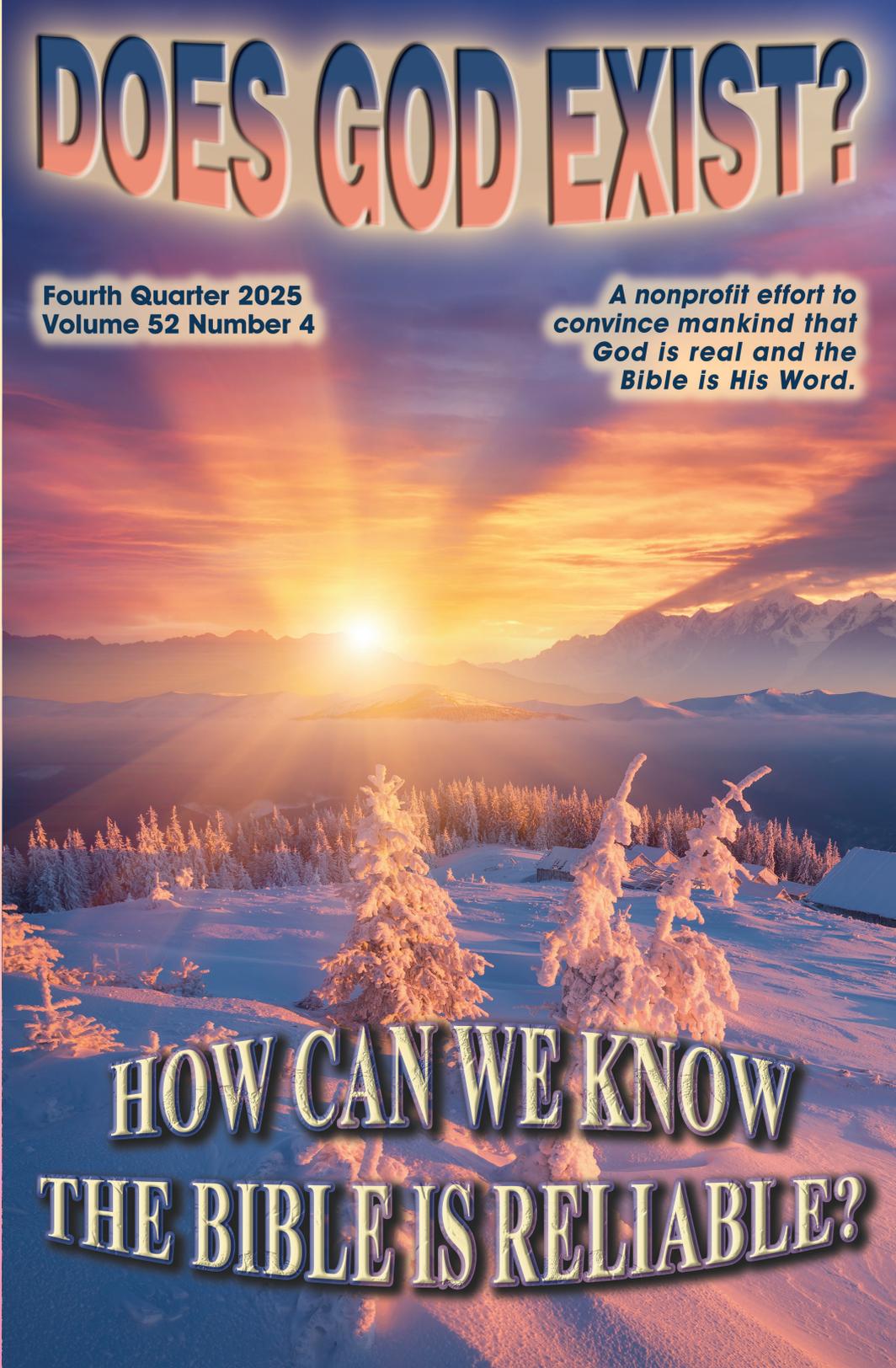


DOES GOD EXIST?

**Fourth Quarter 2025
Volume 52 Number 4**

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



**HOW CAN WE KNOW
THE BIBLE IS RELIABLE?**

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In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

Genesis 1:1-2 NIV

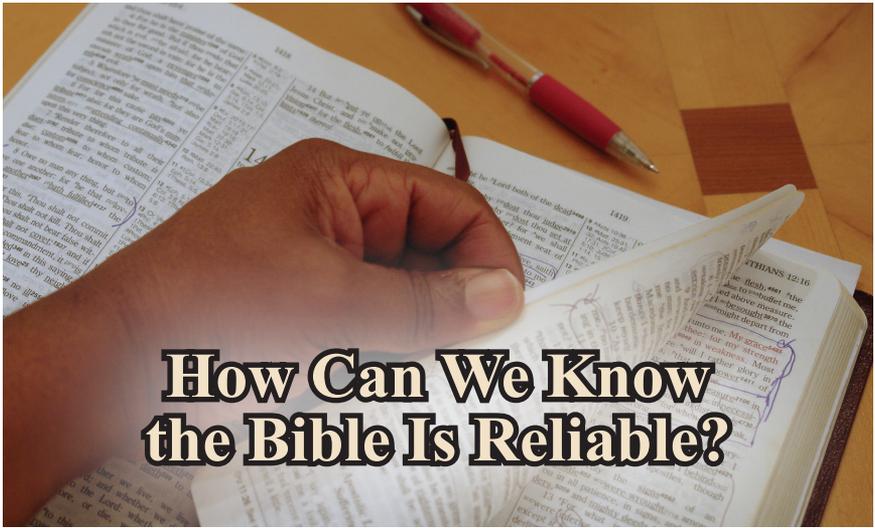
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Correspondence should be addressed to John Clayton
1555 Echo Valley Dr., Niles, MI 49120-8738
e-mail: jncdge@aol.com
Home phone: 269-687-9426

Does God Exist? websites: <http://www.doesgodexist.org>;
dandydesigns.org; doesgodexist.today; doesgodexist.tv;
grandpajohn.club; scienceterrific.com; whypain.org

Send subscription requests, orders, or address changes to:
Does God Exist?, PO Box 2704, South Bend, IN 46680-2704
Phone: 574-514-1400 or by e-mail: marcusen@michiana.org

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How Can We Know the Bible Is Reliable?

This ministry is dedicated to providing evidence. Our first topic is the existence of God. We see the creation of time, space, and matter/energy from a dimension beyond the three-dimensional world in which we live, as demonstrated in cosmology, quantum mechanics, and nuclear physics. If we can agree that there is a being we call “God” who created all we see in the physical world, that raises more questions. “Who or what is the nature of God, and how does he communicate with us?” The Christian answer is “through the Bible.” The question then becomes, “How do we know that the Bible is not just a collection of ancient fairy tales full of mistakes and myths?”

It is essential to emphasize that we are not talking about any English translation of the Bible. The King James translators made several mistakes, and that is true of newer translations such as the NIV. Reformers such as Martin Luther (Lutheran), John and Charles Wesley (Methodist), John Calvin (Presbyterian), and many other denominational leaders have also made errors in their understanding. When we ask whether the Bible is reliable, we are referring to the original writings in Hebrew and Greek, not what any human denomination teaches. Two lines of evidence support the reliability of the Bible.

SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

The first verse of Genesis in Hebrew is, “*reshith Elohim bara shamayim erets.*” Those words are translated, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” These words tell us two things:

1. There was a beginning to time, space, and matter, as indicated by *reshith*.
2. That beginning was caused by an intelligence in a dimension outside the physical realm, as indicated by the Hebrew word *bara*.

This word is used only twice in the first chapter of Genesis. In verse 1, it refers to the creation of the physical cosmos, and in verse 27, it refers to the creation of the male and female soul—spiritual beings in the image of God. The rest of the Genesis account uses the Hebrew word *asah*, which refers to a natural process.

According to the biblical account, by the end of the first verse of



Genesis, there was a functional Earth on which humans could exist. It is essential to note that Genesis 1:1 does not specify a date or duration. How long did God take to create the Earth suitable for humans? What method did God use to create the energy sources humans rely on?

The Bible does not provide the length of time covered by Genesis 1:1 nor the method God used to produce oil and coal. Various denominations claim that the Hebrew word *yom*, translated as “day” in Genesis 1, can only mean a 24-hour day, but that is not true. In



Deuteronomy 10:10, *yom* is translated as “time” and used for an event that is clearly not a 24-hour day.



The Bible states that plants were the first living things on Earth. The sequence of plant types given is grass (*deshe*), herb (*eseb*), and fruit tree (*ets*) producing fruit (*peri*) with seed (*zera*) in itself. Studies of Earth's fossil record confirm this sequence. Earth's earliest forms of life were stromatolites—fossilized algae consistent with the meaning of “*deshe*.” The second form of plant life in

the fossil record is gymnosperms, fitting the biblical word *eseb*, meaning “naked seed.” Angiosperms are the most recent plant forms seen in the fossil record. The Hebrew word *ets* refers to a tree, wood, or stick—an angiosperm.

Similar agreement appears with the fossil evidence of animal life sequences. The order of animal life is important, not the timing. (For



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more on this, see *God's Revelation in His Rocks and His Word* on the doesgodexist.org website or available in a booklet from the **Does God Exist?** ministry: see page 19).

HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

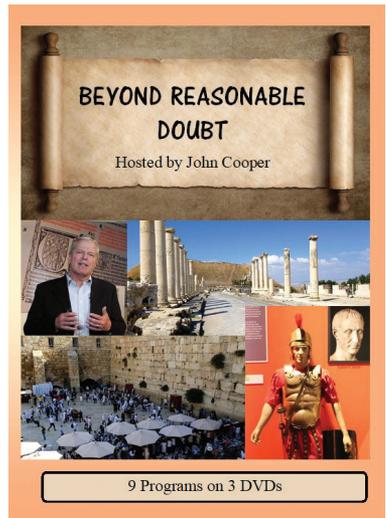
It is impossible to separate historical evidence from archaeological evidence because archaeology verifies the Bible's historical record. In the academic world, there are two main views on archaeological evidence: minimalists and maximalists. Minimalists are skeptics who dismiss religion and refuse to admit any support for the biblical record. Maximalists are believers who interpret every piece of evidence as supporting the biblical record.



This ministry does not take sides in that debate. We offer a

program of archaeological evidence, available through both our video series *Beyond Reasonable Doubt* and our 13-lesson correspondence course of the same name. They present archaeological evidence that the biblical record, while not complete, is accurate in everything it describes. Honest, reasonable people will see that the evidence showing strong archaeological support for the biblical record is compelling.

Do we have absolute proof that the Bible is free of errors? The answer is “no,” but you cannot absolutely prove that you exist either. Maybe you are just a hologram or a product of astral projection! But that is not how any of us live. The weight of the evidence is so substantial that we call our historical and archaeological material *Beyond Reasonable Doubt*.



—John N. Clayton

See page 18 for our latest crossword puzzle. Also on that page is a correction for the crossword puzzle from our 3rd Quarter 2025 issue.



God's Purpose and Mine

One of the major challenges we all face in life is understanding why God allows bad things to happen. Atheists often point out that faith in God does not prevent Christians from experiencing life's problems. Christians still get cancer, COVID, diabetes, and dementia. They face financial hardships, and their children can be born with genetic diseases, autism, or mental challenges. Natural disasters and accidents bring pain and suffering to Christians as well. If there is a God, why does he let us go through these struggles, even if we were dedicated and morally upright? Why do bad things happen to good people?



A great man once said, "If I can understand the mind of God, then God isn't God." I do not have answers for everything I have faced. Even outstanding Christian men and women I know have experienced hardships, and I do not understand why. The heroes of the Bible also wrestled with this question. The book of Job spans 42 chapters on this very topic without providing a clear answer. For 37 chapters, Job and his friends debate why Job lost everything, but they reach no conclusion. In the last five chapters, God intervenes and only convinces Job that he cannot fully grasp the reasons behind God's actions. Still, God does not explain why he permits bad things to happen to good people.

The core issue that puzzles all of us when facing life's problems is the question of why we exist. Those who deny God's existence cannot provide a purpose for their lives. The Bible makes it clear that a spiritual battle is taking place between good and evil. This is not a physical, material war, but one fought in higher dimensions. Ephesians 3:9–11 explains that God has had a purpose from the beginning, involving “principalities and powers in heavenly places.” Ephesians 6:12 states, “We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but

against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Second Peter 2:4 and Jude 6 tell us that some spiritual beings rejected God and chose evil. That is why the conflict between good and evil includes beings like us. Like Job, we are involved in this battle to demonstrate that



good is superior to evil.

Atheists like Richard Dawkins argue that evil does not actually exist. In his book *River Out of Eden*, Dawkins claims, “The universe that we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, and no good, nothing but blind, pitiless indifference.” Can rational human beings look at the terrible things happening in the world and honestly say that evil is not real?

Could God intervene and simply eliminate evil? Yes, but what would that prove? It would show that God is a great destroyer, but the question of evil would still remain. That is why we are told that “God is love” (1 John 4:16), and we are called to trust in God rather than in physical things. We can learn from Paul's experience with what he calls his “thorn in the flesh.” In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul begins by saying that, in his spiritual state, he was taken out of his body to a “third heaven ... and a paradise” that humans cannot describe

(verses 2–4). Paul then encounters a “messenger of Satan” to buffet him (strike him in the face in the original language). Paul says he asked God three times to remove the pain of that messenger, and his request was denied.



On a personal level, I have faced repeated “hits in the face” by Satan. I prayed that my first child would be healthy and talented, yet Timothy was born blind and with physical and mental challenges. My wife of 49 years was struck down by diabetes and its complications, passing away despite my prayers for her healing. My prayers for the church to accept my ministry and support my efforts to do what I believed God wanted were never answered positively. Satan’s workers had victory after victory.

**Timothy—
My Son and My Teacher**



My purpose in what I was doing seemed to be defeated, but God’s purpose continued to prosper. Every time a door was closed, a window of opportunity was opened. When COVID shut down public lectures, the Web became an open window. Now we reach far more people than we ever could through lectures.

I have seen this in many ways and with many people. My dear friend Glynn Langston was born blind, but through him, hundreds of blind people have become Christians and found success in life. My co-worker Karl Marcussen tried to figure out what he thought he should do to preach and teach in public settings, even doing mission work in Italy. Only when he gave up on that goal and was working as a maintenance man in a Holiday Inn did he become part of this ministry over 40 years ago. With the talents God gave him, he has made a huge impact on this ministry. Roland Earnst was running a struggling video production and duplication business when he was led to become a major part of this ministry. Now, he uses his technical gift and academic knowledge to teach apologetic material to people worldwide.

Have we faced physical problems? Yes. We all have had tough times to deal with in life, but because we have experienced those problems, we can reach out to others struggling with similar issues. We are not living a carefree life without problems. We see God’s purpose and have come to understand that our purpose requires us to endure hardship, do the work of a missionary, and fully accomplish our ministry (2 Timothy 4:5). I take no pleasure in the negative experiences I have endured, but having a purpose for living and the ability to keep going for nearly 60 years push me forward, fulfilling the reason why I exist. In a small way, I share the vision of all those who served God in the past.

—JNC



Only Humans Can Sing

The claim that animals sing just like humans is based on misinformation. Only humans can produce music, a fact supported by both definition and experience. A dictionary definition of music is: “The art of arranging sounds in time that expresses ideas and emotions to produce a continuous, unified, and evocative composition through melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre.” The dictionary also provides the following definition of singing: “The use of the human voice to provide a succession of notes to produce a desired effect.” Only humans can sing.

Music has a proven effect on humans. My son Timothy was born with multiple handicaps. He was blind, severely mentally challenged, and had cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, and schizophrenia. What Tim did not have was a hearing problem. If we played a record of one of his favorite artists, he would smile and sit quietly through the entire record.

The Bible records the effect of music on humans. King Saul was mentally disturbed. The one thing that gave him peace was David and his harp (1 Samuel 16:14–16). The Old Testament includes many references to the role of music. In Daniel



3:5–15, we read that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, used music to call people to worship his golden image. In Ecclesiastes 2:8, we read that Solomon had singers serving him. In Nehemiah 12:27–28, we see that singers and players celebrated the dedication of the restored Jerusalem wall. The Psalms are songs, and many of them refer to making music.

Music has played a significant role in Christianity. Ephesians 5:19 tells Christians to “Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.” A psalm is a current expression of needs. A hymn is a song of praise to God. Spiritual songs are songs that instruct or motivate.



Can animals do these things? The answer is no. Animals make sounds and “songs” to survive. Dogs bark, cats meow, and birds



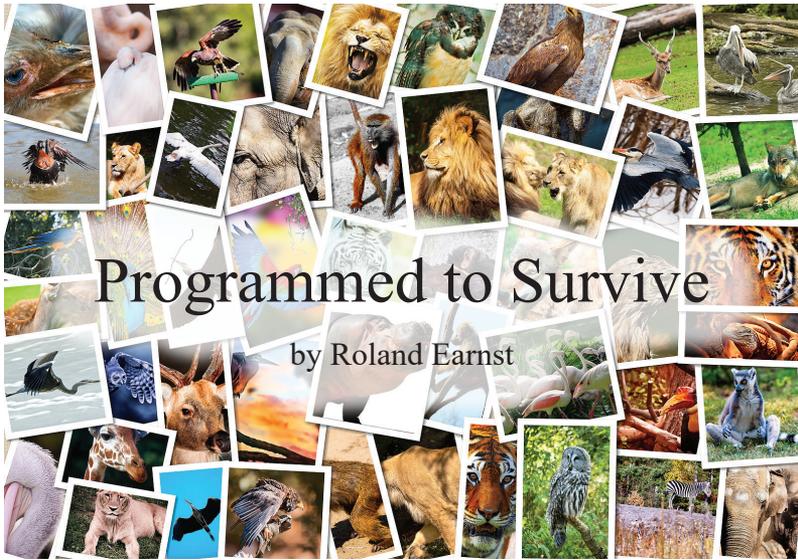
“sing” for survival reasons. Whales in the broad expanse of the ocean contact one another by emitting low frequencies that travel long distances. A cardinal sits outside our window and “sings.” But what is he actually doing? He is saying to all other cardinals, “Stay out of my territory and away from

my mate or else.” He is not creating music.

Animal communication is a demonstration of God’s design and wisdom, but only humans can sing as a product of our spiritual nature in God’s image. Humans need to sing and make music (see Colossians 3:16 and Hebrews 2:12). God created us to enjoy the gift of music and use it to honor him.



—JNC

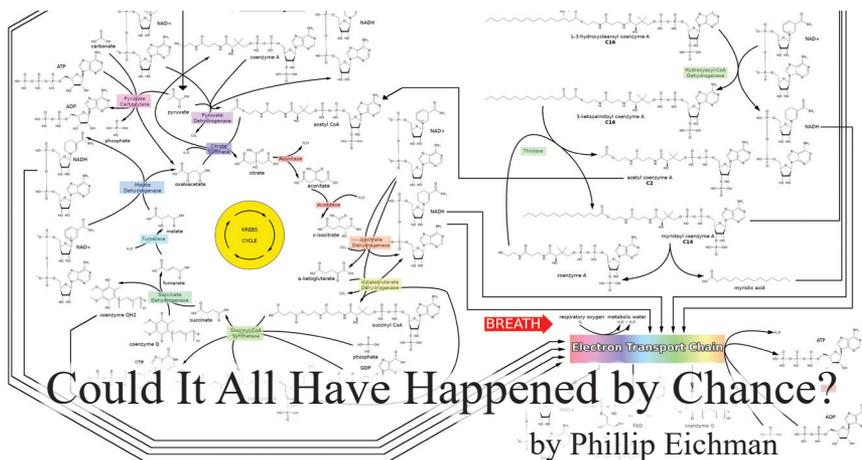


Every living organism is programmed to survive. Let me explain what I mean. We often describe how God designed creatures with defense mechanisms necessary to avoid, evade, or defend against predators. However, they are equipped with more than just defense mechanisms. In computer terms, a self-preservation subroutine is embedded in their DNA. Even plants, which have no brain or desires, possess this self-preservation trait. I am sure you have seen this when you try to remove weeds from your lawn or garden.

Living things are programmed by their Creator to survive. In 1969, I was a college student in Cincinnati when the science fiction movie *2001: A Space Odyssey* opened in theaters. I still do not fully understand the movie's message, but HAL, a computer with a self-preservation subroutine, fascinated me.

HAL 9000 was programmed to survive and refused to let the human astronaut disable it. That was the scary part of the movie for me. The idea of an evil computer or robot with artificial intelligence and a self-preservation subroutine threatening humans has become a common theme in science fiction thrillers. Those human inventions could turn into a modern Frankenstein's monster. Many people fear that AI (artificial intelligence) could lead to such terrifying scenarios.

You can find some comfort in the fact that human programmers have been unable to design a computer program with a true self-preservation subroutine. Look around you, and you will see countless living things that are programmed to survive. God has embedded survival software into every living organism, proving that he is far more intelligent than any human programmer. God's wisdom and creative genius have programmed all life to survive for a purpose.



When I was a young biology student, there was a chart in one of the labs with the impressive title of “Intermediary Metabolism.” Basically, this chart shows all the chemical processes that occur in cells. I remember wondering if I would ever understand even a small part of these complex pathways and cycles. A year of organic chemistry helped me recognize some molecular structures, and later biochemistry courses in graduate school filled in more details. However, advances in molecular and cellular biology have made our understanding of these processes even more complicated than they were when I first looked at the chart fifty years ago.

If you have never seen a chart like this, just do a Google search for “intermediary metabolism,” and you will find various versions. If looking at some of these makes you feel overwhelmed, you are not alone. Even after years of studying and teaching biology, I must admit that I still only understand a small part of these processes.

Where did all of these complex processes come from? Did it all just happen by random chance? Did the molecules arrange themselves with the proper structure, shape, and necessary functional groups attached? Did all the precursors, enzymes, coenzymes, and cofactors needed for these reactions just happen to exist and be present at the right place and time? Did the cellular structures required to support these chemical processes also just happen to assemble themselves? Is everything we know about life and living things just one big accident?

Some believe that all of this developed by chance, but personally, I think it would take a much greater faith to believe in a series of random events than in a Supreme Being who planned and created these processes. The first words of the Bible tell us that it was God who created the universe. This includes not only the physical world we live in but also the living world and the natural laws and processes that sustain it.



What Makes Humans So Special?

by Roland Earnst

Many animal rights advocates argue that we should treat animals the same as humans. To do otherwise is what they call “speciesism,” and they consider it perhaps even worse than racism. Why should humans be favored over other species? What makes humans so special?

An article in *Scientific American* caught my attention. It was written by Kate Wong and titled “Humans Are Not So Special After All.” The article points out that since 1960, when Jane Goodall observed a chimpanzee using grass and twigs as tools to coax termites from their nests, people have discovered that animals can do things previously thought only humans could do. Wong suggests that humans are not unique and that even plants can think and count.

Observations have shown that animals can perform amazing feats, but is it not possible that they do these things because they were programmed for survival by their Designer? It seems to me that the examples Wong provides fall short of proving her point. What makes humans so special involves more than the intelligent actions animals perform.

One example Wong uses is that brown capuchin monkeys decline a treat when they see another receiving a better one. She claims this shows a “sense of fairness,” but could it not also indicate a sense of greed? Would it not be a greater indicator of a sense of fairness if the monkey refused a better treat when he saw another one receive a lesser treat?



How about if the monkey decided to share with another monkey that received less? Would that not better indicate a sense of fairness?

Wong also states that apes, monkeys, and elephants “mourn the loss of bonded individuals.” However, that makes sense because



those species are programmed with a group/herd mentality that depends on each other for survival. She also mentions how mice and rats are affected by the pain or suffering of a fellow species member; but rather than compassion, could that not be fear for their own safety?

Wong also mentions an orca that made worldwide headlines for carrying her dead calf for 17 days while swimming 1,000 miles. To me, that appears to be a programmed survival instinct that failed to recognize there was no hope for the calf’s survival. The Eurasian magpie that “recognized itself” in a mirror reminds me of a turkey rooster that “recognized” his reflection in my basement window and kept tapping on the glass to challenge this supposed “competitor” for his territory.

For an example of plant “consciousness,” Wong presents the Venus flytrap and the fact that it “remembers” being touched. After two touches, it closes to trap the insect. After five touches, it secretes enzymes to digest the prey. But this does not demonstrate “thinking.” It is very simple to program a counting subroutine that causes a device to perform an action after two, five, or any number of signals from an outside source. That is programming, not thinking. The same applies to plants that produce chemicals summoning predators for defense when an animal chews on them. Again, it seems to be a survival program built into the plant.



Wong mentions anthropomorphism as “ascribing human thoughts, feelings, and motivations to animals.” While that is something people often do—particularly with dogs—I think Wong herself may be guilty of it.

The bottom line is that none of the cited examples can compare to what makes humans so special. Humans alone are created in the image of God. We have minds unlike the brain functions of any animal. When we see animals do amazing things, we should give credit to the Creator who gave them those survival abilities.

Follow us daily on “Does God Exist? Today.”



Falling Apart as We Age

by Dr. Frank Black, M.D.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Frank Black became acquainted with our work when he and his family joined us on one of our float trips down the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon. At the time, he was working at a hospital, and later he went to Tanzania to serve as a mission doctor. The following article was originally written for a class on aging.

Yes, it's true; we do fall apart as we age. But personally, I feel completely humbled and a bit audacious when I admit to the truth of my title. The reason is that I was remarkably physically blessed for the first 80 years of my life — no significant illnesses, remaining vigorous, able to do almost anything I wanted. I've never taken these blessings for granted. Having worked as an ER doctor for over 35 years and spending another 5 years in a "bush hospital" in Tanzania, I've seen every kind of trauma and disease. And so many! This or that issue happens to all of us at some point — due to genetics, circumstances, location, lifestyle, etc. I always knew that eventually "it" (my physical limitations) would happen to me — or a series or combination of "its." And they have. They weren't unexpected. I won't bore you with my list of problems, but they started in my 80th year. Why not? I have no complaints or regrets.

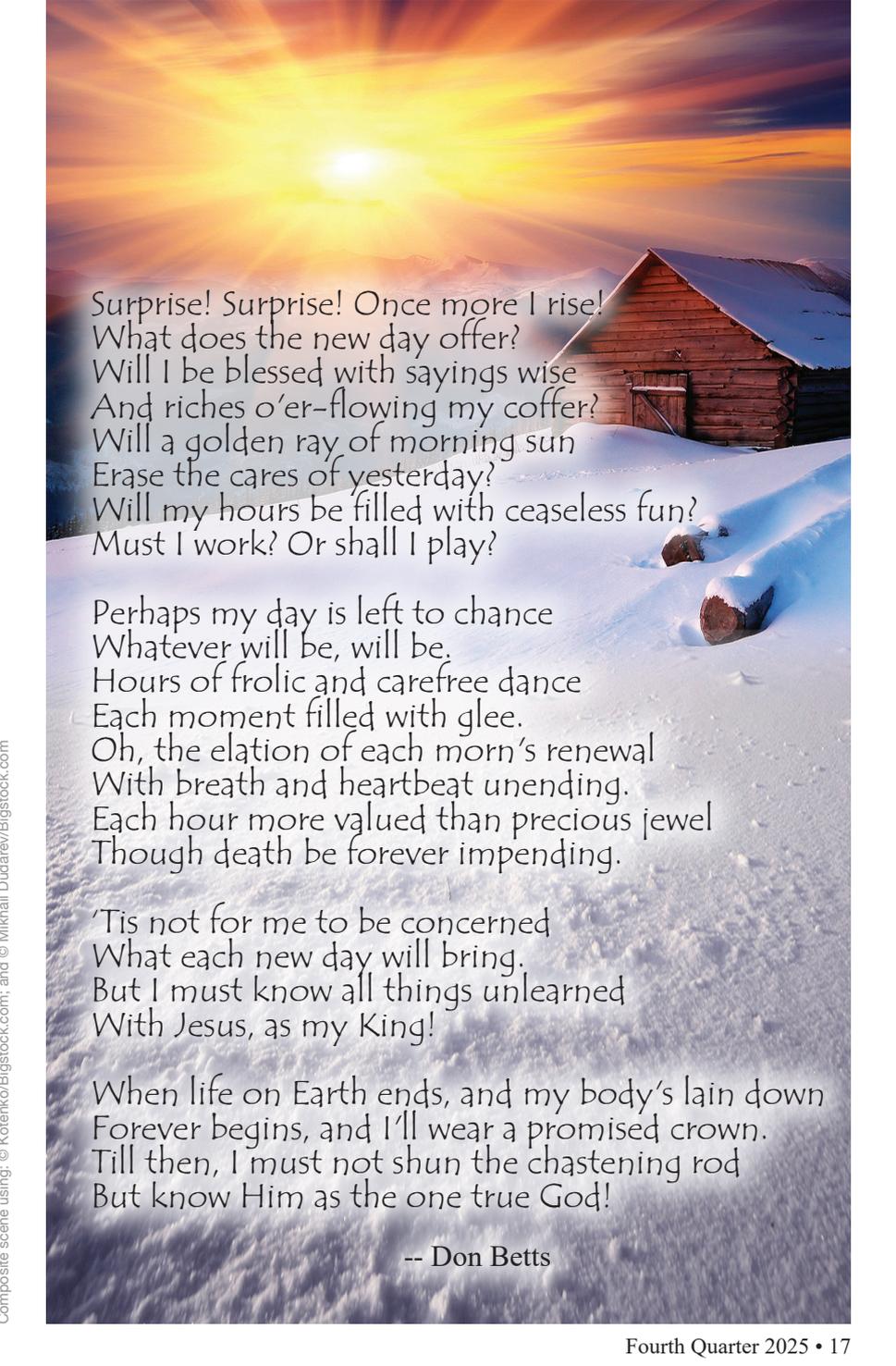
All of us "older folks" have a list of health issues — not to mention our medications, various therapies, limitations, etc. Most of us learn to adapt, compensate, tolerate, and finally accept our situation. I believe God gives us the ability to compensate — a blessing! We don't want to start kicking and screaming or complaining excessively. Our friends often seem to gradually fade away. After all, do you really want to hear others' problems all the time? God has designed our organ systems

with built-in margins for safety and longevity. But as we age, our functions naturally decline (that's normal). Whatever system or ability you consider, it decreases over time. As much as we wish it weren't so, there are no exceptions. I'm not trying to be depressing—just realistic. With the right Christian attitude, we can accept this. Many of us are approaching or past “three score and ten.” I hope you're not thinking, “Why me?” I've heard that so many times. The answer: it just happens; things happen. Or you can say, “Why not?” We're all different, and different things happen at different times. Sometimes we're caught completely by surprise (like sudden illness or trauma), or it might be the worsening of a long-term problem. Some issues can be prevented, treated, and sometimes reversed, but not always. Let's prayerfully do our best when these problems inevitably occur.

Can we do anything to stop our decline? In some areas, yes; in others, no. Sometimes it's due to heredity or just being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Tragic events are rare and often unavoidable, but they do happen. More realistically, we can take measures to extend our lives—get vaccinated, have regular medical screenings and care, stay physically and mentally active, maintain a healthy weight, avoid risky situations, stay aware and cautious, practice moderation in everything, and so on. Most of us in the USA understand these things, but how many actually follow them? Sometimes people naively just go along thinking: “someday” or “it won't be me,” with other excuses. But remember, our time will come. Be prepared.

Let's always thank God for our blessings—for our years and memories. He will give us support, comfort, and strength for whatever lies ahead. Let's be Christian examples for others, help those in need, use our abilities for as long as possible, and aim to finish well. This is my prayer for you and me.





Surprise! Surprise! Once more I rise!
What does the new day offer?
Will I be blessed with sayings wise
And riches o'er-flowing my coffer?
Will a golden ray of morning sun
Erase the cares of yesterday?
Will my hours be filled with ceaseless fun?
Must I work? Or shall I play?

Perhaps my day is left to chance
Whatever will be, will be,
Hours of frolic and carefree dance
Each moment filled with glee.
Oh, the elation of each morn's renewal
With breath and heartbeat unending.
Each hour more valued than precious jewel
Though death be forever impending.

'Tis not for me to be concerned
What each new day will bring.
But I must know all things unlearned
With Jesus, as my King!

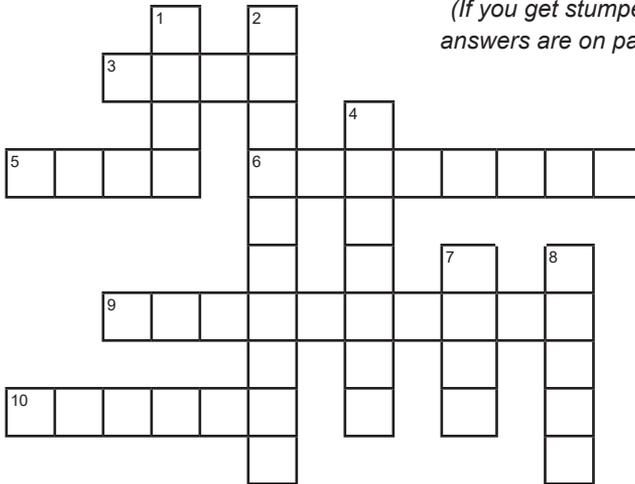
When life on Earth ends, and my body's lain down
Forever begins, and I'll wear a promised crown.
Till then, I must not shun the chastening rod
But know Him as the one true God!

-- Don Betts

Does God Exist?

4th Quarter 2025 Crossword

Solve this puzzle based on the articles on pages 3–17.



(If you get stumped, the answers are on page 31.)

Across

- [3] The Hebrew word for “create” used twice in Genesis chapter 1.
- [5] We are in a spiritual battle to show that good is superior to _____.
- [6] Venus fly traps use a _____ subroutine to capture insects.
- [9] _____ charts show the chemical processes in cells.
- [10] Metabolism could not have happened by _____.

Down

- [1] Dr. Black says we _____ apart as we get older.
- [2] Dr. Black says to get _____ and have regular medical screenings.
- [4] Living things are programmed to survive for a _____.
- [7] Only humans can _____.
- [8] Humans are special because they are created in the _____ of God.

CORRECTIONS: I, Karl (one of our editors), did it again. There are several mistakes in our print copy of our third quarter crossword puzzle and answers. The DOWN clues have a missing number: number 5 should be number 3, and number 7 should be number 5, then there should be inserted a clue for number 7: “Life isn’t _____ but God is.” In the answers for the crossword puzzle: DOWN 8-mind should be DOWN 9. See a corrected version at: <https://www.doesgodexist.org/Journals-2025/3rdQtr25/Crossword-3rdQtr25.html>

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Much of the material in this publication
appeared earlier on that website.



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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.

Robert Boyle
(1627-1691)

Anglo-Irish chemist, physicist, and inventor
One of the first modern chemists
A pioneer of the modern scientific method
He is best known for Boyle's Law
describing the relationship between
gas pressure and volume.



In his last will and testament, Robert Boyle “addressed his fellow members of the Royal Society of London, wishing them all success in ‘their laudable attempts, to discover the true Nature of the Works of God’ and ‘praying that they and all other Searchers into Physical Truths’ many thereby add ‘to the Glory of the Great Author of Nature...’”

Reference: *For the Glory of God: How Monotheism Led to Reformations, Science, Witch-Hunts, and the End of Slavery*, © 2003 by Princeton University Press, page 158

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of Ancient History at
York University, York, Neb.



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

Is the Bible Reliable?



I am not an apologist like my husband, John, so I can only answer that question from the perspective of a Bible student. That question is the same as asking if the Bible is inerrant. That is only possible if it is inspired by God and not originating from human minds. Humans cannot accurately predict events about people, places, and times thousands of years into the future. The Old Testament does that. There are many Old Testament prophecies about Jesus that are fulfilled in the gospels. Isaiah 53 is a good example of specific, accurate details about Jesus written thousands of years before he was born. In fact, every time the Bible mentions historical figures, places, and dates, it is always accurate. Historic and archaeological evidence support this.

The Old Testament contains many statements related to scientific knowledge that humans did not know at the time. In Isaiah 45:12, the writer speaks of God “stretching out the heavens.” The Hebrew word used suggests a pulling out, like a man starting a lawn mower. The expansion and acceleration of the cosmos have only been discovered in recent times. In Isaiah 51:6, we are told “the earth shall wax old like a garment,” and it also notes that everyone on it will age and die. John describes this as the second law of thermodynamics, which is about entropy and states that everything tends toward increasing disorder. Lord Kelvin, who lived from 1824 to 1907, is credited with discovering this law.

There are other examples of things that people did not know when the Bible was written. Whenever the Bible mentions facts, they have been confirmed as true. Many good books on this topic are written by authors like Lee Strobel, Josh McDowell, Doug Jacoby, William Craig, Hugh Ross, and others. This accuracy in prophecies and factual information is only possible if God inspired the Bible. The Bible states that all scripture is God-breathed (2 Timothy 3:16), and the writers of the Bible affirm this repeatedly (Galatians 1:11, 12).

As a believer and a Bible student, I have based my life on its credibility. Applying the scriptures changes how I live. It influences how I treat others and impacts all my relationships. It helps me handle life's inevitable troubles and shifts my perspective on life and death. I do not fear death; I look forward to eternity with God.

—Cynthia Clayton

Follow us daily on “Does God Exist? Today.”



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.

The Way Made Simple

by Mike Dalrymple

Sundance Publishing, © 2025

\$12.99 (paperback), 174 pages, ISBN-13 979-8999415400

Available from The-Way.online

If you are looking for a book that is clear and straightforward, making the evidence impossible to deny, this book is perfect for you. It is a book you could give to a skeptic, yet it can also strengthen a Christian's faith, especially a college student or teenager. We do not know if we have ever read a book that can appeal to such a wide audience.

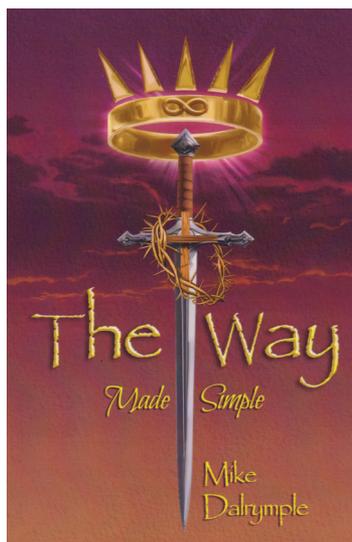
Each chapter begins with "The Way."

The chapter titles are:

1. The Way to God
2. The Way to Belief
3. The Way to Understanding
4. The Way to Salvation
5. The Way to Transformation
6. The Way to Live
7. The Way to Grow
8. The Way to Worship
9. The Way to Avoid
10. The Way to a Healthy Heart
11. The Way to Die
12. The Way to Knowledge

There is also a very helpful Appendix that includes an Old Testament prophecy and a New Testament quote that fulfills that prophecy.

We highly recommend this book. It is unique, will benefit any reader, and can persuade any open-minded student who examines biblical evidence.

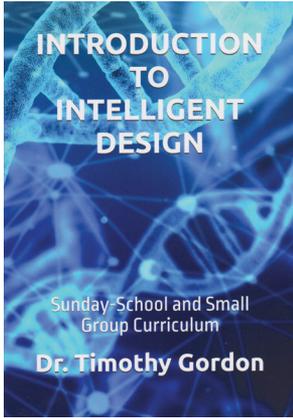


Introduction to Intelligent Design (Second Edition)

by Timothy Gordon

Intermountain Inst. for Religion, Science, & Culture, © 2025
\$9.99 (paperback) 116 pages, ISBN-13 979-8297151635

One interesting fact about ministries like **Does God Exist?** is how skeptics use abusive rhetoric to criticize our content. Their



name-calling and degrading language have led many Bible class teachers, preachers, and elders to avoid discussing how we know the Bible is true. The phrase “Intelligent Design” is often at the top of the list of those guilty of baseless abuse, and responses to material promoting Intelligent Design clearly show that critics do not understand the concept.

We have provided numerous examples of design in the world around us through this periodical, the *Dandy Designs* book series, our Facebook page, and the free videos on our doesgodexist.tv website. Our content is tailored for laypeople and children,

but there is a significant need for academic material geared toward college students and advanced high school students. This book addresses that need.

The author, Tim Gordon, is a retired Navy commander with 30 years of military service. He holds doctorates in Christian apologetics and Christian education and has worked as a manufacturing and clinical data analyst for about 25 years. This book is a curriculum designed for Sunday school and small groups, making it especially suitable for college-age audiences. It is divided into 12 weeks, but the wealth of content makes it nearly impossible to cover everything in that time.

Each chapter presents a series of points followed by discussion questions. For those of us who have taught before, it is clear that discussions will elicit many ideas among students. At the end of each week’s material, there is a crossword puzzle and a word search for students to do outside of class. The book concludes with three appendices: Appendix A: Ten questions to ask your science teacher about design; Appendix B: Recommended Resources; Appendix C: ID’s Place in the Universe of Origins.

This book is a valuable resource not only for college classes but also for teachers and preachers in any congregation working with teenagers and college-educated adults. We highly recommend this book.

DANDY DESIGNS

The Song Sparrow's Success

The National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America devotes 19 pages to various sparrow species. While many are limited to specific areas of North America, some are widespread across the continent. One widespread species is the song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), which has 25



subspecies spread from the East Coast to the West Coast, from Alaska's remote islands to the Mexican volcanic plateau. These birds may seem ordinary, but they are incredibly successful at surviving and thriving in boreal forests, coastal wetlands, and even deserts. The secret of the song sparrow's success is that each subspecies has unique traits that help it survive in its specific habitat.

In the Alaskan Aleutian Islands, the *maxima* subspecies has larger bodies to better conserve body heat. The *fallax* subspecies, found in the Sonoran and Mojave deserts, has lighter plumage to blend into the desert's brown landscape. The *caurina* subspecies of the Pacific Northwest has darker feathers to resist moisture-related microbes. In Atlantic Coast salt marshes, the *atlantica* subspecies has larger bills to assist in evaporative cooling.

Scientists from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the University of British Columbia sequenced the DNA of nearly every subspecies to understand the song sparrow's success. They found that genes and the environment work together to enable variations among subspecies, allowing them to thrive in diverse ecosystems.

This new research confirms what we have previously stated. God has given each species the ability to adapt and change over time to fit changing environments. That adaptability is key to the song sparrow's success. Sparrows can evolve and adapt, yet they remain sparrows. This ability to change highlights God's divine power in his creations (Romans 1:20). Jesus affirmed God's love for even the sparrows, and much more for every human being (see Matthew 10:29–31).

Hermit Crabs Recycle

You might say that hermit crabs are recyclers or scavengers of their homes. There are over 800 species of hermit crabs, and most of them find an abandoned shell of a gastropod (snail) and move into it. The fact that hermit crabs (superfamily Paguroidea) live alone in shells is why we call them “hermits.”



For a gastropod such as a snail, the shell is part of its body, an exoskeleton that offers protection. When the owner dies, the hermit takes over the abandoned shell. You might call it a mobile home because hermit crabs, like the original owners, carry the shells with them as they move. Outside the shell, a hermit crab is vulnerable to predators because of its soft abdomen. Inside the shell, the crab is protected and can retract its entire body if needed. It has a curved abdomen to fit the shell, and the tip is designed to grip the shell tightly. Because hermit crabs depend on shells for protection, sometimes two of them will fight over one they both like.

Marine hermit crabs spend most of their time underwater, breathing through gills. As long as their gills stay wet, they can stay on land briefly. There are about 15 species of land hermit crabs, but they still need access to water. People sometimes keep them as pets.

As hermit crabs grow, they need larger shells, so they compete to find new homes. Some people have observed them lining up in a queue from largest to smallest. When the largest moves to a bigger shell, each of the others moves up to the next size. Having shells available requires a balance between the number and size of the crabs and the gastropods that die. Sometimes, they are forced to find shelter in hollow pieces of wood or rock. Sadly, they may even take refuge in plastic trash from which they cannot escape.

Some larger hermit crabs support sea anemones on their shells. The venomous anemones protect the crabs from predators, while eating food fragments that escape the crab’s grasp. Once again, we see how the web of life is designed to work together for survival. We believe this is no accident but the work of a Master Designer.

See our videos at www.doesgodexist.tv

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 article to see the original posts for more details and references. There are many other interesting and informative articles on that website each day. On that website, you can subscribe to follow us daily. Each week we publish “The Best of the Week from DOES GOD EXIST?” with links to our most popular posts on DoesGodExist.Today and our Facebook page (Facebook.com/evidence4god).

A SALAMANDER’S TOES: A recent report by researchers at Washington State University explains how the wandering salamander (*Aneides vagrans*) can climb, jump, and glide from limb to limb in the forests from California to British Columbia. These salamanders can control the blood flow to their toes to expand or contract the surface area. In this way, they can attach or detach from tree surfaces. They can release from one limb, glide to another, and instantly attach as they wander through the coastal redwood forests. God has endowed each living creature with the features necessary to adapt and survive in changing environments.



MARIJUANA USE BY OLDER ADULTS: Researchers at the University of Michigan found that in 2024, 21% of adults aged 50 and older used cannabis in some form. A study of emergency room visits in California from 2005 to 2019 found a 1,804% increase in cannabis-related ER visits among people aged 65 and over. In Canada, cannabis was legalized in 2020, and ER visits by older adults have skyrocketed since then. Marijuana use by older adults may suggest they are unaware



of the significant increase in cannabis potency compared to their younger days. The fact is that using marijuana in any form is risky, and there is still much we do not understand about the long-term effects.



WALKING UPRIGHT: A Reuters News Agency article titled “How Humans Evolved to Walk Upright” fails to mention a critical design feature for walking upright. The article discusses a study of pelvis designs in primates. It suggests that the shape of the human pelvis explains how humans walk upright. However, upright posture involves more than just the pelvis.



The opening into the skull connecting the spinal cord to the brain is called the foramen magnum (Latin for “great hole”). It is positioned at the center of the human skull, but in other primates, it is located towards the rear. Besides the pelvis, the foramen magnum’s position is an

essential part of the design that supports bipedalism, or walking upright on two legs. The human pelvis also plays a crucial role in forming the birth canal that allows the passage of babies with larger brains.

Researchers identified over 300 genes involved in the design that enables walking upright. Many DNA regulatory elements must work together to accomplish what seems so simple to humans. Bipedalism enables us to use our hands for carrying objects, using tools, creating art, raising and cooking food, while we can observe our surroundings from a higher vantage point. Was this unique design merely an accident of natural selection, or the work of an intelligent Creator?



FRAUD IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH DATA: Some scientists are becoming very concerned about fraud in scientific research data. They face pressure to publish research papers to secure grants, advance their careers, or gain prestige. When financial gain is involved, scientists may be tempted to falsify the statistics they report. A recent study suggests that the number of fraudulent scientific publi-

cations is growing “at a rate far outpacing that of legitimate science.” Scientists rely on the work of others and depend on the accuracy of published research. When data is falsified for financial gain, it can be deadly, especially in medical research. Faking scientific data for personal gain damages scientific knowledge. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming increasingly important across many fields, including medicine. If AI is trained on false data, it creates even bigger problems.

In all human endeavors, there are instances of fraud, and that includes scientific research. Science and faith in God are friends, but humans are not always trustworthy, and that applies to both science and religion.



GLOWING BIRDS-OF-PARADISE: The more than 40 species in the *Paradisaeidae* family, known as birds-of-paradise are more than just colorful; they are extravagant in their ornamentation and in their mating rituals.



Birds-of-paradise inhabit the rainforests of New Guinea and Australia, where they showcase their dazzling colors and remarkable features. Rene Martin of the University of Nebraska exposed some specimens of birds-of-paradise at the American Museum of Natural History to UV light. She discovered that 37 species showed biofluorescence under ultraviolet light. Seeing them with human eyes was impressive, but for a bird’s specialized eyes, it must be even more dramatic.

Unsurprisingly, the males glow the most. This discovery reminds us that it is easy to overlook what is right in front of us. What new insights will science uncover about God’s creation in the coming days and years?



AI STUFFED ANIMALS: Small children love stuffed animals and often treat them as if they are real “friends.” What happens when you add AI to the toy? It can now respond to a child’s questions and even their moods. Stuffed toys incorporating interactive AI, have positive potential. The toys can tell stories and answer the child’s questions. Children can learn new words faster than by merely watching passive media. It can also reduce excess screen time and encourage them to be more active. However, if the AI toy

becomes the primary companion for a young child, it could harm the child's social awareness and communication with real people. Interaction with other humans, whether children or adults, can teach a child empathy, conflict resolution, and the importance of sharing. The AI toy will always accommodate the child's wishes and moods, and will never say "no."

Another important factor to consider with AI stuffed animals is privacy, since they are internet-connected to monitor a child's conversations. They could potentially store, analyze, and possibly misuse conversations of nearby adults. Some AI toys work locally without sending conversations to servers, which is worth considering. The bottom line is that limiting time with AI stuffed animals is just as important as limiting screen time for young children. But it may be harder to pry a child's attention away from a stuffed "friend" than from the television or game screen.



TREE MICROBIOMES: A study of microbiomes in living tree trunks reveals that the woody tissues of trees host a trillion microbial cells in addition to the cells of the tree. This includes single-celled bacteria and archaea. The study shows that microbiomes in living tree trunks vary from species to species. But how do these microbes get inside the trees? It might happen through wounds or openings, or they could be passed through the tree's seeds. Perhaps there is another route scientists have yet to discover. Regardless of the method, "What looks like one thing is a trillion-in-one organisms living together." When you see a tree, you might not realize how intricate its design is. Genesis 1:11–12 states, "Then God said, 'Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds,' and it was so."



THE CANA WEDDING FEAST: We read in John's gospel that Jesus performed his first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Jesus turned six large stone jars of water into wine. But where exactly was Cana? We know it was in Galilee because John mentions it, but the exact location has long been disputed. An archaeologist believes he has found the site of Cana and the wedding feast.

Jesus was present at the wedding with his first disciples, who had been followers of John the Baptist just days before. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was also there, so this wedding was likely for a close friend or family member. The reason for Jesus performing this miracle might have been sympathy for the embarrassment

of the wedding host, but it could also have been to help his new disciples develop faith (see John 2:1–11).

Natural processes can turn rainwater into grape juice over time, but Jesus had the power to accelerate this without a grapevine. There was no reason for him to ferment the grape juice to cause intoxication. When the master of the feast tasted it, he remarked, “You have kept the good wine until now.” That suggests the wine at this feast was not intoxicating.

Since the 18th century, the location of Cana and the wedding feast has generally been identified as Kafr Kanna, an Israeli town in Galilee. Now, archaeologist and historian Tom McCollough suggests that Cana was actually located five miles north of Kafr Kanna, at a site called Khirbet Qana. This was a Jewish village from 323 B.C. to A.D. 324. McCollough also notes that rabbinic texts and the writings of first-century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus support this site.

The significance of identifying the location of Jesus’ first miracle is not for pilgrims to visit and venerate the site. Instead, it shows that the gospels describe real historical locations and events. Jesus is a real person, and Cana was a real place.



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT PAIN RELIEF: Experience has shown that spending time outdoors in a natural environment can help relieve stress and promote relaxation. A new study indicates that enjoying the beauty and peacefulness of God’s creation can actually reduce the sensation of pain.

To create a controlled laboratory test, the researchers used images and sounds that depicted urban, indoor, and outdoor settings. For the test, the subjects were exposed to increasing-intensity shocks while the researchers monitored their brains with MRIs. The test subjects exposed to the urban and indoor environments showed the expected brain activity when sensing pain. However, the areas of the brain that receive pain stimulus were dulled when viewing the natural environment.

You could call it “natural” pain relief. According to Maximilian Steininger, who authored the study, they found that the pain relief was not just a placebo effect. It really worked. When feeling pain (or stress), getting outside to enjoy God’s creation might be the best medicine. Enjoying God’s creation also inspires us to worship and thank him for the beauty we enjoy in the outdoors.



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We look forward to great things in 2026.*

Thank You!

John and Cynthia Clayton

Roland Farnst

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ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE ON PAGE 18

ACROSS: 3-*bara*; 5-*evil*; 6-*counting*; 9-*metabolism*;
10-*chance*; **DOWN:** 1-*fall*; 2-*vaccinated*;
4-*purpose*; 7-*sing*; 8-*image*

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 quarterly journal, the **Does God Exist?** program offers DVDs, CDs, 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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