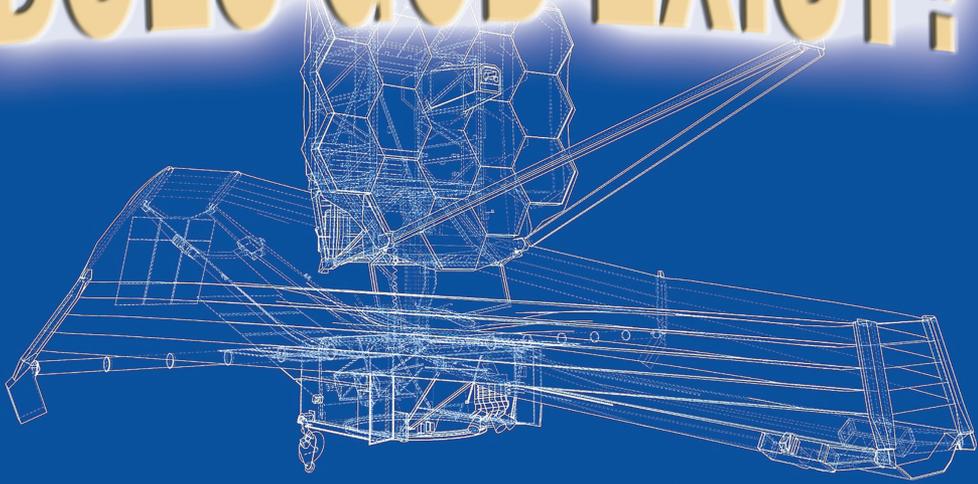
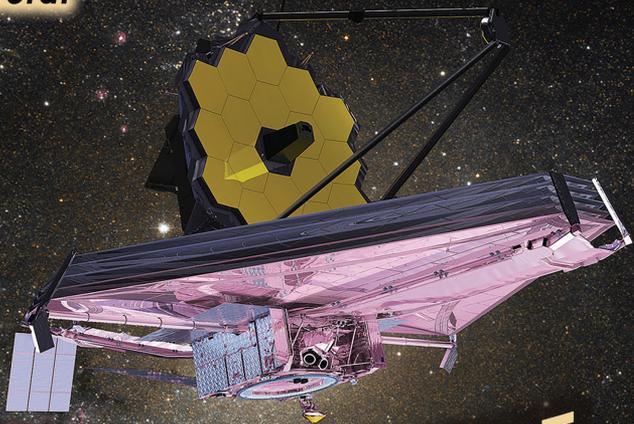


DOES GOD EXIST?



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

**First Quarter 2023
Volume 50 Number 1**



CREATION AND THE WEBB TELESCOPE

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Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice? ... I was formed long ages ago, at the very beginning, when the world came to be.
— Proverbs 8:1, 23.

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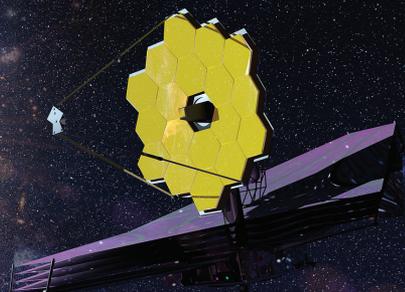
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CREATION AND THE WEBB TELESCOPE



On Christmas day in 2021, an incredible telescope was launched into space. It weighed 13,580 pounds (6,160 kg) and cost US\$10 billion. The justification for such an expensive project is that with it, we could see farther into space with better resolution than ever before. For example, one of the first pictures captured by the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) was of the so-called “Pillars of Creation,” a feature of the Eagle Nebula 7,000 light years from Earth. This image revealed never-before-seen details of that nebula. The magnificent JWST will allow us to learn more about the real creation by peering many light years into the past.

This telescope provides two extraordinary things. The first is its light-gathering ability. Because it is above Earth’s atmosphere and has a very large receiving surface, it can gather more light than other telescopes. At its location in space, the JWST is relatively unaffected by gravitational forces so that time exposures can be very long. The second is its resolving power, which is the ability of a lens system to separate point sources of light. For example, suppose you had a car facing out toward a lake with both headlights turned on. Poor resolving power would cause an observer across the lake to see just one light. Good resolving power would see both headlights. Early earth-based telescopes looked at what we now know as the Andromeda galaxy and saw a “fuzzy light.” Later telescopes were larger and had better resolving power, enabling astronomers to see that fuzzy light was actually billions of stars. The



Pillars of Creation

Webb telescope can look at Andromeda and see that there are planets going around many of the stars, something Earth based telescopes could never see.

How can the Webb telescope “see into the past?” This confusing statement is true because light travels at a fixed speed of approximately 186,000 miles (300,000 km) per second. Even at that speed, it takes a long time for it to travel across the distances in space. Light from the Sun takes eight minutes and 20 seconds to reach Earth. When you look at the sunrise or sunset, you are seeing the Sun as it was eight minutes and 20 seconds ago. If the Sun suddenly died, it would be eight minutes and 20 seconds before we would know it here on Earth.



We measure space distances in light years, which is the distance light can travel in one year — 5,878,625,373,200 miles (9,460,730,472,581 km). The North Star (Polaris) is 323 light years away, so we see it as it was 323 years ago. The Webb telescope can see objects that are 13 billion light-years away. That means we are seeing light that left those objects 13 billion years ago, and doubtless they have changed or gone out of existence since then. The Webb telescope can see objects within a span between 8 and 9 light-years wide (for astronomy students, that is 15,000 pixels).

It is essential to understand that JWST can see those objects, but how they got there is not a subject the Webb Telescope is designed to answer. Real creation is the production of matter from nothing. The Bible makes it clear that this happened from a dimension outside of space and time. The concept of acting outside of space and time describes God and agrees with the simple statement of

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Genesis 1:1. Quantum mechanics and the newest understandings of modern physics show more and more evidence that this is how creation came about, but that has nothing to do with what the Webb telescope is seeing.

So what does the Webb Telescope tell us? What are the real “pillars of creation,” and what do they tell us about the processes God used to produce the world where we live? Because of its excellent resolving power, the Webb Telescope shows us cocoons of dust collapsing under the forces of gravity. As those cocoons collapse, they heat up, and the Webb Telescope can measure the temperatures to verify the temperature rise. When the cocoon gets small enough and hot enough, the materials in the cocoon, mostly hydrogen, fuse into heavier elements, and a star is born. The Webb Telescope shows us the making of stars, not the creation of stars. God created the material from which stars are made long before the fusion process began.

Smaller telescopes have enabled us to see the death of stars. When a star runs out of fuel, nuclear processes produce a change in stellar material. Different stars change the nuclear process in different ways. A nova is an explosion of a star, but there are several different kinds of explosions depending on the star's mass. These processes produce the other elements we see in the periodic chart of chemistry. Colossal explosions in super-massive stars called supernovas produce heavy elements like uranium, lead, and gold. Lighter elements such as carbon, sulfur, oxygen, potassium, sodium, etc., are produced in less massive stars.

The cosmos is not a dead creation that God wound up and let go to die. It is a living, dynamic thing that continues to grow, expand, and change. God is still active and continually working to sustain his creation as the elements are recycled and reworked. Black holes provide waste receptacles to dispose of finished matter. The Webb Telescope allows us to see the continual process of new materials being produced. This is the way God works. Life itself is constantly changing, and biology is another dynamic field where we can watch the



Supernova Explosion



Large Hadron Collider Particle Accelerator — CERN

design and processing of life, allowing life to survive in every nook and cranny of our planet.

Between the Webb Telescope and massive nuclear accelerators, we continually gain more understanding of what God has done and how the creation has come to be as it

is. The complexity we see and the incredible power and wisdom it displays speak of God. In Proverbs 8:1–5; 22–23, Wisdom speaks to all people about creation, and this is what she says about creation and God:

Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice? At the highest point along the way, where the paths meet, she takes her stand; beside the gate leading into the city, at the entrance, she cries aloud: “To you, O people, I call out; I raise my voice to all mankind. You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, set your hearts on it. ... “The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was formed long ages ago, at the very beginning, when the world came to be.

What a wonderful thing it is to be living in 2023 when we have tools that enable us to see this wisdom firsthand. To the ancients who did not have the tools, the simple statement “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” was enough. We now can say with greater understanding, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the skies proclaim the work of his hands” (Psalm 19:1).

—John N. Clayton



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Creation of Heaven and Earth

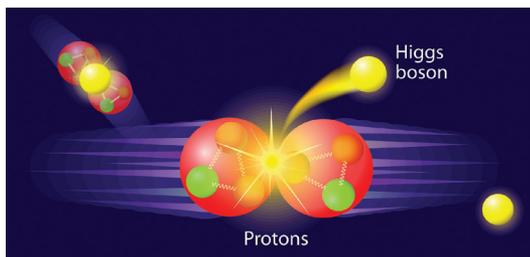
As scientists find more and more evidence, the picture of creation becomes clearer. That is not to say that science has the entire creation of heaven and Earth figured out. However, studies have allowed us to see what was done, even if we do not understand and will never understand how it was done in this life.

Science has identified four fundamental forces involved in creation. They are the electromagnetic force, the weak nuclear force, the strong nuclear force, and the gravitational force. These forces work on particles that science has observed or particles for which science has found evidence but has not observed. For example, photons are responsible for electromagnetism. Particles called gluons are responsible for nuclear forces, with eight gluons causing the strong nuclear force and three gluons causing the weak nuclear force.

The recently discovered particle called the Higgs boson gives mass to the force particles and controls their behavior. Physicists are studying how that happens and are looking for a particle that causes

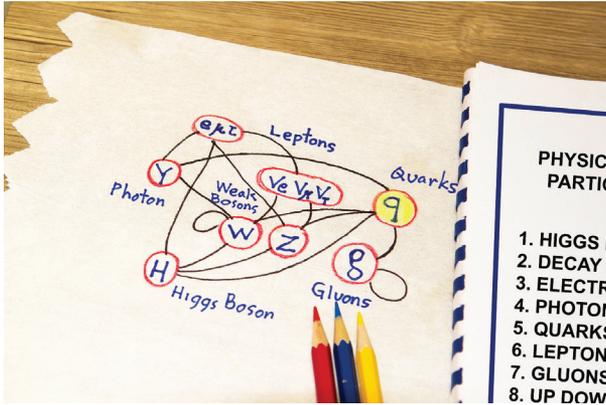
the gravitational force. As research continues, science strongly suggests that those forces began as a single force. Our standard rules of physics cannot deal with this concept, and the time during which the forces originated is called the “Planck era.” The creation of heaven and Earth is a complex process, and science is trying to understand it.

The so-called “standard model” of particle physics has so much supporting evidence that most physicists accept it as a starting point



to understanding the creation process. Some scientists have developed an approach called “string theory” to understand what took place

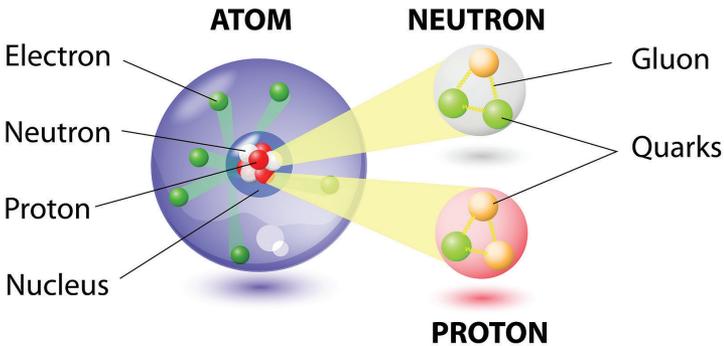
in the Planck era. The mathematics of string theory forces us to believe that creation has come about from dimensions higher than our own. A prominent string theory called “bulk” has creation originating in an eleven-dimensional arena. We live in



- PHYSICS: PARTICLES**
1. HIGGS BOSON
 2. DECAY PARTICLES
 3. ELECTROWEAK BOSONS
 4. PHOTON
 5. QUARKS
 6. LEPTONS
 7. GLUONS
 8. UP/DOWN QUARKS

a three-dimensional world with time as a fourth-dimensional quantity. The idea of eleven dimensions is beyond our comprehension. Although we can describe it mathematically, we cannot visualize it.

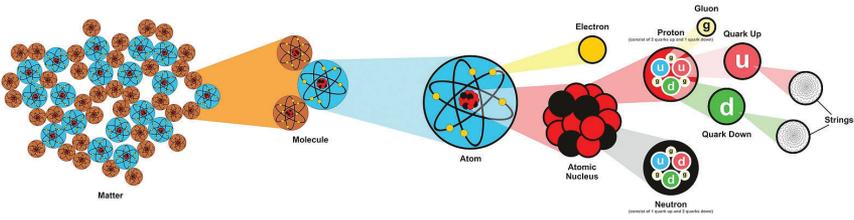
The Bible summarizes the creation of heaven and Earth by simply indicating that an Intelligence in a far higher dimension than our own created time, space, and the physical world in which we exist. “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth” accurately describes what our research and observations tell us.



In summary, there was a beginning often described as the “big bang.” In that beginning, there was Planck time when our laws of physics did not apply. The creation event was caused by *Elohim*, an intelligence outside of space/time operating in dimensions

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Form the Matter Molecule Atom to the Quark to the Strings



outside our physical universe. The creation included the matter/energy from which everything is made and the three-dimensional space, *shamayim* translated as “heaven” in your Bible. It also included the planet we call home, *erets* in Hebrew, created from that matter/energy.

The simple words of Genesis 1:1 describe something that we have yet to fully comprehend. The more we know of the creation, the more we know of the Creator.

—JNC

61 Elementary Particles

48 Fermions

36 Quarks

12 Leptons

Particles

Generation 1 Generation 2 Generation 3

electron e^-	muon μ^-	tau τ^-
electron neutrino $\bar{\nu}_e$	muon neutrino $\bar{\nu}_\mu$	tau neutrino $\bar{\nu}_\tau$
up u \bar{u} u	charm c \bar{c} c	top t \bar{t} t
down d \bar{d} d	strange s \bar{s} s	bottom b \bar{b} b

Antiparticles

Generation 1 Generation 2 Generation 3

positron e^+	muon μ^+	tau τ^+
electron antineutrino $\bar{\nu}_e$	muon antineutrino $\bar{\nu}_\mu$	tau antineutrino $\bar{\nu}_\tau$
up \bar{u} u \bar{u}	charm \bar{c} c \bar{c}	top \bar{t} t \bar{t}
down \bar{d} d \bar{d}	strange \bar{s} s \bar{s}	bottom \bar{b} b \bar{b}

13 Bosons

photon γ

W boson W^+ W^-

Z boson Z

Higgs boson H

gluon g \bar{g} g \bar{g} g \bar{g} g \bar{g} g \bar{g} g \bar{g}

Colors

red

green

blue

antired

antigreen

antiblue

white

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Weak
Strong
Electromagnetic
Gravitation

Four Forces of Nature

by Kenell Touryan

Physicists have identified four forces in nature, also called interactions, that are needed to maintain the stability of the cosmos. The forces work over radically different ranges and at different strengths. These are: the electromagnetic force that is mediated by photons; the strong force, mediated by the gluons; the weak force, mediated by the W and Z Bosons, and the force of gravity mediated by the gravitons. Gravity is the weakest force but has an infinite range. Physicists are attempting to unify these forces under one mathematical framework called the Grand Theory. These attempts have been successful for the first three forces—the electromagnetic force and the weak force are unified under Electroweak Theory, and the strong interaction is unified with the electroweak force at higher energies—but, to date, their efforts have failed to unify the force of gravity with the other forces.

THERE ARE TWO REALITIES, PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL, CONNECTED TO ONE ANOTHER.

The weak and strong interactions work in tandem to generate the massive power of our Sun and all the stars in the universe. The weak nuclear force is a fundamental force of nature that underlies some forms of radioactivity, governs the decay of unstable subatomic particles such as mesons, and initiates the nuclear fusion reaction that fuels the Sun and all the stars. In this enormous power coming through weakness, I see an analogy to the cross being the “weakness of God that is stronger than man’s strength” (1 Corinthians 1:25), further illustrated in 2 Corinthians 13:4 “... he was crucified in weakness,

yet he lives by God's power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him in our dealing with you."

I believe that anyone who limits reality to the physical world and ignores or denies the spiritual may have difficulty solving the problem of a unified theory. For a physicist who accepts spiritual reality



in addition to the physical world, unification may become "natural." As we read in Hebrews 11:3, "... what is seen was not made out of what was visible;"

in other words, the visible, the tangible is inextricably linked to the invisible. In fact, the invisible is the source of the visible. There are two realities, physical and spiritual, connected to one another. If that is true, the bold statement of Hebrews 1:3, "The Son ... sustain[s] all things by his powerful word," may hold the solution to the long-sought Grand Unification Theory! We can see the two realities as coming together to make Christ the source of the unified theory. As we read in Colossians 1:17, "He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

WE CAN SEE HOW GOD (THE INVISIBLE) INTERACTS WITH HIS CREATION (THE VISIBLE) IN THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST.

The conception of Christ by the Holy Spirit was a direct act of God, but Mary's pregnancy continued as any normal pregnancy would, lasting for nine months, and is an example of God's indirect action using the laws of nature. C. S. Lewis used the word "seamless" to describe the boundary between God's direct and indirect interaction with his creation (*God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*. © 1974, Eerdmans, p. 37). As the Creator of all reality, God can use fiat creation of the physical universe or evolving creation over eons to achieve his purposes. Through the prophet Isaiah, God tells us, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways" (Isaiah 55:8).

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THIS SEAMLESS INTERACTION IS RECORDED IN MARK 4:35-41.

In this account, Jesus and his disciples are crossing the Sea of Galilee in a boat when a sudden squall arises, putting the disciples in great danger. Although Jesus is with them in the boat (God's indirect action), he is tired and asleep; the disciples become gripped by



fear, terrified that they will perish in the storm. They awaken Jesus and ask him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” Jesus stands up and commands the wind to stop, and immediately the wind ceases, and the sea becomes completely calm. This is an example of God, through Christ, interacting directly with the

natural world. Jesus then admonishes his disciples, asking why they are so afraid. “Do you still have no faith?” The disciples should have remembered the passage from Psalm 23, where David says, “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” In a single story, we see God acting both indirectly and directly.

ULTIMATELY, THERE IS ONE REALITY WITH TWO ASPECTS.

The arguments that often divide Christians regarding the issue of how much God interacts with his creation directly and/or indirectly should not cause acrimonious separations, as they often do. The ID community and evolutionary creationists agree that God acts in our world. It is the naturalist that denies the existence of God in all affairs of humanity, including how the universe came into existence, that must resort to natural laws only (seldom questioning how so-called natural laws came into existence). My colleagues in the American Science Affiliation should take to heart the fact that God interacts with his creation, both indirectly and directly.

Editor's Note: This article was reprinted by permission from *God and Nature* published by the American Scientific Affiliation. (<https://godandnature.asa3.org/touryan-four-forces.html>) Kenell (Ken) Touryan retired from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in 2007 as chief technology analyst. He spent the next eight years as visiting professor at the American University of Armenia (an affiliate of UC Berkeley). He received his Ph.D. in Mechanical and Aeronautical Sciences from Princeton University with a minor in Physics. His first 16 years were spent at Sandia National Laboratories as Manager of R&D projects in various defense and advanced energy systems. He has published some 95 papers in refereed journals, authored three books, and co-owns several patents.

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Dealing with Media Bias

by Thayer Salisbury

It is upsetting. These days, it also seems inevitable. Lies are told, and many people believe them. Maybe that was overstated. Sometimes, it is a half-truth or a conjecture stated as a proven fact rather than a direct and intentional lie. But the result is pretty much the same. Children are growing up with a lot of false information in their heads. Many adults are making decisions based on false information. And this false information is not always coming from off-the-wall fringe Internet sites. Often, these days, highly respected sources cannot be trusted.

THE PROBLEM: LET ME GIVE A FEW EXAMPLES.

A couple of years ago, I read an article about some little-known pyramids in Sudan. The author stated that these pyramids had been emptied of their contents centuries ago by “European grave robbers.” The statement interested me. I am not an expert on that part of Africa, but I do have some knowledge of its history. I knew that European influence came late to that area. I knew that the area had a lengthy history of inter-tribal strife. Inter-tribal strife often leads to grave robbing. Desecrating graves shows quite clearly that “we do not respect your ancestors or be-



Sudanese Pyramids

lieve that they have power over us.” I knew the area also had a long history of Arab slave trading. I knew that the first looting of the better-known pyramids in Egypt had been carried out by Arabs — although Europeans did plenty at a later date. So, I wondered how the author knew that Europeans had looted these pyramids in Sudan.

Not being shy in these matters, I wrote to the editor of the journal in which the article had appeared. Evidently, the author had no proof for his claim. But he certainly was not going to admit that, nor was the editor going to allow my letter to see the light of day. I was impolitely ignored. No proof whatsoever was offered.

This might not be exactly a lie. Those who looted the Sudanese pyramids may have been Europeans. That is certainly a possibility. But it is not known to be a fact. Yet it was stated as a fact. No other possibility was mentioned, even though at least two other possibilities exist (and even seem just as likely).

EXAMPLE NUMBER TWO COMES FROM THE SAME HIGHLY RESPECTED PUBLICATION.

I am excited about the possibilities of renewable energy. I know there are problems with solar and wind power, but I believe we will soon work many of those out. So, I was pleased to see an article on off-shore wind turbines at Block Island — a part of the State of Rhode Island. I was pleased with what I read in the article until I came to this deceptive statement.



“Lewis objected to the wind farm because of the political process that, he said, led to the power purchase agreement with National Grid, the utility company. Now all Rhode Islanders were paying too much for clean energy, he and others contended, while wind farm developers made a killing. Yet a recent analysis of Block Island power rates, which vary by season, found that the cost per kilowatt hour, if averaged over

a year, is 44 percent lower than it was before the wind farm went online.”¹

Did you catch that? Do you see the dishonesty? A person reading quickly will think that the author disproved the point made by those who object to the wind farm. But the author compared apples to oranges. The objectors’ point was that the people of the State of Rhode Island were paying more. The author responded with a statistic that is completely irrelevant to that question. No one had denied that the people of Block Island (some of the wealthiest people in the world)

were paying less. The claim was that the mainland residents of Rhode Island were paying more so that the rich folks on Block Island could pay less (and the wind farm company could make a huge profit). Instead of answering this objection honestly, the author used a trick to confuse the reader.

Both of those examples come from the highly respected publication *Smithsonian*. I have respected that publication since I was a child. Unfortunately, I respect it no more. The editors are willing to allow unsupported claims and cheap verbal tricks if either can be used to get people to believe something the editors want. I caught those two. I now wonder how often I have read too quickly and overlooked their dishonesty.

A FINAL EXAMPLE.

This one comes from a recent BBC video mini-documentary about archaeology.² About halfway through this documentary, the narrator (who claims to be a biblical scholar) makes this statement



Tell es-Safi

about the professor digging at Tell es-Safi. “One of his recent finds contradicts the biblical caricature of the Philistines as barbarians.” The narrator goes on to indicate that the Bible consistently presents the Philistines as backward and the Israelites as more advanced.

Do you see a problem with that? Most

people will not. Most people, like this documentary’s poorly trained (or dishonest?) narrator, know next to nothing about the Bible. They are perfectly willing to read the modern use of the term “Philistine” back into the Bible. But why? Where does the Bible present the Israelites as more highly developed than the Philistines? This is the exact opposite of what the Bible indicates. The Bible plainly says that the Philistines were more advanced than the Israelites.

“Now there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, ‘Lest the Hebrews make themselves swords or spears.’ But every one of the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen his plowshare, his mattock, his axe, or his sickle, and the charge was two-thirds of a shekel for the plowshares and for the mattocks, and a third of a shekel for sharpening the axes and for setting the goads. So on the day of the battle,

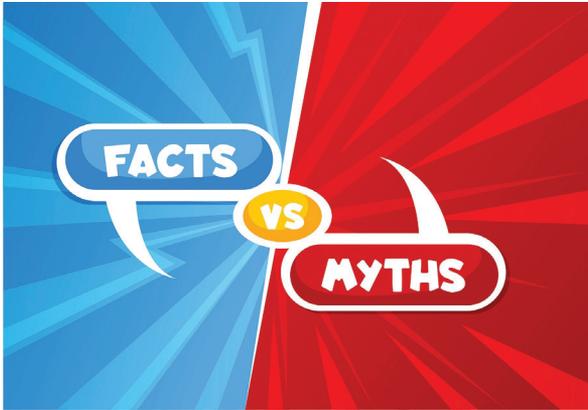
there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people with Saul and Jonathan, but Saul and Jonathan his son had them” (1 Samuel 13:19–22 ESV).

If we were to reword the narrator’s statement to make it factual (instead of dishonest and misleading), it would be “One of his recent finds confirms the biblical description of the Philistines as more advanced than the Israelites.”

THE CURE

Some of you may have the time to write letters of protest. I do not. I have tried that and found it to be a waste of time. The letters will be ignored. These people have an agenda, and they will promote it. But there are some things we can do. Make sure that you know your Bible well. The BBC narrator can put over that false statement only because people do not read the Bible for themselves.

Read alertly. Question the logic if you catch an author, or a publication, using verbal tricks that seem to indicate the facts are not on



their side. Do not be taken in by claims that this view or that idea is “progressive.” Those who claim that “you cannot put the clock back” are ignoring the fact that you can put a clock back. C. S. Lewis suggested that if the clock is giving the wrong time, putting it back

is progressive. Sticking with a bad idea just because it is labeled “progressive” is the most regressive thing one can do.

Train your children, grandchildren, and anyone else you can influence, to question claims (even claims made by supposedly respected sources).

LET ME END ON A MORE LIGHT-HEARTED NOTE.

Of course, one would expect the Major League Baseball website to give accurate information regarding baseball. But a few years ago, I noticed that the MLB site claimed that Willie Mays hit four home runs against the Brewers on April 30, 1961. WRONG!!!! There was no team known as the Brewers in 1961. That team did not exist until 1970. The Brewers played its first game against the Giants (Willie's team) in 1998 (by which time



Home of the Milwaukee Brewers

Willie Mays was long retired). In this case, someone just goofed. The writer saw that the game was played in Milwaukee and confused the Milwaukee Braves with the Milwaukee Brewers.

Some errors are just oversights. But, even in more respected publications, some may be

intentional. But whether intentional or not, errors on more serious subjects can be harmful. Be alert.

References:

1. Elizabeth Royte, “There’s Plenty of Juice on Block Island,” *Smithsonian*, April/May 2022, p. 45.
2. <https://www.bbc.com/reel/video/p0d8gprs/the-bible-s-buried-secrets-david-and-goliath>



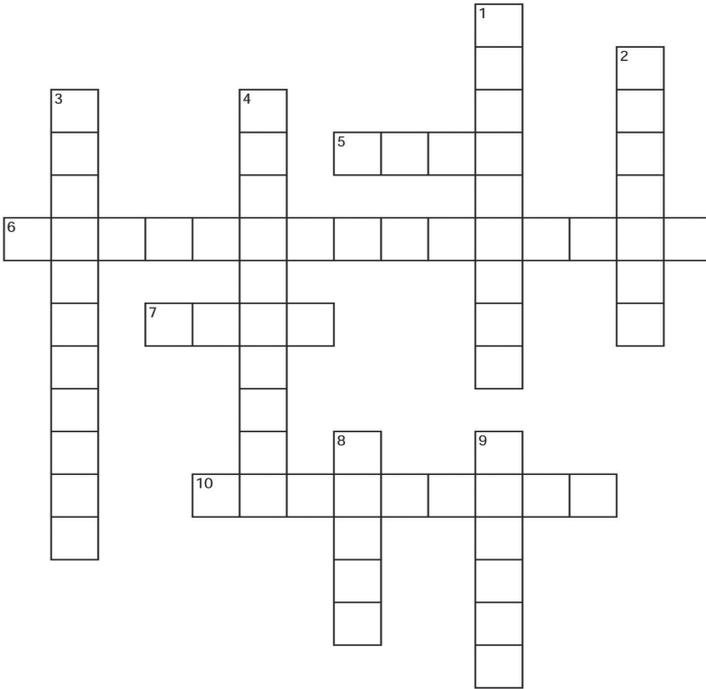
Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,”

— 1 Timothy 6:20b ESV

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Does God Exist? 1st Quarter 2023 Crossword

Solve this puzzle based on the articles on pages 3-17



Across

- [5]** God is outside of space and _____
- [6]** The 4 fundamental forces are strong and weak nuclear, gravitational, and _____
- [7]** Looking into the night sky is looking into the _____
- [10]** The Bible correctly says that the universe had a _____

(If you get stumped, read to the end of this issue for answers.)

Down

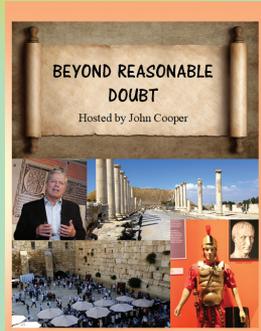
- [1]** Colossal explosion of a super-massive star
- [2]** Real creation is the production of matter from _____
- [3]** 1 Samuel says the _____ were more technically advanced than the Israelites
- [4]** Sticking with a bad idea just because it's labeled "progressive" is _____
- [8]** Travels at 186,000 miles per second
- [9]** Proverbs 8 personifies this characteristic of God

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SCIENTISTS AND GOD

Editor's note: Atheists attempt to suggest that scientists are intelligent people who have rejected faith and do not believe in God. The fact is that some of the most productive scientists who have ever lived were believers in God. We share some of their thoughts with you in this column.

LOUIS PASTEUR
1822 - 1895



*French chemist
and microbiologist
renowned for his
discoveries of the
principles of vaccination,
microbial fermentation,
and pasteurization*

"The idea of God is a form of the idea of the Infinite. As long as the mystery of the Infinite weighs on human thought, temples will be erected for the worship of the Infinite, ... and on the pavement of those temples men will be seen kneeling, prostrate, annihilated in the thought of the Infinite. At these supreme moments there is something in the depth of our souls which tells us that the world may be more than a mere continuation of phenomena proper to a mechanical equilibrium brought out of the chaos of the elements through the gradual action of the forces of matter."

Source: https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/692216.Louis_Pasteur?page=1

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Cynthia's Corner

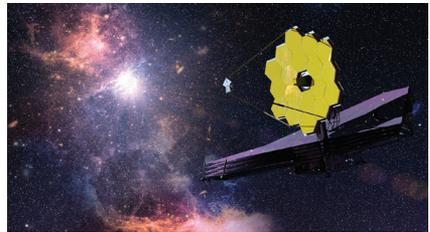
THE WEBB TELESCOPE AND GOD



I am not a scientist; far from it! But since marrying John, I have had the opportunity to learn firsthand how he makes science understandable and practical for all ages, intellects, and interests. His ministry about science and faith not only being compatible but mutually beneficial has helped people of all ages and backgrounds come to a better understanding of who and what God is.

So what does the Webb Telescope tell us about creation and God? John tells me the Webb Telescope can see back in time some 13 billion years because of how long it takes light to travel from the farthest stars to us. That is mind-blowing to me! But it is also evidence of God's existence. Why? Because the Webb Telescope can see the beginning of the cosmos, the beginning of time. That means the creation had a beginning. Science has proven what the Bible states in Genesis 1:1. We also know the beginning was caused, since any beginning must have a cause. Since life requires too many properties to happen by chance, that cause must have wisdom and design ability. It is easy to see the absurdity of chance being the cause. The universe, our planet, and life are all too complex to have happened by chance!

All a non-science person has to know is that this powerful telescope lets us see farther into space than ever before. We are witnessing the processes God has used to produce stars, galaxies, and other planets. We are coming to understand the cosmic forces involved in creation. These discoveries add more weight to the fact that there was a beginning to the cosmos. The Bible also tells us what the source of that beginning was. Science is about discovering what God has done to create "the heavens and the earth" and understanding how he did it.



Proverbs 8:22 tells us that God possessed wisdom in all he did in the creation. We do not need to understand God's processes to look through our telescopes and microscopes and be amazed by the very big and the very small. Truly, "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge" (Psalm 19:1–2).

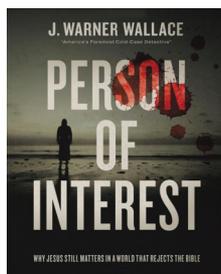


The books that are reviewed in the Book Reviews section are not available through us, but can be obtained from a local bookstore or through many online bookstores.

Person of Interest

by J. Warner Wallace, Zondervan Reflective, © 2021

\$19.95 paperback, 312 pages, ISBN-13: 978-0310111276



For over 20 years J. Warner Wallace has been a cold-case homicide detective solving crimes where there is no body or witnesses. He was an atheist for many of those years. This book takes a case where a man's wife was missing, and detectives found no body. Wallace applies the same techniques he used in that case to investigate the existence of Christ, bringing an incredible new tool to apologetics.

This book shows how an atheist trained in using evidence can conclude that Jesus Christ lived and was what the Bible says he was. Wallace does not accept biblical statements at face value but investigates whether the evidence supports what the Bible says. He addresses the usual atheist challenges to belief in Christ and examines the evidence.

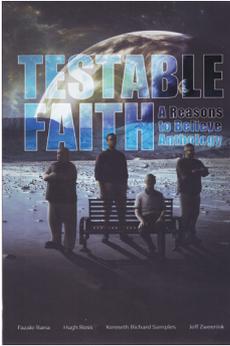
One of the great strengths of this book is that it has detailed and exhaustive lists comparing Christ to Old Testament personalities and the influence of Christ on world affairs. Wallace constructs a profile of Jesus with 64 characteristics. He uses the profiling techniques of a detective to show how Jesus fulfilled all the Old Testament prophecies, which would be impossible for an imposter to do.

Much of Wallace's work involves secular sources with no biblical connections. The number of books written about Jesus (17,239) compared to the 30 top human book subjects is astounding. Shakespeare (9,801), Lenin (4,498), Lincoln (4,978), Napoleon (4,007), and Marx (3,817) are the closest ones to Christ. Wallace also points out the influence of Jesus on art, music, education, and science. Eight pages list modern sciences positively influenced by Christ.

This book contains evidence that will challenge any skeptic. We recommend it highly.

Testable Faith

by Fazale Rana, Hugh Ross, Kenneth Samples, Jeff Zweerink,
Reasons to Believe publisher, © 2022,
\$21.95 paperback, 134 pages, ISBN-13: 978-1-956112-02-3



A scientific theory must be testable, and skeptics often argue that Christian faith is not testable. This book, written by four scholars, challenges that idea. Philosopher-theologian Kenneth Samples deals with the question, “Isn’t Faith Incompatible with Reason?” He asserts, “A well-reasoned faith stands a better chance of enduring disturbances and overcoming challenges.” In the chapter “If God Created Everything, Then Who Created God?” he explains why that question engages in a category error “like asking what the musical note D smells like.”

Astrophysicist Hugh Ross in “Creation of the Cosmos,” examines the Hebrew words in the Genesis creation account. The Bible uses the verb *bara* (create), only with God as the subject. Scientific evidence supports the assertion of Genesis 1:1 that the universe had a beginning outside of time and space. In “Why Such a Vast Universe?” he explains how science has shown why advanced life requires an enormous cosmos.

In “The Origin and Design of the Universe,” astrophysicist Jeff Zweerink explains why “the theistic worldview provides the best explanation of our scientific understanding of the universe.” In his essay “Would the Discovery of ET Disprove Christianity and Must ET Exist?” Zweerink explains that Earth has all the complex requirements for life, but finding life on other bodies in space would not disprove God’s existence.

Biochemist Fazale Rana gives “A Biological Case for the Creator.” He explains that biochemical systems are information systems and “the hallmark features of the cell’s chemical systems are identical to what we would expect” if they had been designed. He describes the failures of “chemical evolution.”

Finally, Fazale Rana and Kenneth Samples present “A Case for the Image of God.” They say the exceptional qualities of humans cannot be explained by naturalistic evolution. Our moral and spiritual components, mental capacity, and ability to relate to God, ourselves, and others all reflect God’s image.

This book explains why “the biblical creation model is more plausible and better fits the facts ... than other models.” It is testable and “can be assessed by empirical evidence.” We recommend this book to those who want to defend the faith against “scientific” arguments.

DANDY DESIGNS

Special Bees

Over 200 different species of orchid bees in the bee tribe known as *Euglossini* live in Central and South America. Orchid bees get their name from the male's behavior in collecting oil from orchid flowers. They store the oil in their special rear leg pockets and use it to attract females.



The specialized structure for gathering and storing chemical fragrances is unique to orchid bees. They land on a flower surface and spread lipid secretions to dissolve the compounds they want to collect. Then, they move their legs in a specific pattern to transfer and store the oily fragrant mixture in the leg pockets.

Orchid bees are a remarkable group of brightly colored insect pollinators in metallic green, gold, or blue. They have an elongated beak for extracting nectar from flowers and play an essential role in the tropical regions of the Americas.

Female orchid bees pollinate up to 74 flowering plant species belonging to 41 families. They also frequently fly long distances when foraging for nectar, so they cross-pollinate flowering plant species with low population densities. Male orchid bees pollinate certain orchid species exclusively, and the orchids could not survive without them.

Female orchid bees do not visit orchids because they do not produce nectar, but the males come to collect fragrances. Different orchids produce different scents that are attractive only to certain male orchid bees. That design assures that cross-pollination only happens within orchids of the same species. Also, some orchids are designed to match their pollen placement to the location of the pollen sacks of certain species of male pollen bees, insuring that the bees deliver the pollen to the correct orchid species.

Scientists are impressed by the intricate associations between orchid bees and the hundreds of plant species they pollinate. It is easy to say that this phenomenon is the result of evolution, requiring no intelligent design. However, once you consider the specificity of this system's design, you realize that chance is not a reasonable option.

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Optimized Teamwork

It may look like a bloated jellyfish floating on the surface of tropical marine waters, but it is a colony of siphonophores. Siphonophores are a bizarre animal group consisting of colonies of hundreds to thousands of genetically-identical individual creatures. The strangely-named Portuguese man o' war (*Physalia physalis*) is an amazing part of the ocean's extensive web of life.



A siphonophore begins as a fertilized egg and “buds” as it develops. The budding action forms distinct structures and organisms called polyps. These tiny organisms cannot survive independently, so they merge into a tentacled mass. The mass of polyps cooperate as one creature to travel and catch food. The species cannot properly function without every polyp as part of the system. Even though all of the polyps that

make up the Portuguese man o' war are clones, they come in unique shapes and serve different purposes. Some polyps form tentacles to trap prey, some digest food, and some facilitate reproduction. How each part of the animal knows its role is beyond our comprehension but is quite indicative of God's design.

Tiny fish comprise about 70 to 90 percent of the man o' war's diet. Surprisingly, small fish still choose to live among the siphonophore's tentacles. They are not immune to its stings and must swim nimbly between the stingers. The fish eat the leftovers of paralyzed prey that the animal avoids. In this instance, the fish are provided with shelter and food, while the Portuguese man o' war is fulfilling its ecosystem role. The resident fish speed up the decomposition process of the leftovers from the man o' war's diet.

Although it has an excellent defense with its venomous sting, the Portuguese man o' war still manages to have a long list of enemies. Loggerhead sea turtles and some ocean fish are thick-skinned enough to eat the man o' war. Blue dragon sea slugs can devour the animal and appropriate its toxins. They store the stinging cells as a predator deterrent. That means the Portuguese man o' war benefits blue dragon sea slugs long after death.

Humans often use teamwork to accomplish things, but this animal could not live without it. The complexity of this sea creature provides too much evidence for intelligent design and engineering for us to ignore.

News and Notes

STAY UP-TO-DATE ON NEWS AND NOTES: The stories in News and Notes are condensed from articles previously published on our website www.DoesGodExist.today. You can use the QR codes with each of these articles to see the original posts for more details and references. There are also many other interesting and informative articles on that website each day. We encourage you to follow us daily on “Does God Exist? Today.” On that website, you can also subscribe to our free weekly e-mail update. We call it “The Best of the Week from DOES GOD EXIST?” It contains links to the most popular of our posts on DGE? Today and our Facebook page ([Facebook.com/evidence4god](https://www.facebook.com/evidence4god)).

BIRD BRAINS AND EFFICIENT NEURONS: In the past, calling someone a “bird brain” was an insult because people believed birds were not very smart. A new study of bird brains by researchers in Germany shows that bird neurons are more energy efficient than those of mammals. For example, pigeon neurons use three times less energy than mammal neurons. Birds are designed to do many things requiring brain power, including flying and singing complex vocalizations.

The lead researcher of this study suggests that the brains of birds are organized so that neurons can more easily exchange signals. Organization does not come out of random chance mutations. It requires an organizer.

The brains of all animals are designed to allow them to live in a particular environment. Humans are unique because we can alter the environment rather than being altered by it. Also, our brains allow activities such as art, music, complex mathematics, worship, and the ability to be taught to think. Our spiritual nature sets us apart and allows our creative activity and our understanding that there is life beyond the grave.



ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION DURING PREGNANCY:

The most destructive recreational drug on the planet is alcohol. The consequences of alcohol consumption are more than tragic accidents. New research on alcohol consumption during pregnancy indicates that the damage of alcohol is more pervasive than anyone believed ten years ago.

Researchers at the University of Vienna have revealed their fetal development studies showing that even one glass of wine per week by the mother can significantly reduce her baby's brain development. The major damage was in the right superior temporal sulcus. That region of the brain involves social cognition and language development.

With careless environmental pollution and recreational drugs, having a healthy baby is more of a challenge than ever before. We cannot expect God to constantly undo what we have done to ourselves, individually and collectively.



LIVING IN FEAR IN TODAY'S WORLD: According to *The Boston Globe*, 80% of college students are living in fear. The article says that activists and administrators have created an “Us vs. Them” mentality. This applies to race, pronoun usage, and political views creating “intense, persistent, and excessive worry and fear about everyday situations.”

People today are living in fear because they have adopted “survival of the fittest” as their guide for dealing with one another. That means I can denigrate those I deem less fit and treat them as less valuable. All abuse of others is rooted in this belief system. Carried to extremes, it even applies to political differences. Recently a female member of Congress suggested killing a political opponent to advance her concept of democracy. No wonder people are living in fear.



The Christian belief system eliminates living in fear. John writing his excellent dissertation on love in 1 John 4:7–21 says it beautifully: “There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen” (verses 18–20). Living in an atheistic world is challenging, and fear reflects that. Therefore, Christian faith and morality are more important than ever, not just on an eternal level but even in our day-to-day lives.



HOW LONG DOES A MOTHER CARRY HER CHILD?

We all know that a mother carries her unborn child for nine months, but most people do not realize that a mother carries her child for decades. That is true even of a woman who chooses to abort her child. Scientists see microchimerism in which fetal cells and DNA are left behind in the mother's body.

The unborn baby is not part of the mother's body and has his or her own DNA. The baby is like a foreign object inside the mother. That is the reason for "morning sickness," as the mother's immune system tries to reject it. The often repeated slogan "my body, my choice" does not consider that the baby is not part of the woman's body and has no choice in the matter.

The unborn baby gets nourishment through the placenta as it connects to the mother's arteries. However, the baby can also shed some cells and DNA, which enter the mother's bloodstream as early as two weeks after conception.



Those fetal cells can find a home in various organs of the mother, including her heart and brain. Since those cells are from a different person, the result is microchimerism. The woman has part of another person remaining inside her body.

Scientists have found that a mother carries her child for decades as the baby's cells remain in her. If she has more than one child, she can retain cells from each of them in her body. Just as science has found that stem cells can be helpful in medical treatments because they can form into different kinds of cells, the potent cells from the baby can become pancreas, heart, liver, or brain cells in the mother. Or they can become skin cells. Scientists have found cells from the baby in the scar tissue after a caesarian birth, indicating that the baby's cells are helping the mother to heal.

Not only do fetal cells continue in the mother after normal births, but also they are left behind when there is a miscarriage or medical abortion. Surprisingly, studies indicate that more cells are left in the mother after an induced abortion than in a natural miscarriage.

This means that a mother carries her child for decades. As mothers carry with them a part of their children, there is good reason for the bonding between mother and child. Even when a woman decides to end her baby's life before birth, she still carries some of that child with her. Being a mother is a precious blessing, and abortion is not something to be taken lightly.

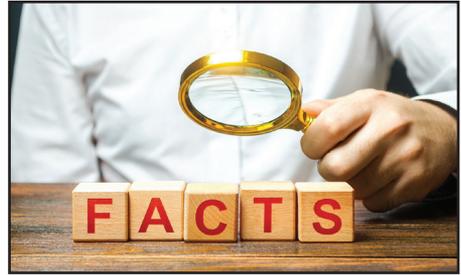


JESUS CHRIST CHALLENGES PEOPLE TO THINK:

People today often refuse to use evidence to make decisions on everything from personal relationships to politics. One of the unique things we find in the Bible is that Jesus Christ challenges people to think. In the book of Matthew, Jesus uses the phrase “What do you think” five times (17:25; 18:12; 21:28; 22:17; 22:42). Jesus never called his listeners to blind acceptance or thoughtless adherence to authority. In biblical Christianity, faith is not an emotionally-based response.

Jesus Christ challenges people to think, but as long as people refuse to use their minds and examine the evidence, skepticism and chaos will result.

Throughout the Bible, we find encouragement to look at the evidence and know that God is real and that his Word should guide our lives. Read Psalm 19:1; Psalm 53; Psalm 139:14; Proverbs 8; Matthew 6:26-30; Acts 17:22-31; and Romans 1:18–20. God rewards those who seek to understand and never calls us to blind acceptance.



THE CONCEPT OF INFINITY AND GOD: The biblical description of God as omnipresent, omnipotent, and eternal involves concepts that skeptics refuse to accept. The foundation of the atheist worldview rejects an infinite eternity in heaven. Likewise, mathematicians rejected the concept of infinity for many years until the end of the nineteenth century. However, infinity exists, and mathematics does not make sense without it.

Euclid’s geometry deliberately excluded the idea of anything infinitely small or infinitely large. The Greeks believed they could describe the entire universe with positive rational numbers. However, the value of π requires an irrational number with infinite decimal representation. The value of π is an irrational number because even at 100 places, it does not end. The digits after the decimal point are infinite.

Legend says that Hippasus, the first to prove that irrational numbers exist, was executed when he published his proof. The scholarly group known as the Pythagorean brotherhood was vocal about naturalism, denying the existence of the infinite. Eventually, it became evident that their view of the cosmos was impossible. And yet here in the twenty-first century, we find that denial of the concept of infinity is still the thinking of those who reject the biblical concept of God.

You cannot understand your life as having an infinite purpose if you reject the concept of infinity. The concept of the infinite is contained in the statement of Jesus in Matthew 20:16, “So the last will be first, and the first last,” and Matthew 16:25, “For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells us that God has set eternity in the hearts of humanity. The biblical concept of eternity makes sense, and the history of mathematics strongly supports it.



PLANT SURVIVAL AND HOW IT WORKS: Have you ever thought about the fact that everything in the natural world directly or indirectly eats plants? Not just animal life but bacteria, viruses, and pathogens also attack plants. Plant survival depends on an immune system.

Animals are protected by specialized immune cells that travel through the bloodstream to a place of infection. A plant does not have a bloodstream, so each plant cell synthesizes proteins to attack an infection while suppressing the normal functions of photosynthesis and growth.



A plant must perform a complex balancing act. The infection will destroy the plant if it does not produce enough defense proteins. If the plant produces too much defense protein, its growth will be stunted. Plant biologists are still trying to understand how plants can resist infection while still growing and carrying on their normal functions. That ability is built into the design of the plant’s DNA. When you look at a plant, you might think it is a simple thing whose functions we understand. However, every plant is a showcase for the wisdom and design of God.



NANOFIBRILS OF SPIDER SILK: Would you like to see a material that is stronger than steel and can stretch ten times more than Kevlar? If so, look at a spider web and marvel at the design of the microscopic nanofibrils of spider silk.

Researchers have used atomic force microscopy and nuclear magnetic resonance to examine the molecular structure of spider silk as never before. The nanofibrils of spider silk are fibers with diameters in the nanometer range, 10,000 times smaller than a human hair. Spiders generate them using proteins. At a molecular level, scientists

saw six distinct protein substructures making up the nanofibrils of spider silk, giving it incredible strength and resilience. They hope their research will lead to the development of high-performance synthetic fibers.



Studying God’s design in nature has led to an incredible number of things that make our lives more comfortable and enable us to solve some of the problems we face. Romans 1:20 tells us we can know there is a God through the things he has made. One of those things is the nanofibrils of spider silk.



LEGALIZING ASSISTED SUICIDE: The Netherlands has been a trailblazer in legalizing abortion, same-sex marriage, and euthanasia. For many years, that country has had a euthanasia law that allows doctors to actively kill a patient with an injection of drugs. Last year, a group called the Cooperative Last Will filed a suit to force the Dutch government into legalizing assisted dying. This would provide patients with a lethal substance they take themselves. On December 14, 2022, the Hague District Court rejected the group’s arguments affirming Netherlands’ ban on assisted suicide. The Cooperative Last Will was making plans to appeal the decision.

From a purely secular standpoint, there are obvious problems with this issue. There are times in life when you hit rock bottom, and dying can look pretty good. However, people thinking of taking their own lives are not considering what their death does to those who love them and their obligations to society.

The Christian view of life and the physical body is explained in 1 Corinthians 3:16–17. It tells us that the body is the temple of the Spirit and expresses God’s displeasure with anyone destroying it. Therefore, legalizing assisted suicide to allow distressed individuals to end their lives is filled with problems.



**ANSWERS TO
CROSSWORD PUZZLE ON
PAGE 18**

DOWN: 1-Supernova; 2-Nothing;
3-Philistines; 4-Regressive; 8-Light;
9-Wisdom

ACROSS: 5-Time;
6-Electromagnetic; 7-Past;
10-Beginning

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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, CDs, courses, books, teaching materials, materials for the blind, 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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