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DOES GOD EXIST?



scotland:

Beautiful Land of
Searching People

A nonprofit effort
to convince mankind
that God is real and
the Bible is His Word.



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scotland: BEAUTIFUL LAND OF SEARCHING PEOPLE

In July 2010, the **Does God Exist?** ministry spent three weeks in Scotland doing forty-one presentations in nineteen days. The presentations in Livingston were in a church building, but in Aberdeen and Dundee the presentations were in neutral ground sites—a hotel meeting room in Aberdeen and a gymnasium (a multipurpose room) in Dundee.

Just traveling in Scotland was a joy. The country is beautiful with a rugged coastline and mountains rising over 1,000 feet in what is called “The Highlands.” With the Gulf Stream on one side and the North Sea on the other, there are wild swings in weather precipitating the comment from the locals that “we have all four seasons every day.” Winters are mild, but wet. Summers are cool and wet. All of this wetness produces green everywhere and beautiful gardens abound throughout the country.



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Scotland is also called “The Land of Castles.” Everywhere you go you see castles with their own claim to fame. While each has its own story to tell, they have a common history of religious strife. The story is that Christianity was brought to Scotland by Saint Columba in 563 A.D. on the Isle of Iona known as the “Cradle of the Celtic Kingdom.” Bodies of kings of Scotland,



Fyvie Castle

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Norway, and France as well as clan leaders were sent to Iona for burial. As political and national struggles evolved, religion was used as a tool of those in power. The histories of Scotland and Ireland are full of stories of religious massacres, executions, assassinations, and abuses. The wisdom of Jesus' teaching "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's" can be seen clearly. Most people in Scotland see God as a man-made political tool used to enforce the view of the aristocracy, not as a reality and relevant to the common people. References to the "post-Christian Era" are everywhere and Richard Dawkins and his associates are viewed as heroes by a significant percentage of the Scottish and Irish population.

This picture shows the result of all this. The "Dog House" was a beautiful old church building across the street from the gymnasium where we conducted our lectureship in Dundee. Like most church buildings in Scotland, it now serves a secular purpose. Most church buildings are night-clubs, like the Dog House, or bars, banks, museums, bookstores, restaurants, and liquor stores. The consequences of rejecting Christianity are readily visible everywhere you go in Scotland and Ireland. We took a tour of the countryside of Ireland around Dublin, and our tour guide was a walking encyclopedia not only of the history of Ireland, but of the current



Cynthia Clayton

state of its people. "We are a grumpy lot," he said, and went on to ask us if we had met people on the street who actually smiled. When someone said they had, his response was "they must have been tourists, because we are not a happy people." We found people to be friendly and very helpful, but also quite defensive and distant. Distrust was a constant reminder of the pervasive mind-set of the people that all of life is a competition, and only the fit survive.

A consequence of this secular viewpoint is an enormous use and dependence on alcohol. We advertised our lectureship in Dundee

by passing out leaflets on the city streets, but we learned to do it in the afternoon. My wife attempted to pass out leaflets in the evening when we started the presentations and found that most of the people in the area surrounding the gymnasium were too intoxicated to be able to function in the lectures and discussions. Our guide in Ireland said that the average adult in Ireland spends 6,000 euros (roughly \$8,000 American) on alcohol per year. He drove us by a huge hospital in Dublin that he said was totally dedicated to treating alcohol related disorders. This guide was not a religious person or someone who was on a campaign of some sort. This was a regular comment of his presentations as he took tourists around the sites and scenes of Ireland. Obviously, statistics can be misleading and inaccurate, but the prevailing influence of alcohol in this culture, and the social struggles taking place cannot be minimized or dismissed.

Our presentations were well attended in every place where we gave them. We found that people rejected out of hand anything that involved the word “church.” The history of religious and church struggles has soured most people to the point where they would not even consider something connected to church in any other way than a historical way. By the same token we found enormous interest in God and the evidence for God’s existence. Getting people to understand

that the church is people (1 Corinthians 3:16 ff.) and not a building was a major struggle. We found enormous interest in the question of what God is—that God is a Spirit (John 4:24) and not an old man in the sky—and what that really means. People had a skeptical view of the Bible, but



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most of their knowledge was what they had heard the Bible says, not what the Bible actually says. Discussing the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters 5 through 7 and the radical concepts of Christ piqued a great deal of interest. One night we had a long discussion of Matthew 5:38–48 in which Jesus talks about turning the other cheek, going the second mile, and loving your enemies. After this, one man said, “Well then all of this war that has decimated our country was in contradiction to what Jesus taught?” I jumped on that, of course, pointing out that the Crusades were also in opposition to the teachings of Christ. He responded by saying he wanted to know more about “this Jesus which I have never heard of.”

We left Scotland and Ireland with many studies underway and with large numbers of DVDs of our lessons being distributed. My e-mails have been flooded with people who have UK in their URL, indicating that they are writing from the United Kingdom. The questions continue to be on the unique message that Christ actually gave, and how much it is at odds with the history of religion in Scotland and Ireland.

I have to think of what has happened in the United States, and how that is still unfolding. Christianity has been distorted by many in this country, both in the past and today, to a political/militaristic concept. We have people today who are urging churches to contribute to military action in Israel to facilitate the return of Jesus to the throne of David in Jerusalem. In the past we have had racism promoted by pseudo-Christian groups such as the Ku Klux Klan. Christianity has been used to fleece people of their savings to promote religious causes, or to say to them that God will give them back more than they give if they will turn their savings over to a Christian minister. Religious scams are everywhere, even in things that appear to be positive causes. Some relief money given to charities has been embezzled by religious leaders, and immoral actions by religious figures are commonplace. The result of all of this is a growing distrust of religion, and a tendency to reject Christianity because it is viewed as the tool that enables this bad activity.

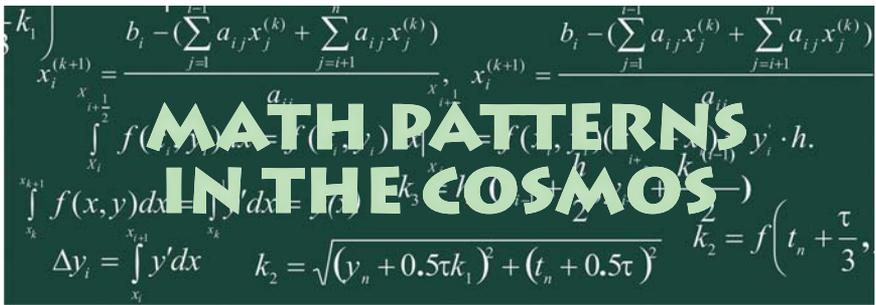


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The U.S.A. may be a few years behind Scotland and Ireland, but the same problems and abuses exist, and Satan will use them effectively. Will we profit by the experiences of our brothers and sisters across “The Pond”? Will we work to bring a fresh new message

to people of the United States that says that God’s existence and the validity of His Word, the Bible, is strongly supported by evidence? Will we call people to live as the Bible says—not as we or anyone else says? Christianity works when lived as Jesus taught us and as the Bible presents it. Christianity elevates all human beings while bringing peace, trust, love, and understanding to a world that desperately wants what God has to offer.

—John N. Clayton



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As you admire the sky on a dark winter night, you have two choices about the origin of what you are observing. You can believe it is all a part of a great accident that scattered galaxies, stars, planets, moons, and a variety of other objects across space. Or you can believe that an intelligence created the cosmos with purpose and conscious design. Both views have their problems and questions. The idea that the cosmos is an accident does not explain anything about the origin of time, space, and/or energy. Suggesting that these things have always been is at odds with scientific law. The suggestion the cosmos is a product of intelligence and design raises questions about those things which seem to be poorly designed or destructive in nature.

For those of us who wish to carefully and thoughtfully consider these options, it is interesting that the creation is full of math patterns. Some of these have just been discovered and many of which are not understood even though they have been recognized for many centuries. In 1702 a Scottish astronomer, David Gregory, saw a pattern in the solar system that was later popularized by Johann Bode and is called Bode's law. Take a series of numbers starting with zero and three and double each number. That would be 0, 3, 6, 12, 24, 48, 96, 192, ... Now take each number and add 4 to it and divide by 10. The result would be .4, .7, 1.0, 1.6, 2.8, 5.2, 10.0, and 19.6. That last set of numbers is the location of the planets around the Sun in terms of the earth's distance from the Sun. Here are the actual numbers:

Planet	Bode number	Actual number
Mercury	.4	.39
Venus	.7	.72
Earth	1.0	1.0
Mars	1.6	1.52
Asteroids (Ceres)	2.8	2.8
Jupiter	5.2	5.2
Saturn	10.0	9.54

This turned out to have predictive value. Bode popularized his law in 1768, but Saturn was the last known planet at that time. The next number after 10.0 in the Bodes Series would be 19.6. Years later William Herschel discovered Uranus and its distance is 19.2. Things break down at this point, with Neptune discovered in 1846 not matching the pattern. Modern astronomers think that orbital resonances and planets interfering with each other may account for some of the Bode's law numbers, but no one really knows at this time why the pattern is there.

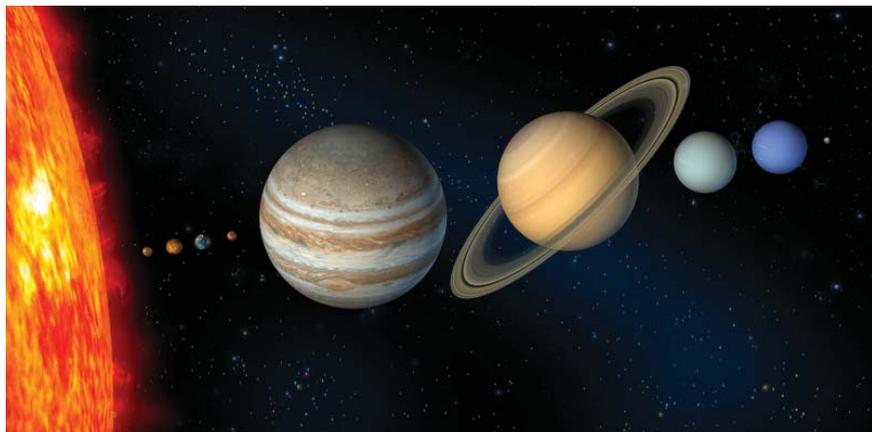
There are other patterns like this. One we all know about, at least in a general way, is the fact that the Moon is 400 times smaller than the Sun and it is also 400 times closer to us than the Sun, making them appear to be the same size. That also allows solar eclipses in which the Moon exactly covers the Sun giving the spectacular “diamond ring effect” and “halo effect” we see in the wonderful pictures of eclipses.



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Recently a new special numerical connection has been discovered between Earth and what is called the 1/8 circle rule for the other planets. During one earth year each planet performs a certain number of spins on its axis. This number does not come out even, so each planet will turn some additional amount which will be a fraction of a rotation. Every planet's extra rotation turns out to be a fraction of, or multiple of, 45 degrees. Venus, for example, rotates once during an earth year, and then it rotates through 181 degrees in addition. This is roughly 4×45 degrees. During one earth year Jupiter rotates 883 times and then rotates an additional 89 degrees or roughly 2×45 degrees. Saturn rotates 882 times in an earth year and then rotates an additional 227 degrees or roughly 5×45 degrees.

This 45 degree pattern also applies to each planet's orbital period. It takes Mercury 88 days to revolve around the Sun. During that 88 days Earth revolves through 87 degrees (roughly 2×45). It takes Mars 687 days to orbit the Sun, and during that time Earth rotates through one revolution and an additional 317 degrees which is roughly 7×45 . This is true of all of the planets including Pluto. (For more data go to www.halfrightanglerule.com.)



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There may be some undiscovered principle of celestial mechanics involved, perhaps with phase locking or particle effects, but many astronomers will just blow it off as coincidence. The famous mathematician, Pythagoras, was spellbound when he realized that the square of any right triangles' sides added up to the square of its hypotenuse. It is reported that when he realized this he sacrificed 100 oxen to the gods because he felt it was a stunning relationship which had to be divine.

We should not “invent a God” to explain such relationships, but to attempt to suggest that multiple numerical features like this will come about by chance is equally foolish. When we design something, we use patterns. Man's creations are aesthetically appealing when structure, form, and pattern are thought through and conceived in a special way. When we are told “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the skies proclaim the work of his hands” (Psalm 19:1, NIV) the message is expressed in multiple ways. It is more than just looking in wonder at the beautiful sky above us. It is also growing in our understanding and appreciation of the patterns and order built into all we see. What at first appears to be chaotic and accidental ends up showing wisdom and form.

Once again we are reminded that we can know there is a God through the things He has made (Romans 1:19–22). However, we still have to plead ignorance to God's challenge to Job: “Can you bind the beautiful Pleiades? Can you loose the cords of Orion? Can you bring forth the constellations in their seasons or lead the Bear with its cubs? Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you set up God's dominion over the earth?” (Job 38:31–33, NIV). We are forced to reply with Job, “Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know” (Job 42:3b, NIV).

—JNC

THE WISDOM OF GOD: PROVERBS 8:12 – 30

It is popular with churches today to make God an illogical magician who “speaks” something into existence by a zapping process that occurs with no natural process of any kind involved. It is assumed, for example, that when Genesis 1:3 tells us that God said, “Let there be light” that there were no chemical or physical processes involved. The assumption is that the production of light was not because of the change in the energy of an electron, but that the process was totally mystical. A frequently quoted passage is Psalm 148:5 “for he commanded and they were created” referring to the sun and moon. Again the assumption is that no natural process was involved, but that they miraculously appeared. As astronomers study the Sun and Moon and other objects in space, they see processes that seem to explain how such objects are created even as we watch, and for some this becomes a basis of atheistic beliefs.

Believing that God zaps things into existence is popular to some folks. It is attractive because it requires no thought or understanding on our part. Some people think that if you believe God used logical, mathematical laws and methods to produce the cosmos, then God and His attributes are reduced in some way. This makes faith a blind acceptance. You either believe God miraculously spoke everything into existence with no method or technique involved or you reject God as the Creator.

This is a choice most young people reject. God has never called man to blind acceptance. Psalm 19:1 tells us “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands” (NIV). A work can be seen, admired, studied, and understood. When I see a beautiful garden I know that someone has used skill, patience, understanding, and knowledge to make that garden. When the Garden of Eden is



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described in Genesis 2:8–10, the language certainly does not sound as though God zapped it into existence. “Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; ... And the LORD God made all kinds of trees to grow out of the ground ... A river watering the Garden flowed from Eden;”

Romans 1:20 calls man to see God’s creative skill, “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made” In Isaiah 40:26 we read “Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name.” In Isaiah 45:18 we read “he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited.” The wording of these passages suggests working, fashioning, and designing.

One of the most interesting passages in this subject area is Proverbs 8 which deals directly with God’s methods. The passage is about wisdom and incorporates wisdom’s role in the creation process. I would suggest it is a biblical injunction to intelligent design. Verse 1 begins by emphasizing the role of wisdom and understanding. “Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice?” In verses 4–6 God calls man to use wisdom to understand. “To you, O men, I call out; I raise my voice to mankind. You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain understanding. Listen, for I have worthy things to say.” God is not a God of ignorance or illogical understanding. The creation and the world we live in makes sense.

Wisdom is imbedded in God’s creative process. Verse 22 tells us that before anything was created God used wisdom to do His will. “The LORD possessed me at the beginning of his work, before his deeds of old. I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began.” God existed before there was space, time, energy, or matter, and wisdom was a part of all He did with these quantities. In John 17:24 Jesus tells us that God loved Him “before the creation of the world” and 1 Peter 1:20 tells us Jesus was chosen then as well. Ephesians 1:4 tells us that God chose those who would obey Him “before the creation of the world” (not individually, but as a group). 2 Timothy 1:9 and Titus 1:2 repeat this.

Proverbs 8:23 tells us that God used wisdom in the quantum mechanical world—the material and energy that would be used to form the world. Verse 24 tells us that all water systems, the basis of life depend on wisdom. Verse 25 tells us that mountains and hills are designed with resources for man with wisdom. Verse 26 reminds us



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that the earth's fields, soils, and nutrient systems demand wisdom. Verses 27–28 indicate that wisdom was involved in the formation of the atmosphere. In verse 29 we see boundaries to the sea and the land had to be done with wisdom. Verses 30–31 tell us that wisdom is God's craftsman—the tool of design. "I (wisdom) was the craftsman at his side." This whole section of Proverbs gives emphasis to God's technique being a process of crafting, using wisdom, bringing power and intelligence to all we see in the creation.

Biblical words used to describe God's actions always use a process, not a magician's touch, to describe what is being formed. In Genesis 2:7 we read "The LORD God formed (*yatshir*) man of the dust" This word is used to describe what a potter does with clay. There could be a variety of understandings as to what method God used, but whether you see someone molding and shaping a body directly out of clay or a progressive act of naturally shaping a body, a process is involved. Genesis 2:8 tells us, "Now the LORD God had planted a garden" In Genesis 2:9 "the LORD God made all kinds of trees ..." again implies a process. When the Bible describes the processes used to produce the cosmos we are told numerous times that the cosmos was stretched out. The Hebrew word used to explain this is "*natah*" which indicates an action like pulling the cord on an outboard motor. Passages that use this word are Isaiah 40:22; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12; 48:13; 51:13; Job 9:8; Psalm 104:2; Jeremiah 10:12; 51:15; Zechariah 12:1; and Job 37:18.

In Genesis 2:3 at the close of the creation chapter of Genesis 1 we are told that these are the things the Lord "God created and made" (KJV). The words *bara* (create) and *asah* (make) are both used here and indicate both a miraculous act of God and a natural process which God directed have been used in the creation of all we see. *Bara* is only

used three times in Genesis 1, in verses 1, 21, and 27. The indication is that most of what God did in preparing the earth for man happened by natural processes that we can understand. Proverbs 8 tells us that wisdom was a major player in this process, and even with our limited ability to understand we can marvel at the wisdom and creative intelligence that we see all around us.

—JNC



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WESTERNIZING THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNT

Recently the newspapers and other media have had an ongoing story about a Dutch man who built a replica of Noah's Ark (BBC News, April 29, 2007). The man's work is truly amazing, with considerable attention to detail. The size, ratios, and structure of this massive monument have gotten a great deal of press and astounded many writers. At the end of 2010 Ken Ham announced that his organization, "Answers In Genesis," is involved in a multi-million dollar project to build a replica of Noah's Ark along Interstate 75 in Kentucky. This will be part of a theme park which they expect to bring in millions of visitors when completed.

We do not want to demean or minimize these projects in any way, but they are classic examples of westernizing the biblical account. As you look at this picture of this ark replica you see a very attractive ship. The boards that make up the ship are carefully cut, planed, and smoothed. They are fitted together beautifully and are carefully cut and sanded to fit in an attractive way. We have no way of knowing when the Flood occurred, but suppose we accept the traditional date of 5,700 years ago even though 9,000 to 12,000 years ago is more reasonable. What kind of tools were available? How was wood cut and used? Copper was used as a metal somewhere around 2,500 B.C., but smoothing, sanding, nailing and other processing of wood was a long way off. The hundred years of work by Noah takes on a

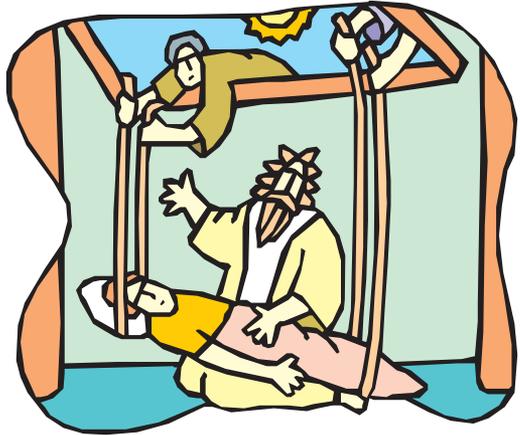


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different meaning if you realize that modern tools were not available when he did his construction.

The problem of westernizing the biblical account comes up in a variety of ways. We read about houses in the Bible and assume that the dwelling places were like the ones in which we live. The fact is that most people lived in houses with dirt floors, had no solid doors or windows, and had a leaky roof.

In Mark 2:4 when the palsied man was lowered through a hole made in the roof, making an opening in a roof was fairly easy to do in that day. Sweeping to find a lost coin (Luke 15:8–9) makes sense when you understand how the houses were made. In Luke 11:5–8 we see the story of the man who refused a traveler because he was “closed in” for the night. The notion of just throwing open a door was not possible in the construction of that day. All hygienic issues of cleaning and washing in Bible times were far more complicated than most of us care to imagine.

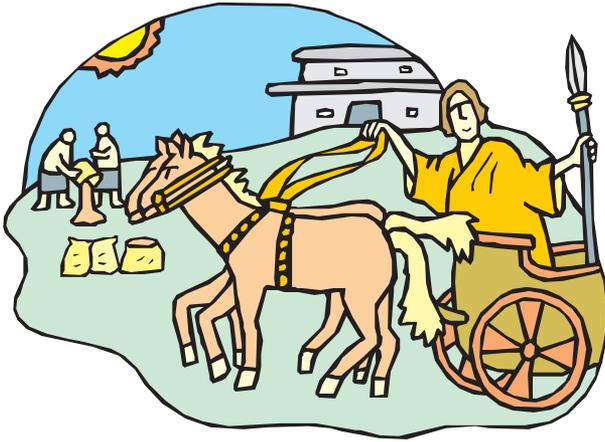


These pictures: *Art Explosion* by Nova Development Corporation. © 1997–2001.



Travel in the day of Jesus was far more laborious than today. No one could travel from point A to point B without adequate preparation. Most people traveled on foot and in groups because of the heavy crime rate on the open road. The man in the story of the good Samaritan being beaten and robbed

by thieves was all too familiar to most people. Roads were poor and few in number, being either ruts or Roman cobbled. The story of the Ethiopian Eunuch reading a scroll while riding in a chariot (Acts 8:26–39) shows he was an eager student of the Bible, studying in austere conditions. Boats were nothing like what we are familiar with in the Western world. Many boats were made of reeds, and some boats were more



like rafts. Jesus sleeping in the bottom of the ship in Luke 8:22–25 is even more incredible when you realize what that ship was probably like.

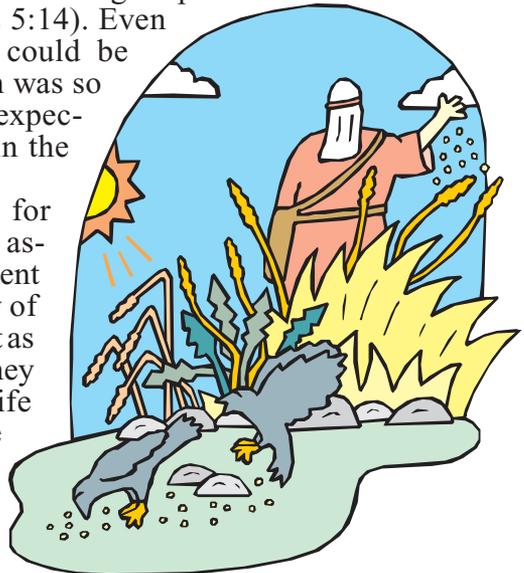
We have a very westernized view of how agriculture was carried on in biblical times. Modern plows,

cultivators, fertilizers, and herbicides were not involved in growing crops. A hoe was a stick with a limb on it. Sowing or planting was totally done by manual methods. Fishing was done with nets and was very slow and labor intensive.

Modern medicine has caused us to have some misguided views of medicine in ancient times. There were no antibiotics or miracle drugs, and infection and water-borne illnesses were common, frequently ending in death. Paul told Timothy in 1 Timothy 5:23 to use wine to assist fighting off a stomach problem. Proverbs 31:6 suggests that pain killers in that day were limited and ineffective, especially in old age maladies. Quarantine was a major medical tool and oil was used as a soothing help to many illnesses (see James 5:14). Even relatively minor injuries could be life-threatening, and death was so common that average life expectancy in Jesus' time was in the early thirties.

We take many things for granted in our lives, and assume that people in the ancient times had the same quality of life we do. The reality is that as we better understand how they lived and how hard their life was, we get a better picture of how much Christianity has improved the lives of everyone on the planet.

—JNC



WHAT DOES THE OLD TESTAMENT TEACH ABOUT THE RESURRECTION?

by Phillip Eichman

From the very beginning of Christianity the message has been that Jesus died, was buried, and was raised from the dead. In the first recorded sermon, Peter boldly proclaimed regarding Jesus: “This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. . . . God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact” (Acts 2:23–24, 32). (All Bible quotations are from NIV.)



The “fact” to which Peter referred was nothing less than the conquering of death, the enemy of mankind since the beginning.

This message—that there is life beyond the grave—quickly became the central theme of the preaching of the disciples of Jesus and the foundation of the Christian faith.

The resurrection from the dead is a common theme in the New Testament. The concept of the resurrection and life after death, however, had its beginnings in the Old Testament. In this issue we are going to briefly examine the resurrection in the Old Testament.

The Hebrew religion tended to place emphasis primarily on the present life. Blessings or punishment, for individuals or the nation of Israel, were seen as occurring at either the present time, or if in the future, through descendants. That is not to say, however, that there was no concept of an afterlife among the Hebrew people. There are passages in the Old Testament that many believe teach that life exists beyond the grave. Unlike the New Testament, however, there is no clearly defined doctrine of the resurrection in the Old Testament. The passages in the Old Testament provide at best a glimpse into the afterlife but nothing to compare with the hope expressed in the New Testament.

The development of the concept of the resurrection in the Old Testament begins perhaps as early as the Garden of Eden with the promise that came with the curse resulting from the first sin (Genesis 3:15). Over time the concept became more developed through further revelation especially in the books of the Wisdom Literature and the Prophets. Later in the Old Testament period the concept of the resurrection became more fully developed among the Hebrew people. This can be seen, for example, in the fact that Jesus condemned the Sadducees for their denial of the resurrection (Matthew 22:9; Mark 12:27; Luke 20:38). Thus, by the time of Jesus there was some expectation of existence after death among the Jewish people.



Before looking at specific passages related to the concept of the resurrection it is necessary to first examine the concept of death as found in the Old Testament. The Old Testament concept of human beings consisted of a physical body made of flesh (*basar*), a spirit (*ruah*), and a soul (*nephesh*). Death, in Hebrew thought involved all three of these entities. The physical body is made of dust and returns to the dust after death (Genesis 2:7; 3:19). It was also believed that at death the spirit (or breath) is withdrawn (Psalm 104:29; Ecclesiastes 12:7), and the soul (*nephesh*) was sent to *sheol* or the place of the dead (Psalm 16:10).

Thus, in the Old Testament death is viewed as the end of physical life but not the termination of existence. The dead, though separated from this life, continued to exist.

Sheol represented a dark and unknown existence, but there was still some hope in the minds of the Hebrew people. David, for example, wrote in reference to God in Psalm 139:8: "If I make my bed in the depths (*sheol*) you are there."

There are several examples in the Old Testament of God miraculously intervening in the natural processes of death. Although these are not directly related to the resurrection, they are important in understanding existence after death. These events related to death or the afterlife fall into three categories. The first of these events involved the raising of certain individuals from the dead. These include (1) the

son of the widow of Zerephath (1 Kings 17:17–24), (2) the son of the Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4:18–37), and (3) a man thrown into Elisha’s grave (2 Kings 13:20–21). In miracles such as these, known as revitalization or resuscitation, a person was returned to his or her previous life. Apparently, however, these individuals eventually died again.

The second of these events occurred when Enoch (Genesis 5:24; cf. Hebrews 11:5) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:10–11) were taken by God from this life into another realm. The details are few, but it appears that Enoch and Elijah passed from this life into the next without experiencing death, as we know it.

The third event was the strange account of the “witch” of Endor calling Samuel from the grave (1 Samuel 28:3–25). Although this has little to do with the concept of the resurrection, bringing Samuel back from the dead would, like the previous examples, at least confirm that death is not annihilation and that individuals continue to exist after death.

In addition to these historical events there are also several Old Testament passages that refer either directly or indirectly to the raising of the dead or life after death. It is recorded, for example, that Hannah said in her prayer, “The LORD brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up” (1 Samuel 2:6). Although the language is not very specific, this passage would at least suggest that God could raise the dead and deliver a person from sheol.

In another passage, Job speaks of seeing God after death: “And after my skin has been destroyed, yet will I see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:25–27). Not all scholars agree that this is a reference to the resurrection. It would seem, however, that the statement reflects at least a belief in an existence after death or even an actual reference to the resurrection.

There are several passages in the Psalms that give additional insight into life after death. One example is found in Psalm 16:9–11, especially in verse 10, which reads: “because you will not abandon me to the grave [sheol], nor will you let your Holy One see decay.” This verse is especially significant in light of the fact that it was quoted by Peter in Acts 2:25–28 in reference to the resurrection of Jesus. Another is found in Psalm 49:15, which reads: “But God will redeem my life from the grave; he will surely take me to himself.” (See also Psalms 17:15 and 73:23–26.)

The clearest expressions in the Old Testament of belief in life after death and resurrection of the dead are found in the prophets, although not all Bible scholars are in agreement on the meaning of these passages. In Isaiah 25:8, for example, Isaiah prophesied that God “will swallow up death forever.” Another example is in Isaiah

26:19, which reads: “But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.” Some scholars interpret these prophecies in reference to restoring the people of Israel as a nation, while others, see these passages as clear references to a resurrection of the dead.

Isaiah 53:10–12 is another prophecy that is often seen as relevant to the concept of the resurrection. As a part of the Suffering Servant passages in Isaiah, this is especially applicable to the resurrection of Jesus.

The prophecy of Ezekiel concerning the dry bones coming to life certainly uses language that is suggestive of a resurrection of the dead (Ezekiel 37:1–14). This passage is usually interpreted, however, as a reference to the future raising up and restoring of the nation rather than individuals. Many scholars also interpret the prophecy in Hosea 6:1–3 as referring to the restoration of the people of Israel even though Hosea also used language suggestive of a bodily resurrection.

The Old Testament passage which is most commonly interpreted to be a reference to the resurrection of the dead is Daniel 12:2 which reads: “Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.” Even this prophecy by Daniel is lacking in specific details. Like some of the other Old Testament passages examined here, however, it does point to a future time when the dead will be raised.

Thus, even though the Jewish people had a limited understanding of death and future life, they were not left without a future hope. And that hope, was to be manifested in the person of Jesus Christ, as he alone was able to conquer that enemy of mankind—death itself.

(In our next issue Phillip Eichman will continue with a look at the resurrection in the New Testament.)



Nobel Scientists and God

Editor's Note: One of the things that has come out of the battle between extremists in the evolution/creation controversy has been a flow of literature from atheists claiming that good scientists and intelligent, educated people do not believe in God. This simply is not true. Tihomir Dimitrov has compiled an e-book on <http://nobelists.net> of quotations of Nobel Prize winning scientists. In each issue of this journal we hope to quote statements from some of these.

JAMES H. TAYLOR

1993 NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSICS

DISCOVERED THE FIRST KNOWN BINARY PULSAR

“A scientific discovery is also a religious discovery. There is no conflict between science and religion. Our knowledge of God is made larger with every discovery we make about the world.” “My wife and I spend time with our faith group; it’s a way for us to make connections with our philosophical views on life, why we are on the Earth, and what we can do for others.” “We are a group of Christians who believe that there can be a direct connection between an individual and the Spirit, which we may call God.”

“By contemplation and deep inward looking one can effectively commune with this Spirit to learn things about oneself and about the way one should conduct oneself on Earth.” “[I] believe that there is something of God in every person and therefore human life is sacrosanct and one needs to look for the depth of spiritual presence in others, even in others with whom you disagree.”

ADDRESS CHANGE? To remain on our mailing list, please give us both your old and new addresses with both zip codes at least six to eight weeks before the move, if at all possible. Thanks!



Cynthia's Corner

John was asked to return to Scotland last July to do **Does God Exist?** lectures in three cities and a youth camp. We were glad to be able to go.

Our first experience there was with the youth camp. It was inspiring to see the young people from across Scotland growing in their relationship to God and to each other. Those friendships they develop at camp can last a lifetime and often become the backbone of the Church in the future. In fact, John and I were impressed with the unity and closeness of the body of Christ in Scotland. The members we spent time with



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know and support each other across the country. One of the reasons for this may be because they are so outnumbered by the nonbelievers and their message is generally rejected by a population that mostly has disdain for organized religion. The whole country is a mission field.

When we were in Dundee, I was handing out leaflets in the early evening on Saturday and almost everyone that I talked to was intoxicated or on their way to the pub to get that way. Many of the beautiful cathedrals have been turned into restaurants, night clubs, banks, or pubs (see John's article on page 3). It seems that organized religion has been so violent and divisive in the past that people cannot get beyond their national history to see the biblical message of love and unity that Jesus taught and lived. I think that the lesson for Christians is to preach only Jesus and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 1:23)—and to live as if we really believe it!



Patty Gibson

—Cynthia Clayton



The books that are reviewed in the Book Review section are not available through us, but can be obtained from a local bookstore or through many online bookstores.

Cosmos, Bios, Theos

edited by Henry Margenau and Roy Abraham Varghese,
Open Court Publishing Co., 1994, 285 pages,
\$36.00 (paperback) ISBN-10: 0-8126-9186-5



The subtitle of this book is “Scientists Reflect on Science, God, and the Origins of the Universe, Life, and *Homo sapiens*.” A book written by 60 leading scientists including 24 Nobel prizewinners may be written off by many people as being impossible to have any value. I have to confess that I was very skeptical of the use of the book, because all I did when I first got it was to leaf through it and see that each writer only had a few pages. When I finally sat down to actually read the book, I found that its primary value was in its science explanations, not in the opinions of each of the 60 scientists

who lent their name to it.

The book is worth buying just for the first 25 pages which contain an excellent essay by Roy Abraham Varghese. This essay is an objective survey of modern science. If someone wants an objective discussion of cosmology, relativity, quantum mechanics, and modern theories such as multiple universes, vacuum fluctuations, and the like, this is a wonderful quick summary of all of that. After that introduction, the book contains the responses of 60 leading scientists to the following questions:

1. What do you think should be the relationship between religion and science?
2. What is your view on the origin of the universe: both on a scientific and—if you see the need—on a metaphysical level?

3. What is your view on the origin of life: both on a scientific level and—if you see the need—on a metaphysical level?
4. What is your view on the origin of *Homo sapiens*?
5. How should science—and the scientist—approach origin questions, specifically the origin of the universe and the origin of life?
6. What are your thoughts on the concept of God and on the existence of God?

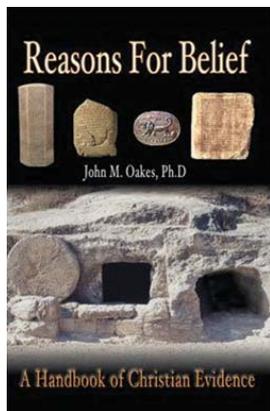
The book also contains a debate between Antony Flew and H. D. Lewis as well as some secondary essays by William R. Stoeger and Eugene Wigner.

The problem with this book is that outside of the essay by Varghese, it is all opinions, and the opinions are all over the intellectual block. What is useful is that a vast percentage of the opinions are very positive about the existence of God and the value of religious faith. This is not a book about the Bible or Christianity, but the validity of belief in the existence of God. Most of the book is fair and even-handed. For a person wanting a better understanding of cosmology and quantum mechanics, the book is very useful.

Reasons for Belief

by John M. Oakes

Illumination Publishers, 2005, 255 pages,
\$15.00 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-0-976-7583-3-4



Dr. John Oakes is one of the shining lights of the Church of Christ today. His Web site is evidenceforchristianity.org and he heads the Apologetic Research Society which does a great deal of work in all areas of apologetics.

The main thrust of this book is the validity of Jesus Christ and the Christian system, not the existence of God. The book has nine chapters which focus on Jesus' claim to be the Son of God, reasons for believing in Jesus including His miracles, the resurrection, and the role of prophecy.

Oakes then turns his attention to the validity of the Bible with heavy documentation from historical and archeological sources. There is a long chapter on scientific support of the Bible and a final chapter on general support for the biblical message as the Word of God.

This is an unusual book because it is focused on a specific area of study of the Christian system—not a generalized apologetic approach. It should be a very useful tool in helping counter the attempts of skeptics to denigrate the Christian system.

DANDY DESIGNS

THE OCEAN'S BEAVERS

Here in the North we know that beavers transform the wilderness in wonderful ways, providing habitat for fish, birds, and storing water that sustains the whole ecosystem during dry months. Many areas of Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Minnesota are stocking beaver because of the environmental benefits that they bring to large wilderness areas.



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Florida State University's Felicia Coleman and Elliott Norse of the Marine Conservation Biology Institute have been doing studies of the red grouper in ocean areas around Florida and throughout the Gulf of Mexico. They have discovered that the red grouper serves the ocean in the same way that beavers serve the northern wilderness.

The grouper digs large holes in the ocean's sandy bottom exposing rocky surfaces at the bottom of the holes. These holes and rocky surfaces that are exposed are protected by the grouper's activity and provide a place for coral, seaweed, sponges, and other marine life to start, thrive, and congregate. When granular charcoal was added to the holes the fish were maintaining, they took the charcoal away and scattered it elsewhere. The holes are cleaned and maintained by this beaver-like fish. Research has shown that when red groupers are fished out of an area, the area becomes an underwater desert—barren of other forms of sea life as well. Just as the beaver maintains its environment, the red grouper is a tool that engineers and maintains the floor of the ocean to allow the whole ecosystem to function.

Thomas Bigford, chief of NOAA fisheries' Habitat Protection Division says, "We're learning that engineering happens at all sorts of different scales, at all sorts of different levels. It changes the way we do things. It changes what we think of as protected habitat." The engineering that we see in nature reflects the wisdom and design of God. He has designed animals that can manage and sustain environments that otherwise would be hostile to life. These animals do this in such a way that barren areas become life-giving oasis, whether on land or under the surface of the ocean.

Source: *The Open Fish Science Journal*, January 2010.

DEEP SEA TRIPLEWART SEA DEVIL



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One of the amazing things about life on the earth is that life exists in places where the conditions are so severe that it would seem impossible for any kind of life to be there. Imagine living in a place where there is no sunlight, the temperature is slightly above freezing, and pressure is greater than 150 tons per square foot. This is

the home of the deep sea anglerfish also known as the triplewart sea devil and wolf-trap anglerfish. These names got applied when people found dead specimens floating in the ocean and could not imagine what they were like when they were alive. Now that scientists have seen them in their natural environment, the awe of these creatures has just gotten bigger.

Eating is a major issue for this fish. How do you locate food in totally dark, sparsely populated regions of the sea? The deep sea anglerfish has a rod running off its head with a light-giving enzyme called luciferase on its tip. This enables the fish to attract prey and/or mates. The tip is a fleshy wad that wiggles, looking like a small fish. The jaw of the fish produces suction when the mouth is opened and it has retractable teeth that face into the mouth. An approaching fish will be sucked into the mouth and cannot get out. The mouth can open in four milliseconds so the suction is very fast. The stomach of the fish is expandable so it can actually swallow something larger than itself.

Finding a mate is an issue in the conditions of the deep sea, but the male anglerfish is 25 times smaller than the female, and when they find each other he chomps down on the female and never lets go. His circulatory system fuses with hers and all his organs except the reproductive organs shut down, so he becomes a permanent sperm bank. One species of anglerfish has a male that is 6.2 mm long, the smallest vertebrate known to man.

One can propose that evolutionary change explains these incredible adaptations to an alien environment, but we would suggest that intelligence planned and designed this system so that life can exist even in the deserts of the oceans. We can know there is a God through the things He has made (Romans 1:20).

Source: *Discover*, June 2010, page 20.

News and Notes

ANNOUNCING A NEW BOOK! We are pleased to announce that a new book is now available from the **Does God Exist?** program. The book is titled *Looking Back* and is a history of the first 40 years of the **Does God Exist?** ministry. This is not an apologetic book, but rather a history of how God used John and Phyllis Clayton from the start of their work in 1968 with a desire to help young people with faith problems, and follows their story to May 2008 when Phyllis passed away. This will be of interest to people who have followed the program and know the Claytons. It tells of their kids, problems, successes, failures, and struggles. It will also be of interest to those who want to see how God works through people and in people's lives. The book can be ordered online at doesgodexist.tv, by calling 574-514-1400, or by mailing a check for \$3.00 to John Clayton at 1555 Echo Valley Dr., Niles MI 49120.

SEARCH FOR OTHER EARTHS HAS IMPLICATIONS.

A red star known as Gliese 581 apparently has six planets orbiting it. One of the planets is at a distance that would allow water to exist as a liquid. The number of stars that have been found to have planets orbiting them is growing with the number exceeding 500 at the time of this writing. A vast percentage of these planets are like Jupiter—large, gaseous worlds that are cold and hostile. Some are very close to their stars. It is obvious that the cosmos is full of planets orbiting stars. The processes that produce stars must also produce a widespread distribution of debris that forms planets as well as moons, asteroids, comets and the other things that make up our solar system. This tells us something about God's methods, and it may well be that generations from now much of their materials will be useful to man. It is also true that we are seeing a rapid increase in the number of variables that have to be carefully chosen for life to exist. Earth continues to be a very unusual place in the creation, but God may have chosen to prepare some other unusual places that are beyond our imagination. The old adage "your God is too small" may apply in this discussion as it has in the past on other subjects.

Data from *Science News*, October 23, 2010, page 5.

MANNA ON THE MENU. *The New York Times* has had several articles in the “Dining and Wine” section about manna being imported and used in a variety of recipes. *Biblical Archeological Review* reports on this ancient food in the September/October 2010 issue (page 24). Exodus 16:13–14 tells us that it tasted like coriander seed and made wafers that tasted like honey. Psalm 78 calls it “grain of heaven.” There



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are many sources of “manna” in the Middle East today. In some places it is believed to be the dried sap of the desert-growing tamarisk tree, and some other forms are believed to come from insects. In the U.S. manna has been imported since 2008 and is used in eclectic menu items. You can argue that this manna is different from what is described in the Bible, but from an apologetic standpoint it is clear that what is described as God’s provision for the Israelites had a scientific basis. God used quail as well as manna to provide food for his people, reinforcing God’s natural solution to their food dilemma.

ALCOHOL-FREE CHRISTIANITY. The most destructive drug to ever exist on planet earth is alcohol. Today’s alcohol drinks are far different from those in Jesus’ day, when distillation did not exist. Because it is used as a recreational drug, the problems with alcohol use continue to grow. A new Web site has been started for those Christians who have concerns about alcohol use in society and in the Church. It is www.alcoholfreechristianity.org.

HUMAN TESTING IN THE PAST. Einstein said it best: “Religion without science is lame, but science without religion is blind.” History is full of cases where one group of people were deemed expendable, and horrible experiments were done with an eye to making scientific discoveries. A famous example was the Tuskegee study in which doctors denied treatment to black males with syphilis to study the long term effects of the disease. New data shows that American doctors infected 700 Guatemalans with syphilis from 1946 to 1948 to test penicillin. In the 1950s LSD was given to unsuspecting American citizens for experimental purposes. Quaker Oats allowed researchers to put trace amounts of radiation in the cereal of mentally handicapped

children. Those who suggest that moral decisions, and what they are based on, are of no consequence need to look at the historical record. Christian values as taught by the Bible are critical to allowing science not to be blind to the moral implications of experiments.

Source: *Time*, October 18, 2010, page 30.

WHY ARE THERE MOSQUITOES? Those of us who live in the North and spend a lot of time outdoors have had our battles with mosquitoes. We also may have questioned God’s design while slapping at hordes of the nasty vermin. The newest data from people who study insects shows these little creatures are important. There are 3,500 species of mosquitoes world-wide and of those only about 200 suck blood. In these species only the females bite, and only to provide for their larvae. Mosquitoes pollinate plants and provide food for many birds. In their larvae stage they provide food for fish and are a major part of the food chain in northern lakes and rivers. We might not miss mosquitoes right away if they all disappeared, but many of the plants and animals we depend on in northern latitudes would be in serious trouble without these pesky insects.



Source: *Alaska*, November 2010, page 52.

STRAIGHT BRITISH COUPLE SEEKS “GAY” PARTNERSHIP. Britain has a law which allows gays to have a civil partnership, available in Britain only to same sex couples. Tom Freeman and Katherine Doyle do not want to get married, but they want to have a civil partnership, so they are suing the government. Legal experts are predicting they will win because discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation infringes on Britain’s human rights law. The charge is that the government is being heterophobic. The point that we have made from the outset of this debate is that while we oppose homophobia and are not interested in abusing anyone, when you violate the biblical definition of marriage, then any union of any kind has to be accepted—be it group marriage, polygamy, polyandry or civil partnerships. The bigger concern yet is the destructive nature of all sexual relationships outside of God’s plan for man and woman described in Genesis 2:24.

Source: Associated Press and Yahoo News, November 9, 2010.

MUSLIM COLLEGE STARTS IN U.S. One interesting contrast between countries in which Islam dominates and countries where some form of Christianity dominates is freedom of ideas. The first Muslim college dedicated to “a rigorous curriculum in Islamic Studies and Arabic” is located in Berkeley, California. Zaytuna College was started as an institute in 1996 and is moving towards becoming a fully accredited college. One has to wonder what would happen if a Christian university was started in a Muslim country. The contrast between the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 5–7 and the Koran needs to be shown to our young people so they can better understand the violence and struggles going on in today’s world.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Zaytuna_College&oldid=395701340 (accessed December 14, 2010).

END TIMES EARTHQUAKES. We continue to see material in the press by promoters of dispensational millennialism saying that the world is about to come to an end. One scientific area that is referred to is the frequency of earthquakes. Major earthquakes in Haiti, Indonesia, and other places around the world have been a disaster with tragic losses of life and property. However, the notion that this seismic activity is increasing or that it is unusual is not supported by the facts. As scientists measure earthquakes, they find that the crust of our planet is in constant motion. Since measurements have been recorded, the earth averages nearly 1.5 million earthquakes per year. Only about 15,000 of these could be detected by humans without scientific equipment, but they are active and dynamic in changing the crust of the earth. This raises new land from the sea and provides new resources for man. “Terra firma” is actually a dynamic, moving surface that constantly adjusts and changes. Nothing strange is happening in the crust at the present time, and human predictions of end times can be seriously misguided scientifically and biblically.

Source: *Science Illustrated*, November/December 2010, page 70.

GENETIC TESTING AND DISEASE. As of October 25, 2010, there were 1,956 diseases for which genetic tests are on the market. Data is accelerating in this field of medicine, and the future has all kinds of wonderful, and sometimes scary possibilities. Knowing you will have a particular disease that is something you inherited can help you find medical help, arrange personal finances, or take out large insurance policies right before the disease hits. It can also allow insurance companies to cancel you right before the disease hits, and affect when you retire and who you marry. There are several interesting implications of all of this. We have to recognize that a huge percentage of the diseases we suffer from have been caused by damage to our genome, and much of that is from human abuse. God is not the

cause of the pain and suffering in the world. Genetic medicine is a field our young people can enter that holds great promise and can serve humanity in wonderful ways. The training of teachers, preachers, counselors, and church leaders will increasingly need to include how to get and use genetic information in a positive way. As we learn to correct these genetic problems, wonderful new solutions can come to some of the bad things that happen in life.

Source: *USA Today*, October 25, 2010, page D1.

TWO DINOS TURN OUT TO BE ONE. Most kids can identify *Triceratops* and *Torosaurus*, two dinosaurs that had serious horns on their heads. Data now shows that the *Triceratops* is a juvenile



2010 © Peter Polak. Image from BigStockPhoto.com

version of *Torosaurus*, and the name *Torosaurus* is going to be delisted. What this shows is that our knowledge and preconceived notions about these large animals is very weak and frequently not too accurate. As science corrects this kind of error the picture of the animals of the past and

how they lived and changed may make the history of Earth considerably clearer.

Source: *Science*, volume 329, August 13, 2010, page 733.

STEPHEN HAWKING AND GOD—AGAIN. One of the most brilliant men on the planet is Stephen Hawking, a cosmologist who has been at the forefront of quantum mechanics and theories about matter. Recently Hawking has released a new book called *The Grand Design*. He has been quoted as saying that he has proven that God does not exist, but that is not accurate, and, in fact, Hawking's concepts are not new to him. Throughout his history he has maintained disbelief in a personal God. The message in this book is that he believes he has come up with a theory about matter that allows him to propose a creation of the cosmos that eliminates intelligent design and can function on the basis of natural law. In a November 15, 2010, (page 8) interview with *Time*, Hawking says "I don't claim that God doesn't exist. God is the name people give to the reason we are here. But I think that reason is the laws of physics rather than someone with whom one can have a personal relationship. An impersonal God." Having a temporary model based upon numerous assumptions that makes intel-

ligent guidance unnecessary is certainly not a disproof of a personal God's existence. The source of the laws that govern both quantum mechanics and Newtonian mechanics remains unanswered, and the moral guidance and personal purpose of life remain unaddressed by any laws Hawking proposes. His newest ideas are interesting, and in our view are wonderful support for the God described in the Bible as the God in whom "we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:22).

AMERICAN KNOWLEDGE ABOUT RELIGION BAD. A study known as "The U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey" asked 32 questions on the major world religions of people who were Jewish, Mormon, Catholic, Protestant, and Atheist. The questions were things like: "What religion was Mother Teresa?" "What religion has figures in Vishnu and Shiva?" "Which figure in the Bible was associated with remaining obedient to God despite suffering—Abraham, Job, Elijah or Moses?" "The person whose writings inspired the Protestant Reformation was who—Luther, Aquinas or Wesley?" "The religion that aims at Nirvana, the state of being free from suffering, is Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism?" The overall average score was 16, with Hispanic Catholics averaging 11.6, Black Protestants averaging 13.4, White Protestants 15.8, Jews averaging 20.5 and Atheists averaging 20.9. Fewer than half knew that the Dalai Lama is a Buddhist. The level of ignorance about religion is massive, and that has many implications for our country and the Church.

Source: *USA Today*, September 28, 2010, page 8A.

HOW AMERICA SEES GOD. *USA Today* (October 7, 2010, page 1A) reports on a study by Paul Froese and Christopher Bader of 1648 U.S. adults on how they perceive God. Five percent said they were atheists, 24 percent said God is a distant God, 28 percent said God is an authoritative God, 22 percent said God was a benevolent God, and 21 percent said God was a critical God. Lots of questions can be asked about the study, but what is interesting is that no one in the study or the reviews discussed what Jesus actually portrayed God to be—a God of love, friendship, association, and joy. Our organized religious leaders have projected God as distant, critical, and authoritarian with an occasional shot of benevolence. Jesus spoke of God as one who loves us and sent Jesus to die for us. What happened to "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "My God and I walk through the fields together. We walk and talk as good friends should and do, ..." God can be all those other things, but for Christians the emphasis needs to be on what God gives us—not what we fear He will do to us.

This journal is a part of a program of service titled **Does God Exist?** The purpose of the program is to provide thinking, seeking people with scientific evidence that God does exist and that the Bible is His Word. It is our conviction that all men can logically and rationally believe in God. In addition to this bimonthly journal, the **Does God Exist?** program offers DVDs and video tapes, CDs and audio tapes, courses, books, and other materials. These materials are offered on a loan basis or at our cost. We also are more than willing to correspond with you and answer any specific question(s) you might have. If you would like further information on borrowing or purchasing these materials, we would be glad to send it to you. Check the boxes below to describe what you would like and mail it to us. We will get it right out to you.

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