

## Velociraptor at a Tent Revival



**D**istracted by a flash of light, Wilfred the Velociraptor had lost his brothers and sisters and was wandering about the plains of Arizona when he heard a distant prayer. He galloped over towards the sounds of

supplication and saw an enormous tent set up in the middle of the dry, dusty, flattened field that he and his brothers and sisters had torn up some time ago when they were training to be stalkers and hunters of prey.

Wilfred tucked his head under a tent flap that had been poorly secured and popped in to see what was going on. The gathering ignored him as they ignored quite a few of the dinosaurs, now woefully in decline. But to their Christian credit, they did so out of pity.

The time of the dinosaurs was coming to an end, as all things must; and the faithful who had gathered agreed that the humongous Cretaceous beasts had a pretty good run on God's green Earth. Very few of those who had once been part of the dinosaur daily diet held it against the great beasts, except for Sheriff Wyatt Erp, whose entire family served as an appetizer for a lost Spinosaurus that somehow stowed away on an ark sailing from North Africa. Erp erred on the side of civilization when he got between an argument between a T-Rex, named Mark, and Albert, the Spinosaur, regarding who was the bigger dinosaur. Ever the diplomat, Erp tried to reason with Albert, assuring him that he would be no match for Mark's jaw-strength:





“Look Al, you may not know this, but Mark’s bite force measures around 8,000 pounds.” But the cocky, lumbering, geographically-challenged interloper would not listen to reason. In a show of machismo, Albert ate the Sheriff’s wife and two kids. Wyatt Erp then shot the Spinosaur, which distracted Albert just enough for Mark to chomp away on his neck. Even though Erp lost his family, he gained a new friend. From that point on, the Tyrannosaurus Rex was a protected creature in these parts, as far as the law would allow. This explains how Mark became King of the Dinosaurs. For the rest of us, it was hard not to admire a species that so brainlessly roamed the planet for 165 million years with contributing nothing little more than barrels of oil.



The most admired dinosaur was the velociraptor, and you could hear this admiration in the children’s voices. “It’s good to see Wilfred, ain’t it?” Verbal Tuck said to his daughter, Tulip. “I thought he was a goner for a while.”

“It was very nice of you to give him that cow, daddy. He was so hungry—poor thing,” said Tulip, hoping that his pop would let her play old Fats Waller’s “Paddy Cake, Paddy Cake” with Wilfred after Reverend Darwin Pulsifer gave the the final blessings.

At first, Wilfred thought it was very rude of the congregation to ignore him, especially since he was on the cusp of extinction. So he went to a different part of the tent—closer to the preacher—and poked his head under the canvas again, but this time a bit more enthusiastically. The only one who noticed this contrived enthusiasm was Edna Mae Washburn. Edna was prone

to saying “Cleave unto this, cleave unto that”—cleave, cleave, cleave, day in and day out—and she recoiled at seeing a velociraptor crash such a solemn affair. She whispered to her husband, whose name was Delmore Cleavine Washburn: “Cleave unto me, husband, for not all the beasts have perished asunder the Lord’s wrath.”



Velociraptors have excellent hearing, and Wilfred had heard Edna’s politically incorrect insinuation and was therefore offended. So, he snorted a particularly desperate snort, which caught the attention of the preacher, who was just about to Speak in Tongues—always a favorite of those who had difficulty expressing themselves coherently:

*Baffa moof noon baffa caser rollo  
dex casa ptomaine poised to let  
usso bagga moof moof rollo  
dex tellin ru ru jellin.*



The congregation responded: “We jellin, we tellin, we ru ru jellin.”

Wilfred, however, was not all that keen about jellin. He was looking for a miracle. He wanted to survive the Lord’s wrath and needed some practical advice on how to dodge meteors. As velociraptors cannot speak, he snorted out a few more snorts and some high pitched acks.



Napping next to the preacher’s podium was Hiccup Ecclesiastes, the tent revival’s community dog. Wilfred’s snorting and acking woke Hiccup up and Hiccup let out a yowl of appreciation.

Apparently, the shock of Wilfred’s acking shocked Hiccup out of his hiccups, which pleased the preacher because usually Hiccup would hiccup throughout the entirety of his Pentecostal prostrations, and would often derail the Speaking in Tongues portion. Hiccup’s hiccups sounded like the mutt was repeating the word “yogurt” over and over. On one occasions the preacher’s concentration was so broken that he

joined Hiccup in a chorus of yogurt hiccups, which confused those in attendance and thought deliverance was being mocked by the preacher. As a result, tithings plummeted and the Reverend Pulsifer was put on notice. But that was then, Hiccup is now cured, and all is righted and righteous.

The preacher was ecstatic, and to show his appreciation, invited the velociraptor to join in the healing ceremony of the Laying of Hands, which was difficult for Wilfred because his hands are attached to arms that are practically useless. To this day no one can justify a velociraptor's possession of arms. Worse, these arms were covered in feathers.

Anyway, the congregation laughed at Wilfred's pathetic attempts at the Laying of Hands, which upset the shy velociraptor. Coming to his rescue, Hiccup barked and yowled and yelped at the faithful, who cleaved to their own shame of mocking one of God's poorly designed creatures.



Tithings notwithstanding, the preacher chastised his flock and warned them that God's wrath is not exclusive to dinosaurs and that extinction is no laughing matter: "Look to thy own shortcomings, brothers and sisters. As the velociraptor hath no arms, what hath ye not? Wings to flyeth about? Webbed feet to swimmeth with the creatures of the sea? Nozzled noses to sniffeth and devoureth the insects of Earth? Mock not Wilfred. Live by example. Cleave unto humility's breast and follow Hiccup's example."

"Yogurt yogurt yogurt."



