DOES GOD EXIST?

Third Quarter 2026
Volume 53 Number 3

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



FINDING FAITH THROUGH HIS WORD

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Faith in Action

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for.

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

Hebrews 11:1–3 NIV

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As an atheist, I had never read the Bible. My atheist parents told me it was a silly old book full of fairy tales, myths, and superstitions, and I never questioned that belief until I was a junior in high school. There, for the first time, I met people who believed the Bible. By then, I was a militant atheist, aggressively attacking anyone who believed in God and loudly ridiculing anyone who believed the stories in the Bible.

When I was 10 years old, my family moved to Talladega, Alabama, where my father taught at Alabama State Teachers College, an all-black school. In those years, I saw racism in operation and was told by my atheist parents that it was all caused by the Bible. As an atheist, I thought the idea of a worldwide flood, with someone building an ark and taking two of every form of life on it, was ludicrous. I found it easy to dismiss the religious beliefs of those who would buy into the stories of the Garden of Eden, the Tower of Babel, David and Goliath, and the miracles of Jesus Christ.

The turning point for me was my junior year of high school, when I became interested in a young lady. The only point of contention between the two of us was that she was a dedicated Christian and I was living by a different set of morals. I finally decided that the only way I could undermine her morals was to prove to her that the Bible was garbage and not a reliable guide for one's life. I started with Genesis 1:1 because my interest and abilities were in science, and I felt that was the Bible's weakest claim.

An Episcopalian friend gave me a copy of Archbishop James Ussher's 17th century chronology that claimed the Bible said the Earth was created 6000 years ago. I knew that was impossible. When I asked where that was stated in the Bible, my friend could not tell me. What I did find was that if you looked up the Hebrew words used in Genesis, there was not a single word that contradicted scientific

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evidence. All of this led me to spend a lifetime examining the biblical account for scientific errors. After over 50 years of searching, I have found none.

My colleagues with advanced degrees in history have told me that the Bible is historically accurate. The book of Isaiah, written 600 years before Christ, contains statements that have been confirmed in modern times. The field of archaeology continues to add support to the credibility of the biblical record. We have a free correspondence course and a free 13-lesson video series on archaeological support for the biblical record.

I have good friends who are psychologists who tell me that the Bible is full of accurate psychological principles, and professors of business and economics have made similar statements about biblical statements in their field.

God's Word has proven again and again to be a powerful weapon in the war against crime and drug abuse. The **Does God Exist?** program has been involved in prison ministry for over 50 years. When incarcerated persons are willing to apply biblical principles to their lives, they can change and break the cycle of crime and imprisonment. The Kings Crossing Prison Ministries in Corpus Christi, Texas, has built a program that brings hopeless criminals into productive lives, and its Christians Against Substance Abuse program (CASA) has helped many men and women overcome drug addiction.

Hebrews 4:12 tells us, "The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the dividing line of the breath of life and the immortal spirit and to the innermost intimacies of a man's being and detecting the inmost thoughts and purposes of the mind." Biblical twelve-step programs can help people overcome addictions and often work when everything else has failed.

Skeptics attempt to discount all of this by claiming the Bible is full of myths and fairy tales. It is essential when reading any document to ask four questions: (1) Who wrote it? (2) To whom was it written? (3) Why was it written? and (4) How would those to whom it was written understand it? It is also important to ask what kind of literature it is. Genesis, for example, is Hebrew poetry, not a scientific treatise. The Book of Revelation is a book of prophecy about "things shortly to come to pass," involving the persecution of Christians by the Romans. It is neither science nor poetry but uses a great deal of literary symbolism to convey its message.

We are told in 2 Timothy 2:15 to "Study to show yourself worthy of God's approval, accurate in delivering the Message of the Truth." A person who does that will become convinced that the Bible is not a fictitious work by ignorant men and women but rather a clear demonstration of the reality of God and his will for their lives.

—John N. Clayton



FINDING FOUNDATIONAL FAITH

What is your faith? Some of my atheist friends will say, "I don't have a faith," but that is not true. The Bible defines faith as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). The Greek word for "substance" in this verse is *hupostasis*, which comes from two words meaning "stand" and "upon." It is literally our "foundation." What is your foundational faith?

For most of us, our foundational faith has more to do with our intellectual understanding, values, morals, and decision-making. Hebrews 11 identifies some of those things with scientific accuracy, and most of us can agree on them. Verse 3 says, "By faith we understand that the universe was formed ... so that what is seen was not made of what was visible." Whether you are a Christian or an atheist, you can have faith in that part of the verse. However, the middle of that verse says it was formed "at God's command." An atheist would disagree that God had anything to do with it but would still agree that "what is seen was not made of what was visible."



See our videos at www.doesgodexist.tv

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Is Your Faith Blind?

That raises an important point. Is faith blind? The answer is clearly "no!" We have faith in gravity because, for all our lives, it has functioned the same way. We trust gravity and have faith in it because we have seen it work. We cannot directly see that God commanded the formation of the cosmos. Having faith in the cause of the universe requires a different kind of evidence, because we cannot directly observe the creation of time, space, matter/energy, and life.

Science gives us examples of faith in things we cannot directly see. For many years, scientists debated whether light was a wave or a particle. Scientists who believed light was a wave proved it by showing that light waves exhibited destructive interference. Two light waves can intersect and cancel each other, leaving darkness. Waves can cancel each other, but particles cannot. Experiments also show that light waves can be polarized, and particles cannot. You can shine a light through certain types of crystals, and the crystals will allow only light vibrating in one plane to pass through. There was overwhelming evidence that light is a wave, and 400 years ago that was the faith of most scientists.



The problem with that faith was that there were things light could do that waves could not. Light shining on certain materials could knock out electrons. This is called the photoelectric effect, and we use it in photosensors and solar cells. Waves such as sound waves cannot go through a vacuum because they need a medium to "wave." Particles can go through a vacuum. Some scientists had such strong faith that light was a wave that they explained how light reaches us from the Sun by saying



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that space is not a vacuum. They made up a substance they called "aether," which they said filled the universe and through which waves could pass.

Scientists today have faith in the dual nature of light. It is both a wave and a particle, and aether does not exist. The point is that our faith can change when we see new evidence.

Even our understanding of what God is affects us in a variety of ways. In the distant past, people thought of gods as physical beings that looked like humans. Roman and Greek gods were humans with superpowers. Some people today still view God as a human with human emotions and desires. Life experiences can weaken or destroy that kind of faith. When someone rejects faith in God because of a tragedy in life, the root cause of that rejection is a flawed concept of who God is.

Faith or Lack of Faith in God

Faith or lack of faith in God can determine the foundation of our lives. The question we must ask is, "What is the foundation (faith) on which I base my life?" For my father, who was an atheist, the foundation of his life was education. His father was a minister, and that faith did not appeal to my father. Instead, he pursued the highest level of education possible, earning a Ph.D. in philosophy at Columbia University under one of the leading educators in his field. He then became a full professor at Indiana University and was recognized as one of the top experts in his field.

After a long career with numerous awards and recognitions, my father retired. None of those achievements and recognitions provided a foundation for him. He dealt with the stress and frustration of his work by drinking. He attended social events only because he had to, and alcohol was the foundation, the lubricant that enabled him to function socially.



Shortly after his retirement, my father developed leukemia. The end of his life was a constant battle to survive, and death was the ultimate tragedy because he died without hope of anything better.

The other problem with my father's lack of faith in God was what it did to and for my mother and my two brothers. My mother was forced to become the family's social director. Social events were her life, and her foundation was recognition from her peers.

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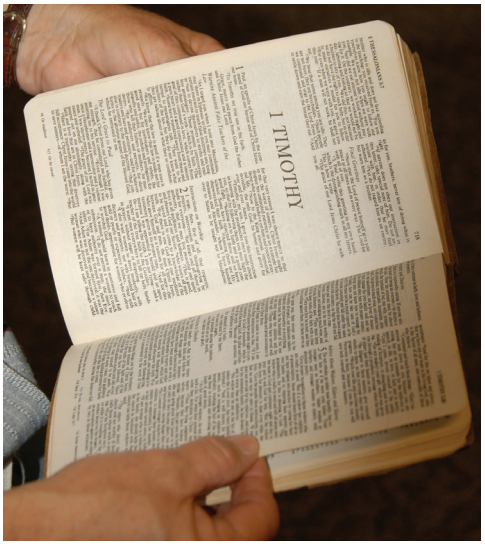
After my father died, she became the leader of the retirement center where she lived, commanding the respect of everyone there. When she suffered a stroke and was moved to the care center, she was not even allowed to eat with her peers, much less play a role in the social events. She was so mortified and miserable that I had to move her 200 miles to a facility near me, where she was still miserable.

My parents depended on alcohol as a foundation for life, believing it would make everything else function normally. This rubbed off on the rest of the family. Like many people in today's world, the negativity destroyed not only my father's faith but my mother's and brother's faith as well. Faith or lack of faith in God will determine the course of your life.

Building a Foundational Faith

One facet of faith is that we often share it within families. When a family member rejects the rest of the family's faith, that creates conflict. My parents strongly emphasized education as the foundation on which to build your life. They viewed religion as irrational nonsense that enslaved and restricted humans. At every opportunity, my parents ridiculed religious faith. Hypocrisy, racism, violence, war, and waste provided a constant barrage of good reasons for them to reject faith in God.

By the time I was eight years old, I adopted my parents' lack of faith and took a leading role in atheism. In junior high, I had a science teacher named Wayne Gross, who made it clear that he believed there was academic evidence that God exists and that the Bible is true. In high school, I had a strong interest and some aptitude in science. In addition, I became infatuated with an attractive young lady who was one of the top students in my high school class.



I did not have any moral values because my parents taught me that educated people realize that life is "survival of the fittest." I found that this attractive young lady was morally uncompromising, and she based her morality on the Bible. To get her to compromise her morality, I wanted to show her that faith in God and the Bible was educationally absurd. I set out to prove to this girl and to Mr. Gross that

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educated people who read the Bible would not believe anything in it. Mr. Gross encouraged me to start with Genesis 1. I had stolen a Bible from a motel (there were no Bibles in my parents' library), and I started reading it and researching the words in the original manuscripts to prove it wrong.

As I read the Bible and examined the scientific evidence, I began to reject everything my parents, my peers, and the religious experts of the day told me. In doing so, I began to understand that everything I had ever been told about God and the Bible was wrong. Education was leading me to a new faith, and my parents did not handle it well. They denigrated the faith of Mr. Gross, my girlfriend, and myself.

How faith works in our lives determines the direction we take. Several years later, I was faced with what to do with a child who was born blind, mentally challenged, and with both cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy. This polarized my faith and my parents' faith. My father used a parallel example of buying a car and finding it was defective. "What do you do?" he asked. "You take it back and demand a refund." Because of my faith, I refused to do that.

Examine Your Faith

I hope you will examine your faith. Look at your foundation and how it shapes the building of your life. Here are some suggestions:

1. DEAL WITH CREATION. You have two choices about how the cosmos came into existence. Either it has always existed, or it had a beginning. As an atheist, I believed that matter/energy was eternal. The Bible clearly states there was a beginning to space, time, and matter/energy.

As I learned about the laws of thermodynamics, it became increasingly clear that matter/energy could not be eternal. If there was a beginning, it had to be caused. We can say we do not know enough to understand the cause. However, the deeper our understanding, the more obvious it is that space and time had a cause outside of space and time. The existence of purpose and design in the cosmos also eliminates chance as a cause.



2. DEAL WITH WHERE YOUR FAITH TAKES YOU. Where did my father's faith in education take him? Did it make

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him happy, secure, and fulfilled? Examine your faith. Does it give you a reason to live, a purpose in existing? Does your faith allow you to deal with the problems that life brings to us all?

All of us know people who have tried to base their lives on alternatives to faith in God. Does making a lot of money lead to a meaningful life? Does becoming a political leader bring joy, contentment, and peace? Do recreational drugs fulfill us as humans? I have had a lot of adversity in my life, including having a multiple-handicapped child, losing my wife to death, never having much money, and having physical problems and pain. I have struggled, wept, and wondered why, but I have had a good life and have enjoyed it. Do other foundations enable a person to deal with life's problems?



3. LOOK TO THE FUTURE. Now I am nearing the end of my life, but that is only the end of my physical existence. My faith allows me to be confident that something better lies ahead. I have hope and peace in the fact that I will die. I see that I have had a purpose in living, and my feeble existence has left the world a better place than I found it. That is because I have been able to share my faith with others and enable them to find joy in living.

Jesus makes a promise to those who choose to build their lives on faith in God. "Come unto me all of you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and LEARN of me for I am meek and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28–30). Do not listen to religion or philosophy or the pleasure peddlers of our world who will give you an unproven faith that does not work. Examine your faith and build it by learning and growing in your understanding of God based on his Word.



—JNC

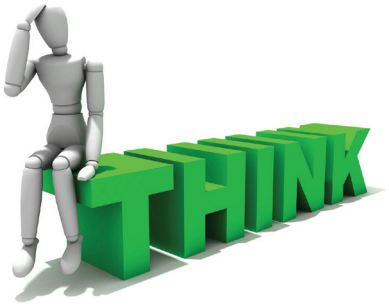
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People today often refuse to use evidence when making decisions about everything from personal relationships to politics. One distinctive feature of the Bible is that Jesus Christ challenges people to think.

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 emotional response. Despite this, modern Christian denominations have relied on blind acceptance and emotion rather than thoughtful reasoning.

A large part of this failure is simply intellectual laziness. People emotionally follow charismatic leaders because it is easier than thoughtfully examining the evidence. The result is that we have cults and abusive religious systems. Unlike other world religions, the Bible and Jesus challenge us to examine the evidence and act on it.

Jesus used miracles to convince people of his divine nature. The prophecies about Christ predicted that he would not attract followers by his physical appearance. Consider Isaiah 53:1–6, which is undeniably a messianic prophecy. That passage says, "he had no form or comeliness; ... *there is* no beauty that we should desire him. He is

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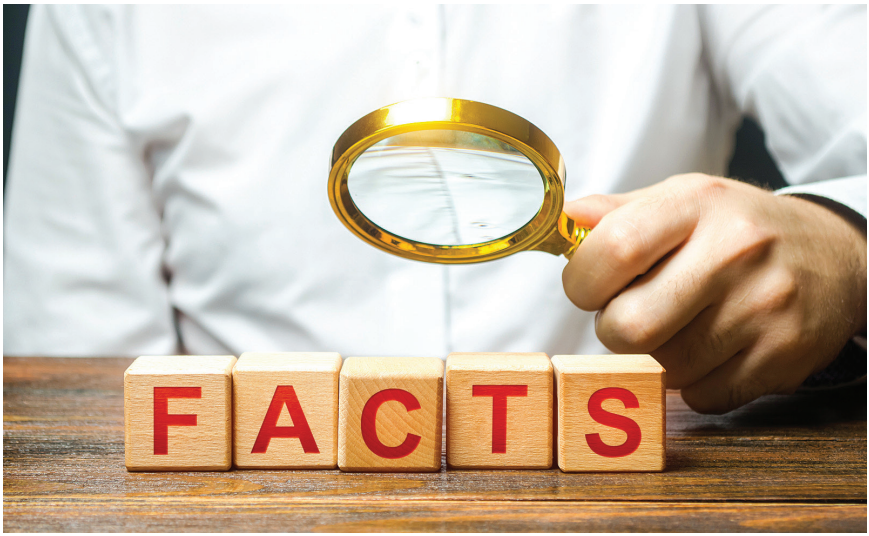
despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: ... we esteemed him not."

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, know that God is real, and let his Word 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. Waiting for God to "zap" you with faith is an exercise in futility. Instead, God rewards those who seek to understand and never calls us to blind acceptance.

The **Does God Exist?** program never relies on the opinion or credentials of any human. Instead, we call on all people to come to faith by using their intelligence and what they can see in the world around them. Read the Bible and examine the evidence!

Our materials (www.doesgodexist.org) are free or at cost and provide a way to organize the evidence so that each person who is willing can "know there is a God through the things he has made" (Romans 1:20). That means looking at the physical world and the spiritual world and dealing with the evidence that is all around us. Still, in today's world, Jesus Christ challenges people to think.

—JNC

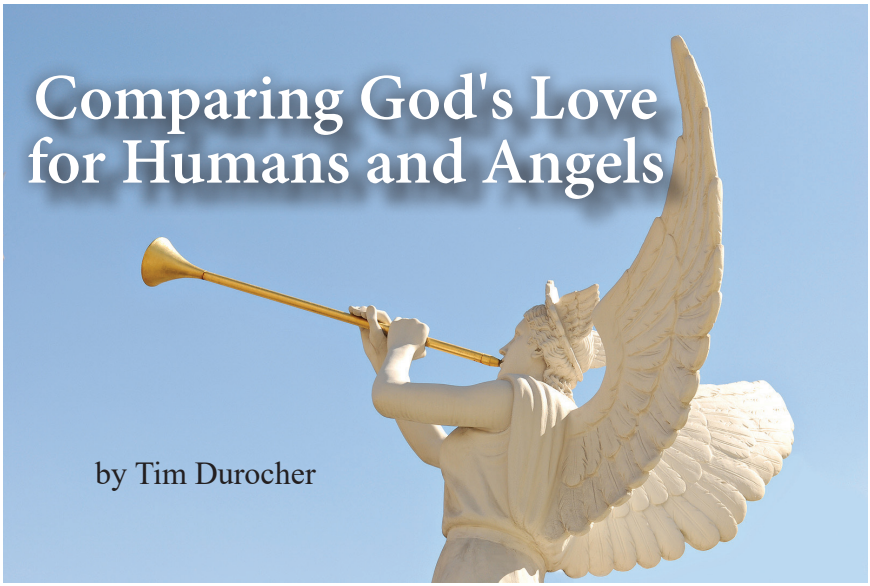


Visit the Clayton Museum of Ancient History at York University, York, Neb.

CLAYTON MUSEUM OF ANCIENT HISTORY

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Comparing God's Love for Humans and Angels



by Tim Durocher

I was recently confronted with the question: "Does God love angels as much as men and women?" This question stems from contemplating God's overall view of love. Are we God's main and true love? Does he share it with his celestial beings as well?

We should know that he loves all his creation, but men and women were specifically created in his image (Genesis 1:27), and we have a special place in his heart. Angels were created as God's messengers and helpers of humanity to look over and protect us, as well as to carry out other duties God assigned them. That in itself should tell us we are precious and worthy in his sight. Some people who have had near-death experiences (NDEs) have witnessed angels guiding them to an area of heaven and have experienced the joy and the love of God beyond comprehension. Although that is a controversial subject, we are at the pinnacle of God's love, and there should be no question about it.

The angels and celestial beings were created before humans, existing in God's very presence. We are created on this temporal Earth and typically cannot see the spirit realm. Although the spirit world is all around us, we are mortal and physically die with the hope of being with God for eternity. He knew us before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). Those of us who follow and believe in Jesus receive forgiveness through his sacrifice, death, and resurrection, which brings us back to God the Father. Angels never die and do not have forgiveness: they have freedom of choice just as men and women, but they already live in God's eternity and have sealed their fate, contingent on whether they obeyed or disobeyed God.

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We should know our special place in God's heart. John 3:16 is one of the most popular verses in the Bible: "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life" (NLT). We should not forget who we are and inexhaustibly grasp the truth of Jesus, obey him, and pray for his will during our short time here. Among the chaos and corruption in this life, we war with our flesh and tend to forget who we are. "Oh Lord, what are human beings that you should notice them, mere mortals, that you should think about them? For they are like a breath of air; their days are like a passing shadow" (Psalm 144:3–4).

Psalm 8:5 explains that we were created a little lower than the angels (see also Hebrews 2:7–9). Angels are brilliant and powerful beings; they have many capabilities that we do not possess or even comprehend. But of course, they are inferior to God, like any of his creations. And this is one of the main reasons for Lucifer's fall, in which he took a third of the angels with him (Revelation 12:4). He wanted to be like God and rise above him, while hating the true destiny of man and woman made in his image. Satan did not want to serve us, and because of his choices and defiance of God, iniquity was found in him (Ezekiel 28:15; Isaiah 14:12–15).

We will be similar to angels and have many celestial attributes, as it is written we are to be like the angels when we physically die (Matthew 22:30), but we will not be one of them, nor should we worship them (Colossians 2:18; Revelation 19:10). In fact, Christians are to judge angels, and even more profoundly, judge the world (1 Corinthians 6:2–3). Therefore, God's love for his angels is different from what it is for us.

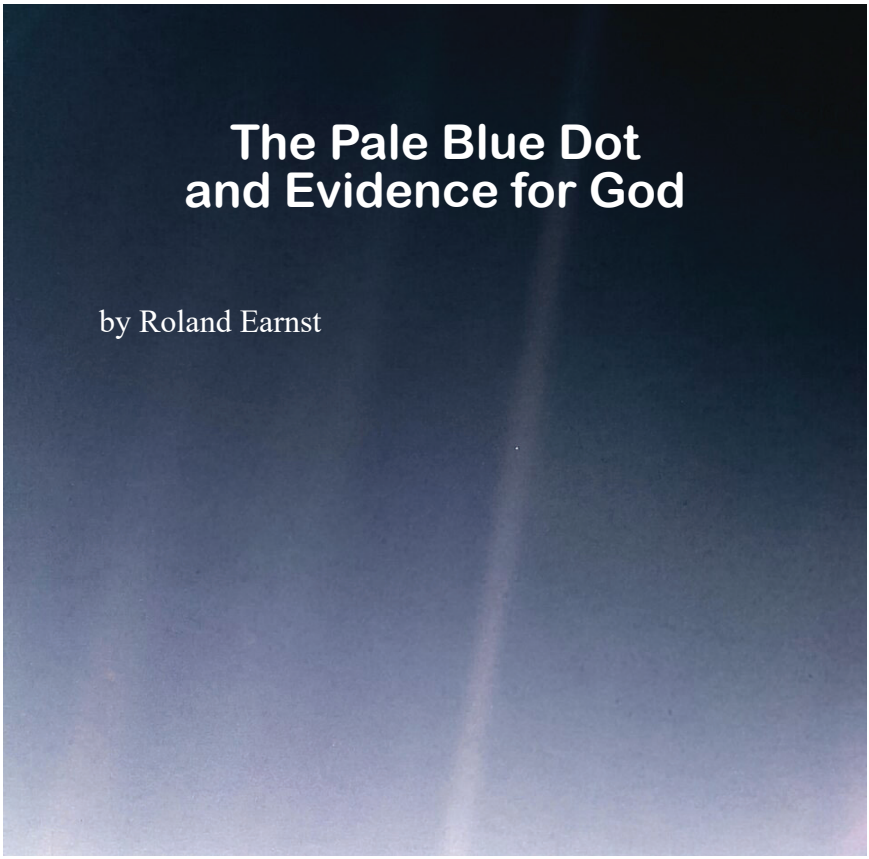


Angels have their destiny, and so do we. We must remember who we are and be light in the world, planting the seed so that the lost might be found.

"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

—Ephesians 2:10

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The Pale Blue Dot and Evidence for God

by Roland Earnst

https://science.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/pale-blue-dot-revised.jpg

The picture above is the "Pale Blue Dot" photograph, taken by the Voyager 1 spacecraft on Valentine's Day, February 14, 1990. At the time, Voyager 1 was 3.7 billion miles (6 billion kilometers) from Earth and moving away. The camera was about to be shut down to save power, since it was not going to fly close to any planet as it was leaving the solar system. Before shutdown, the mission commander ordered the probe to take 60 images to form a "Family Portrait of the Solar System." Thirty-four minutes after it took this picture, the camera was shut down forever. In the picture, the Sun is below, and the tiny dot you see in a sunbeam is planet Earth.

This year, prominent atheists became upset by Victor Glover's words aboard Artemis 2 during its historic trip around the Moon. Some even expressed concern about the "separation of church and space." However, when he spoke from space, he seemed to receive approval from the other astronauts, but not from atheists on the ground. We see the contrast between the two views of the universe.

Some of Glover's words that apparently upset atheists include, "You're on a spaceship called Earth that was created to give us a

place to live in the universe. You are special. In all of this emptiness, this is a whole bunch of nothing, this thing we call the universe, you have this oasis, this beautiful place that we get to exist together."

Why should those words distress anyone? Many early scientists explored creation because they believed in an orderly universe created by an intelligent God. Many astronauts have said that being in space gave them a spiritual experience as they realized that Earth reveals design and purpose. I remember watching the Apollo 8 crew read from the book of Genesis on Christmas Day in 1968 as they traveled around the Moon. Our present NASA administrator, Jared Isaacman, said that his time in space convinced him that "the heavens declare the glory of God."



Many leading science popularizers have tried to tell us that science destroys Christian belief. Richard Dawkins, Bill Nye, Michael Shermer, Lawrence Krauss, and others have written popular books arguing that science makes belief in God unnecessary and implausible. The two views of the universe cannot both be correct. The truth is that scientific discoveries continue to support belief in God and challenge the atheist concept.

What is the strongest evidence for an intelligent Creator? That is an interesting question. Sarah Salviander, an astrophysicist, suggests that biology offers more convincing evidence than her field of astrophysics. She said, "The incredible machinery of a living cell is far more complex than the structure of an entire galaxy of stars." On the other hand, the late atheist critic Christopher Hitchens once said that atheists find the "fine-tuning" of the universe to be "one of the most intriguing" arguments for intelligent design. I think that biology and cosmology together make a strong case for God's existence.

We must acknowledge that the evidence shows this universe has been fine-tuned from the very beginning to make it possible for life, including human life, to exist and prosper on this "pale blue dot." Is that fine-tuning the strongest evidence for an intelligent Creator? Since scientists have not been able to explain it, unbelievers advance the unproven and unprovable idea that there are countless universes with different parameters, and we just happen to live in the one that is fine-tuned for life.

However, when we look at the evidence for design in living things, especially in the human body, we are in awe. As Dr. Salviander said, the incredible machinery of a living cell is far more complex than an entire galaxy of stars. Another advantage biology has over cosmology as the strongest evidence for an intelligent Creator is that we can see it in real time. To see the evidence for design in the fine-

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tuning of the universe, we must look back in time, but evidence for design in life is all around us right now. The information in DNA shows that life could not have happened by chance, since information comes only from an intelligent source.

In addition, we see beauty in living things and in the physical creation. Chance would create chaos rather than beauty. The psalmist David, who did not know about the fine-tuning of the universe, was in awe of the majesty and beauty in the night sky (see Psalms 8 and 19:1–6). The psalmist was also in awe of his own physical body, realizing that God had created him in his mother's womb. He was awestruck by that, despite having no idea about DNA or the amazing structures within the cells of our bodies (see Psalm 139:14–16). Interestingly, Charles Darwin thought that cells were nothing but globs of protoplasm, and he had no idea of the remarkable machines working within every cell or of the DNA that provides instructions for assembling proteins to do those jobs.

Astronomer Carl Sagan was partially responsible for the picture at the top of this article. He popularized the term "Pale Blue Dot" in his book by the same name. He wrote, "Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity, in all its vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves." He also said that Earth is such a tiny dot in the universe that it shows we have no privileged position in the cosmos. Victor Glover said that we are not a lonely cosmic accident, but instead, we are loved. Victor Glover and those who believe in Jesus Christ know that Someone did come from elsewhere to save us. Carl Sagan was a brilliant man, but he did not get everything right.



The bottom line is that, regardless of what you think is the strongest evidence for an intelligent Creator, there is massive and growing evidence that we cannot ignore.

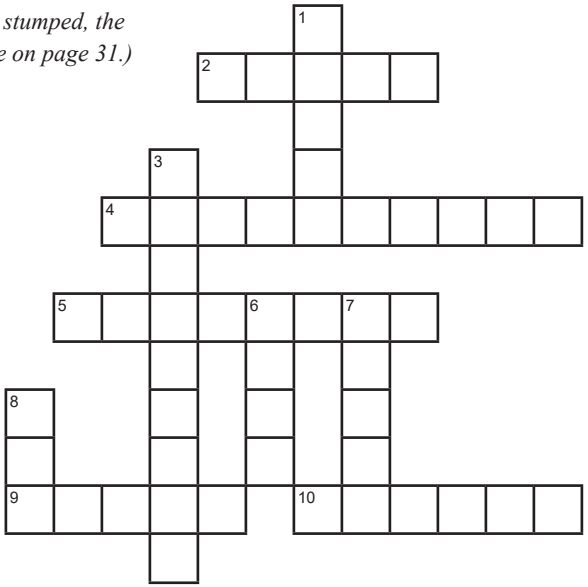
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Does God Exist?
3rd Quarter 2026 Crossword

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

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



Across

[2] Atheists claim they do not have _____, but they do.

[4] God created angels to be _____ and helpers for humans.

[5] Faith is the _____ of things not seen.

[9] Jesus challenged people to _____.

[10] There is strong evidence for God in the fine-tuning of the universe and the _____ of living things.

Down

[1] The _____ does not say that Earth is 6000 years old.

[3] The Bible and science agree that the universe had a _____.

[6] The yoke Jesus gives is _____ and the burden is light.

[7] Everything that begins to exist must have a _____.

[8] From 3.7 billion miles in space Earth looks like a pale blue _____.

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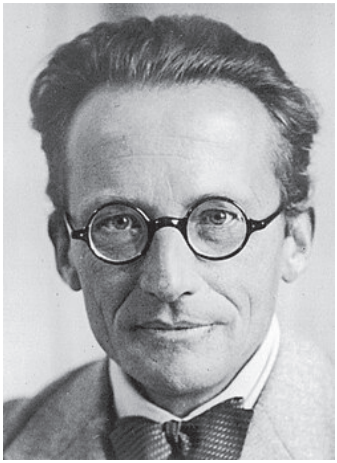
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SCIENTISTS AND GOD

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.

Erwin Schrödinger (1887-1961)

Discoverer of Wave Mechanics
Nobel Prize Winner in 1933
Schrodinger's work led to the development of quantum mechanics as a tool to help mankind understand the world in which we live.



"The finest masterpiece is the one made by God, according to the principles of quantum mechanics."

It is important to understand that nothing in quantum mechanics is in conflict with belief in God. Quantum mechanics is simply a discipline where humans learn more about how God has built the world in which we live.

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Cynthia's Corner



Finding God Through His Word

Our Creator has communicated to us through his written word, "The Holy Bible." The Bible says that all scripture is God-breathed (2 Timothy 3:16). The apostle Paul said that after his conversion, the gospel was not given to him by man but was revealed to him directly by Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:11, 12). Many other scriptures tell us that the Bible writers were inspired by God to write his words.

We can know God and ourselves through his Word. Many scriptures tell us that God's Word is always true and that Jesus always spoke the truth. God's Word acts like a mirror into our souls. Its truth reveals our "inner parts" (Psalm 51:6). Hebrews 4:12 says that "the word of God is alive and active. … dividing soul and spirit, … it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

When my first husband was in Vietnam, we wrote letters to each other very frequently. We got to know each other better by putting our thoughts and feelings into words. What we chose to write about revealed what was important to us. Now my husband John writes me a love letter on special occasions. I treasure those letters more than any gift.

God's Word tells us who he is, who we are, and why he made us. It tells us what he expects from us while we live on Earth. It perfectly describes our human nature, our struggles with sin, and our human limitations by giving us many real-life examples and stories that describe our relationship with God and each other. It tells us what our purpose is on Earth. It describes the spiritual battle between good and evil (Ephesians 6:12). It vividly contrasts good with evil and love with hate, and it shows the consequences of the choices we make and how they directly affect our soul's eternal existence.

The Bible is mostly a love story, telling us how much God loves us. God knew before he made us that we would sin and be separated from him. He also knew he would have to send his only Son, Jesus, to Earth as a human to die for the sins of all mankind. This was the only way to atone for our sin and to give each of us the choice to be reconciled to God or not, to be with him eternally or not. God loves us and wants each one of us to be saved (2 Peter 3:9). It is our choice. Jesus already paid the price for all of our sins. We must respond.

—Cynthia Clayton

Photo: Julie Marcussen

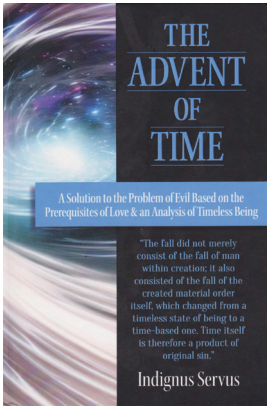
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BOOK REVIEWS

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 Advent of Time

by Indignus Servus
Ex-Voto Publishing © 2024
$12.99 (paperback), 160 pages, ISBN 978-0-9864106-7-3
Available from Thriftbooks.com



Indignus Servus is a lawyer who has written several books addressing major theological questions, including why evil exists and whether the problem of evil conflicts with biblical descriptions of God and his nature. The book's subtitle is "A Solution to the Problem of Evil Based on the Prerequisites of Love & an Analysis of Timeless Being."

Servus challenges the reader to understand God as a being outside of time. Perhaps the greatest weakness in the book is its heavy reliance on the teachings of the Roman Catholic church. This is not an issue, however, because the points he makes do not depend on Catholic doctrine. There are many quotations from the Catechism of the Catholic church, but they are not rooted in doctrinal material.

The book is divided into three sections, with the first discussing the problem in light of God as all-powerful, all-loving, all-just, and all-wise. If this is true, the question becomes: why does not God stop the pain and suffering on Earth? After discussing that subject in 26 pages, the remainder of the book seeks to answer that challenge.

The second section deals with creation, the fall, and how a timeless being resolves the question raised in the first section. Servus addresses the beginning, love and justice, what it means to imitate

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Jesus, salvation and separation, and the role of faith. The book leans heavily on the Bible and is factual, respecting the context of the passages quoted.

We recommend this book highly. It will challenge your thinking and help you understand how the Bible fits into the reality of the problems we all face.

—Reviewed by JNC

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The Big Bang and the Fine-Tuned Universe

by Robert A. Alston, Discovery Institute Press © 2024
$6.99 (paperback), 33 pages, ISBN 978-1-63712-049-1



This mini-book is part of a series of five "In a Nutshell" books, each written by a different author, covering the origin of life, cell factories, irreducible complexity, and the Cambrian Explosion. Together, they are chapters from the book *Evolution & Intelligent Design*. In this book, former NASA special projects engineer Robert Alston examines the questions: "Where did the universe come from?" and "How were its laws and constants finely tuned to allow for life?"

In language a young reader can understand, Alston explains the error Einstein made when he "fiddled with his equation" for the general theory of relativity in 1915. Edwin Hubble's discoveries with the Mt. Wilson telescope disproved Einstein's error, which Einstein had to admit was the "biggest blunder" of his life. Further evidence in 1964 proved that the universe had a beginning, and scientists were forced to reluctantly accept it.

The book goes on to explore how astronomy and physics point to a cosmic Architect. This is evident in the remarkable set of laws governing how everything behaves in the universe. The fine-tuning of the four fundamental forces could not be accidental because of their precision. In addition to the fine-tuning of physics, chemistry also displays finely-tuned carbon resonance.

The texture of the universe at the big bang also had to be just right, and water's "extraordinary" properties are essential for life on this planet. Alston concludes by showing that the multiple-universe hypothesis advanced by scientists to explain the fine-tuning does not work. The book also includes QR codes you can use to access additional resources online. The endnotes also contain many helpful references. We recommend this mini-book for youth and adults.

—Reviewed by RE

DANDY DESIGNS

Never-Ending Beetle Species



Platydracus stercorarius beetle

Beetles are essential to life on Earth, serving as food for many animals, but that is not all they do. Some beetles recycle carcasses, and others recycle dung. Some help restore the environment after a forest fire. Others exhibit strange and interesting behaviors, such as spraying noxious chemicals at their enemies. One beetle species walks upside-down underwater. Many more beetles do interesting things and fulfill very important roles. Some beetles damage crops or are pests in other ways, especially when they are accidentally moved to new habitats. However, even those beetles that are a nuisance often fill very important roles in their natural environment.

Scientists estimate that there are between five and ten million insect species, which make up about 90% of the world's animal species. However, only about 925,000 species have been studied enough to be formally described. Of all insect species, the largest number are classified as beetles. Smithsonian sources identify about 350,000 beetle species, but more are discovered each year.

Of the beetle species, about 70,000 are in the Staphylinidae family. One subgroup within that family is *Platydracus*. According to Wikipedia, there are more than 280 identified *Platydracus* species. However, recent research in China has identified and recorded 61 previously unknown species. Classifying all beetle species will be an enormous job that will probably never be completed.

We often fail to realize how much diversity exists in the natural world. God has created so many different species, and we have not yet been able to study most of them. Even if life has existed on Earth for four billion years, that is not enough time for Darwinian evolution to produce all the species and varieties of animals that inhabit this planet.

The more we learn about God's creation, including the beetle species, the more we are amazed by the complexity and diversity of the essential species that make advanced human life possible.

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The Smartest Nonhuman Animals



New Caledonian Crow
(*Corvus moneduloides*)

What are the smartest nonhuman animals? You might immediately think of chimpanzees. Why not? Chimps are widely thought to be closest to humans on the evolutionary ladder. However, as we have noted before, the similarity between chimps and humans has been greatly exaggerated, and it is becoming clearer that there are more genetic differences between us and chimps.

It may seem surprising, but repeated studies have shown that the smartest nonhuman animals are New Caledonian crows and ravens, meaning they are closest to humans in intellectual ability. Nobody places crows and ravens on an evolutionary line with human beings, yet they have demonstrated their ability to outperform monkeys by retrieving food from a tube accessible from only one end. They can also devise a plan to use one tool to obtain another, which they can then use to retrieve food. That is something monkeys and apes have difficulty doing. There is a YouTube video showing a crow going through eight individual steps to obtain the food it wants.

The ability of New Caledonian crows and ravens to manufacture and use tools and to solve problems with tools greatly exceeds that of chimpanzees, orangutans, and gorillas. What do these birds have that the apes do not? The birds have larger forebrains, cerebrums, perineuronal glial clusters, and hippocampi relative to their body size, as humans do. Unlike humans and the great apes, crows and ravens lack a cerebral cortex.

In trying to establish an evolutionary line leading to human beings, we must consider why these birds have brain features humans have, even though the creatures supposedly closest to humans on the evolutionary ladder do not. Perhaps the story is not a common ancestry but a common Designer. When we try to determine the smartest nonhuman animals, maybe we need to consider whether humans are smart enough to realize that evolution does not tell the whole story.

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News and Notes

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THE SOUND OF RAINFALL: Researchers in the U.K. and at MIT have found that seeds sprout faster when exposed to the sound of rainfall on the ground. When raindrops hit the ground, they create vibrations strong enough to jostle microscopic structures called statoliths inside the seeds. That sets off a biological chain reaction that triggers germination. The study shows that seeds can germinate 40% faster when exposed to rainfall sounds.

Researchers have had great success with rice seeds exposed to rainfall sounds, compared with rice seeds not exposed to them. With all other factors identical between the two groups, rice seeds exposed to the sound of rainfall grow 40% faster. The extensive design in nature is a strong apologetic for God's existence.

THE THYMUS IS ESSENTIAL: A mysterious organ of the human body lies behind the sternum (breastbone) and in front of the heart. It is called the thymus. Almost 2000 years ago, the Greek physician and surgeon Galen of Pergamon called it the "seat of the soul." However, as recently as 1961, Nobel Prize-winning British biologist Sir Peter Medawar called the thymus the graveyard for dying cells and "an evolutionary acci-



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dent of no very great significance." Today, scientists know that the thymus plays an essential role in establishing the immune system during childhood and remains beneficial throughout life.

Recent research at Massachusetts General Hospital has shown the role the thymus plays in a person's health. It helps regulate aging and immune health. It appears to play a crucial role in a person's longevity, protecting against cancer, autoimmune disease, and even cardiovascular risks. Medical scientists have found that people with healthier thymuses are less likely to develop lung cancer or die of heart disease or other causes.

The thymus has an essential purpose and is not a vestigial organ, as some have thought in the past. It is not a mistake of evolution. A healthy thymus is a predictor of good health in many respects. The research has led to interest in finding ways to slow the thymus's natural deterioration, which occurs in adulthood. The thymus has an essential purpose because God designed it that way, but science overlooked it for way too long.

CREATING A SMELL MAP: It is easy to overlook the importance of the sense of smell. Smell affects human health and safety and plays an essential role in the taste of food. It can also warn us of spoiled or unsafe food by its rancid odor. Smelling can give pleasure, as with the fragrance of flowers, or make us nauseated, as when we smell a foul odor. Fragrances can bring back pleasant memories. The loss of smell can cause depression. With those things in mind, researchers are creating a smell map.



Maps of the receptors for vision, hearing, and touch have been developed previously, but this research was the first to create a detailed map of the receptors for smell. The challenge in creating a smell map is that it is more complex than the other senses.

Before creating a smell map, the prevailing theory held that smell receptors were randomly distributed. The study showed that smell receptors form horizontal stripes from the top of the nose to the bottom, and that the order matches the brain's olfactory bulb.

This research is important because it will help scientists develop therapies for people who have lost their sense of smell. As we learn more about how the sense of smell works, we see evidence of design.

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HONEYBEES CAN COUNT: New research supports the idea that honeybees can count. This is remarkable given that a honeybee's brain has fewer than one million neurons (compared with a human brain's 86 billion) and weighs less than one milligram (human brains weigh 1300 – 1400 grams).



Earlier research indicated that bees could count, add, subtract, and understand the concept of zero, but other scientists were skeptical of that data. The new research, published in the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, seems to support the earlier findings.

The way honeybees process numerical information is amazing when you consider the size of their brains. Learning the concepts of "greater than" and "less than" can be useful for a bee's survival. Of course, the report credited honeybees' numerical ability to evolution, but could it not be likely that the Creator placed in the tiny brains of these bees the neurological structure they need to survive?

SECRETS OF THE BEES: The May 2026 issue of *National Geographic* carried an article titled "Secrets of the Bees." The first point is the complexity of hives. Bees design their hives to suit the climate where they live. Many have nests below ground, with some bees excavating as deep as three feet. The larvae develop in areas called brood cells, which are stocked with food.

A second point in the *National Geographic* article is that bumblebees can learn to associate certain colors with rewards. Researchers have found that bees can look at a new landscape and navigate around the changes. In other words, bees are not robots that can be stopped by changing the landscape.

A third area of interest is that bees can figure out the most efficient way to reach a flower in a field, allowing them to maximize nectar gain. In describing "Secrets of the Bees," the *National Geographic* writers use words

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like "hidden genius," "brightest thinkers," and "remarkable ways" to explain what bees can do. These are words that describe properties God would have given the bees, not accidents of chance.

WHITES OF THE EYES: Human eyes come in various colors, such as blue, brown, or green, but that refers to the iris. The area surrounding the iris is called the sclera. In humans, the sclera is white, or at least close to white. That makes us different from other animals, since most mammals have dark eyes. The question is, why are the whites of the eyes the way they are?

In 1997, Shiro Kohshima, a Japanese biologist at Kyoto University, proposed that the white sclera helps us communicate because the contrast between the white and the dark pupils makes it easier to tell where someone is looking. Parents can often tell if their child is telling the truth by whether the child is looking at the parent. When someone looks away, it may mean they are hiding something. When someone looks us directly in the eye, it helps us bond with that person. Thus, the white sclera helps us communicate or avoid communication.



In 2007, Michael Tomasello, a psychologist at Duke University, expanded on Kohshima's theory, developing a cooperative eye hypothesis. He said that the whites of the eyes help us determine what someone is focused on because we are sensitive to where a person is looking. Within the first few days, babies look longer at faces that are directed at them. By two to four months, babies learn to follow where others are looking. When a parent looks at an object and names it, this helps the infant connect the name to the object, improving language skills.

Even though some people's eyes are not as white as others' due to age, health, or race, humans show more of the sclera than other animals do. We can be thankful that God has given humans this exceptional gift.

THE EUPHRATES RIVER: "A river watering the garden [of Eden] flowed from Eden, and from there it divided; it had four headstreams. The name of the first is the Pishon … the name of the second river is the Gihon … the name of the third river is the Tigris … and the fourth river is the Euphrates" (Genesis 2:10–14).

Now, seismic imaging can create 2D and 3D maps of the Fertile Crescent's subsurface using sound waves reflected by rock layers beneath the ground. The technique is similar to using ultrasound to

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create a detailed image of a baby in the womb. The maps can show the land and the Euphrates River as they were in biblical times.

The Euphrates was the longest river in Southwest Asia, flowing some 1,700 miles. It originated in present-day Turkey and flowed through Mesopotamia before emptying into the Persian Gulf. It flowed by Babylon and the ancient city of Uruk in present-day Iraq. Uruk was the world's first metropolis and the birthplace of written language.

JUMPING SPIDER EYES: Many scientific and technological advances are inspired by the study of animals and plants. Spiders have long inspired innovations, especially in silk and web-making. A new development, however, is based on the design of jumping spider eyes.

Jumping spiders (family Salticidae) leap quickly to avoid predators, capture prey, or simply move around. They need good 3D vision to judge distances when they jump. Unlike human eyes, which have only one retina, jumping spider eyes cannot move, but they have multiple retinal layers. These layers capture the image with slightly different focus. Their poppy seed-sized brains then process the images, comparing differences in sharpness to compute the distance to an object.



A computer scientist at Northwestern University, Emma Alexander, and her colleagues, have created an extremely efficient 3D camera dubbed a "SpiderCam." The SpiderCam perceives depth the same way that jumping spider eyes do, by capturing images on two layers of "retinas" with very slight differences in focus. A computer algorithm embedded in a custom chip compares the images to calculate depth and distance.

The advantage of the camera based on jumping spider eyes is that it uses less energy and less expensive hardware than other 3D cameras. Humans continue to learn from animals, and as we discover God's designs in nature, we can apply them in biomimicry to solve problems in technology and everyday life.

SELF-DRIVING CAR SAFETY: Human eyes have a remarkable ability to adjust quickly to changes in light intensity. This is especially important when driving at night. When bright headlights from an oncoming vehicle shine into our eyes, we must be able to continue to see the road and any possible pedestrian or deer crossing in front of us. This requires our eyes to adjust very quickly. God has designed human eyes with an amazing ability to adjust quickly to

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changes in light. Inspired by the human eye's design, researchers at Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) have engineered a "photomemristor" to improve the safety of self-driving cars.

Typical photocells cannot handle the wide range of light intensities required in some driving situations, especially at night. The Penn State researchers have designed a device that can "dynamically adapt to changing light conditions."

Many times, we have seen innovations that involve biomimicry, imitating the design God has used in the natural world. Improving the safety of self-driving cars or robots that perform various duties requires learning from God's design of vision.

MAGNETIC BIRD MIGRATION: Scientists have known for decades that birds use Earth's magnetic field to guide their migrations, but how they detect it has remained a mystery. A recent German study published in the journal *Science* offers insight into this magnetic mystery of bird navigation.

Birds, as well as other animals, have immune cells called macrophages in their livers. Among other duties, these macrophages eliminate old red blood cells. As they digest these no-longer-needed red blood cells, they accumulate iron nanoparticles, making the macrophages superparamagnetic. In other words, they can detect Earth's magnetic field as the bird passes through it.



Using electron microscopy, the researchers observed that the macrophages were in contact with nerve cells, which could transmit magnetic information directly to the bird's brain.

Solving the magnetic mystery of bird navigation can explain how birds that migrate at night find their way when the sky is overcast. It may also explain how sharks navigate and how bats migrate in the dark. Birds and other migrators use vision, magnetism, and other methods to find their way. God has designed into living things the features they need to survive.

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE ON PAGE 18
ACROSS: *2-faith; 4-messengers; 5-evidence; 9-think; 10-design;* **DOWN:** *1-Bible; 3-beginning; 6-easy; 7-cause; 8-dot*

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