird: “It is *carcasses* the worms eat -
And the worm is not the soul!” (Is. 66:24)

Larry: “What of *weeping* and of *wailing*?
And it says, '*where* there shall be' -
Bird: “It says '*there shall be,*' my brother,
And yet not eternally!”

Larry: “*Pain* is what the fire pictures -
Pain is what the flames will bring.”
Bird: “But the objects in the picture
Illustrate a different thing!”

Larry: “In the book of Revelation
It is *un-mis-tak-a-ble!*”
Bird: “It's the last and not the first book,
And most *al-le-gor-i-cal!*”

Micro Chip was working gamely
Just to keep up with the flow,
But at times he needed Larry
Just to go a little slow.

Then our brother had an idea,
Since computers cannot lie,
He would ask of certain details
That it wouldn't dare deny.

“It's repeated by so many
That our Lord said more of hell
Than he ever did of heaven -
Is it true, or can you tell?”

Micro Chip zoomed through the program
And slipped Larry this on cue:
“Forty-seven different writers
All confirm that it is true.”

But then Brother Bird responded,
“I'm not asking the amount
Of the parrots who have said it -
But a real objective count

“And with judgment as their message,
And repentance as their goal,
Did the prophets ever speak of
Endless torment of the soul?”

“And with Paul and the apostles
When they preached the gospel plain,
Did they mention hell or torments,
Or a place of endless pain?”

“In John's gospel is there any
Word of endless hell to fear?
It's the one book in our Bibles
There to make the good news clear.”

And the prophets and apostles
Do...not warn...of endless hell,
And then Paul...and in John's gospel
There's...no word...of it, as well.”

“And pray tell me,” begged our brother,
“And please open up my eyes
If the unbelieving sinner
Ever really truly DIES?”

And then Micro Chip was stymied
By the contradict'ry words
From the hundreds of quotations
In the files of *Mocking Bird*.

For McCheyne (yes, Robert Murray),
Said, “Eternal hell's the death
That the sinners are to die, and
Yet they *never die*,” he saith.

And the words of Jeremy Taylor:
“They shall burn eternally”-
But now listen to his statement:
“*Without dying*,” so saith he.

“You will *live*,” yes, “*live forever*,
But just *where*?” asks Ricky Jones;
John L. Barry is just as certain
That “in Hell men will *live on!*”

William Dowell said “souls and bodies...
Souls and bodies that CANNOT...
Cannot perish, but will suffer...
Suffer in a hell so hot.”

“For the wicked *live forever*,”
One J. Angus is so sure,
And “*alive* all o'er” quotes Wesley,
And feel pain “at ev'ry pore.”

Micro Chip then saw the wording
Of the Scriptures disagreed
With these LIFE and DEATH descriptions
In the sermons and the creeds.

And our brother sensed the tension
When he dealt the fatal blow:
“I have only one more question-
Just one more before we go.”

“If God says, 'The wicked *perish*:
Then I say they surely do,
And He means it as He's meant it
As He's used it through and through!”

“And I've emphasized the *perish*:
For it's PERISH I have read!
And I've said it is just simply
What the Bible clearly said.”

“Can you give me one example
Of a use of *perish* when
Scripture means it as a process
That will never have an end?”

Then he took the sand-filled timer
And he turned it upside-down,
And he said, “Let's all be patient
Until one such use is found.”

And the seconds trudged to minutes,
And the minutes slowly passed,
As the grains of sand fell downward
From the first until the last.

Speedy Micro Chip was flying
On the keyboard and the mouse,
While a nervous Dr. Brimstone
Tried to occupy the house.

Then an “error” message came up
Right before the screen went dark
And the hard drive went *ka-plooeey*,
And shot out a blinding spark.

And the spark ignited wiring,
And a fire began to rage,
And the Doctor, Chip, and Larry
Promptly exited the stage.

But our brother, now in danger,
Grabbed a fire ex-tinguish-er,
But he couldn't quench the burning
Of the red-hot *Mocking Bird*.

But the rest he safely put out,
While the *Mocking Bird* burned on,
And its smoke rose up for...*ever*,
Though it burned up and was gone.

In the foothills of the Blue Ridge,
This peculiar *Mocking Bird*
Found DESTRUCTION EVERLASTING
As the *punishment* incurred.

Benton Cherry was deflated;
Ernest Ladd was not surprised;
Farren Brimstone, aggravated;
Willie Waver hypnotized.

Larry Barry was defensive;
Okie Dokie was amazed;
Sister Smoke was apprehensive;
But so many were unfazed.

But young Micro Chip upgraded,
Through this endless torment strife,
To a high-tech, hard-drive whiz kid
Holding forth the Word of *Life!*

And he built a new computer,
And a clever CD-Rom,
And he's helping on the website
Of our brotherbird.com.