

# DOES GOD EXIST?

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

May/June 2010  
Volume 37, Number 3



**POLLUTION,  
PAIN, AND  
GOD**

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# POLLUTION, PAIN, AND GOD

As the father of a child born with multiple birth defects, I have struggled with the “Why me?” question as much as anyone who has been through an experience like that. The whole issue of why there is massive human pain in a world supposedly created by a kind, loving heavenly Father, is one that atheists use effectively in casting doubt on the existence of God. The usual Christian response to a discussion of why a baby should be born with massive congenital problems is

to say, “This is just for a brief time in this life, and in heaven it won’t be an issue.” That is true, but not very comforting. It is also common for Christians to talk about what the baby brings to others as they serve the infant. I still vividly remember



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a child in my son’s class for the mentally impaired coming up to me when he heard I was giving lectures on the existence of God. As he pointed to a playground full of running, laughing children behind an elementary school he said to me, “Why did God make me retarded so I can’t do what they can do?”

There is no doubt that things like cancer, birth defects, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, and cystic fibrosis bring out good things in those who care for the afflicted. I have written extensively about how my son’s multiple-birth-defect problems have changed me. (The book is entitled *Timothy, My Son and My Teacher*.) There is also no doubt that Christians have a better answer than atheists in this area, because atheism only suggests death since “survival of the fittest” is their guiding principle. Abortion and euthanasia are the only real options atheism offers. Atheist spokesmen, like Peter Singer, have made this clear, and on a physical level it makes sense.

Another point that has been marginally treated in apologetic literature is the long-term effect of pollution. There is a growing body of evidence that a huge percentage of the problems that come to mankind is the result of environmental irresponsibility on the part of people. We know that a large percentage of cancer is caused by man-made carcinogens in the environment. Even cancers that are not

directly caused by chemicals that man has put into the air and water, are sometimes related to our own abuse of the environment. There is strong evidence that skin cancer is related to the depletion of the ozone layer, which seems to be connected to the fluorides that man has dumped into our water and air. Food additives and substitutes can have severe effects on human brains and digestive processes. The disposal of herbicides and pesticides has had catastrophic effects on countless numbers of people. Lead and mercury contamination has caused severe birth defects in all cultures of the earth. In their attempts to challenge global warming, many writers have ignored the unquestionable effects of man's waste being put into the environment.

We are now learning that medical wastes have been disposed of in our air, rivers, lakes, and oceans, putting hormones and complex organic materials not found in nature into our food chain. In our March/April 2010 "News and Notes" we reported on how chemicals released into the air by plastic manufacturing seem to be having an effect on sexual orientation. This means that even the homosexual/heterosexual issue may be connected to what people have done with the chemicals we produce.

When God created the earth, man and his animals, God repeatedly said, "It is good." (See Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25.) At the end of the creation process in verse 31 we are told that it was "very good." When sin entered the picture and man began to do things that were in opposition to what God told man to do, consequences began to appear. Man's disobedience began to generate strife leading to the first murder. It also produced negative changes in the earth's environment. Genesis 3:17–20 tells us that the ground was cursed because of man and that getting food from the ground would no longer be a matter of gathering, but that labor would be required. From the beginning, man had been told that he was to take care of the world where God placed him (Genesis 2:15). Instead of doing that, mankind has used the earth as a dumping ground for our own selfish use.



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It is not our intent here to suggest that science is evil, or that research into things that can improve our life should not be done. The problem is in the greed factor that has caused irresponsible actions by those producing these things commercially. God has given us the tools to do wonderful things, and He has also given us the tools to clean up after ourselves. Our failure to do this has caused massive pain for countless human beings.

The atheist is very likely to say “Why doesn’t God just stop what is happening if He is so loving and kind-hearted?” This is the same challenge as those who were victimized by the horrible things done to the Jewish population by Hitler in World War II. Why did God just not stop the horrible abuses that killed thousands of innocent people in the prison camps of Germany?

From the very beginning of God’s communication with man, God has always told us that we will reap the consequences of what we sow. In Deuteronomy 28 God makes this point clear. He begins by telling His people what would happen if they “fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands” (verse 1). For fourteen verses God tells all the good things that will come from doing everything right. Those commands involved things like giving the land rest (Leviticus 25:5), being careful about wastes, and paying careful attention to diet. It included valid medical practices like quarantine and washing. God then tells in Deuteronomy 28:15–29:1 all the awful things that will happen if people live selfishly and fail to follow God’s commands. Some of the consequences are political and social, but many of them

involve health and agriculture. This same principle is given in Galatians 6:1–10. The positive consequences from doing things God’s way are given followed by the warning, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). That promise is true individually, but it is also true for humankind as a whole.



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Can we rationally believe that God should run around reversing all of the destructive things we do? Should God clean up our air as we pump chemicals into it and release man-made hormones that will upset our minds and overwhelm our social institutions? Should God remove the asbestos, lead, and mercury we dump into our lakes, rivers, and oceans so that a few individuals can make more money by not cleaning up the waste their businesses produce? We need to be angry, but not with God. God did it right, and we messed it up. The green revolution is a good thing, assuming we revert to the positive use of what God has given us and that we do not make different toxins that clean up one mess while creating another. We have the tools to do it right. We need to be indignant and angry with the situation, but let our anger go towards the selfish industrial and medical money-makers who have brought incredible pain and suffering to people all over this planet. We must not misdirect our anger toward the God who loves us, cares for us, and weeps with us at the horrible consequences of sin.

— John N. Clayton

# DOES GOD KNOW THE FUTURE?



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Some questions people bring to us in this ministry are very challenging. Usually the tough questions have a variety of implications that go far beyond the questions themselves. The question we are dealing with in this article is one of those. If God created time, and if every moment of time is “now” to God, then God does not have a past or a future. He sees every moment of time at once, all the time. If you can wrap your mind around that concept, then you realize that God was aware of what was going to happen to you before you were even born. If that is the case, then I really have no say in what is going to happen to me. It has already been predetermined and in a very real sense I am predestined to whatever is going to happen to me. If you bring heaven and hell into that picture, then it has already been determined before my birth whether I will be in heaven or in hell. In fact, this is a teaching of one denominational school of thought, and underlies the theology of several large denominational churches.

What the Bible teaches about God and time is clear. God is portrayed as not experiencing time as we do, and as a being outside of time. Second Peter 3:8 tells us that “one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” Psalm 90:4 says, “For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.” The biblical concept of time is that it is linear, flowing from beginning to end, as opposed to cyclical where time repeats over and over. The Hebrew word *reshith* translated “beginning” in Genesis 1:1 conveys that concept, and Revelation 22:13 makes it clear, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” There are many things portrayed in the Bible as happening before time began or after time has ended (see Psalm 90:2 and 1 Corinthians 2:7). There are also indications of God knowing people and their lot in life long before the events occur (see Psalm 139 and Acts 9:15–16).

Romans 8:29–30 tells us, “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” So the question remains, “Is life a giant charade in which our destiny has already been determined and our fate sealed?”

## **WHAT GOD CAN DO IS NOT ALWAYS WHAT GOD DOES.**

In this journal we have discussed the great “Belly Button Controversy” (see our September/October 2006 issue). The concept is expressed in the question of whether or not Adam had a belly button. Could God have created a man with a belly button as if the man had been nourished by an umbilical cord in his mother’s womb? Certainly God could do that. Could God have created a cosmos with light coming from an object 10 billion light years out in space so that we can observe it and think that what we are seeing happened 10 billion years ago? Could God give us this visual image of something that never happened? Certainly, He has the ability to do that. The question is not what God CAN DO. The question is what God WILL DO. God will not lie, deceive, mislead, or misrepresent anything in any way. While God has the power to do these things, He WILL NOT DO these things because it violates His very nature.

God could know the future. He has the power to do that. However, God has far grander and better purposes for mankind than that. We have been created for a purpose and that purpose involves our having the ability to choose between God and Satan, between good and evil. The whole Bible from Genesis 1 to Revelation centers around man deciding whether to follow God and good and righteousness, or whether man will reject God and follow Satan and evil and sin. The phrase “Choose you this day whom you will serve” (Joshua 24:15) is the basis of most of the Bible. If God were to exercise His ability to know what we are going to do, then our ability to choose would be negated and the purpose God has in creating man would be aborted.

John 1:14 tells us that God became flesh and dwelt among us. Have you ever considered what God had to leave behind to become flesh and dwell among us? Imagine how easy it would have been for Jesus (God in the flesh) to have aborted His mission or act in an overpowering, violent way. In Luke 9:51–56 there is the wonderful story of Jesus and His disciples coming to a town for the night, and having the town reject them and refuse hospitality. When James and John see this they want to “call down fire from heaven to consume them.” Jesus does not argue whether or not He could do that, but what He says is that He has “not come to destroy men’s lives, but to

save them.” What God can do is not the issue, but what He will do to fulfill His purposes is the issue.

## **MANY TIMES THE BIBLE INDICATES THAT GOD IS SURPRISED BY THE CHOICES OF MANKIND.**

One of the most interesting stories in the Old Testament is the story of Jonah. We tend to get absorbed in the story of the great fish, but there are many other messages in this story that are really more important. Jonah is sent to tell Nineveh that they have forty days to clean up their act or God is going to allow them to be destroyed. To put this in perspective, imagine a preacher marching into Congress and telling them to clean up their act within

forty days or they are going to be put out of business. For whatever reason, the people of Nineveh believed what Jonah said and vowed to change their ways. In Jonah 3:10 we are told “And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.” God



changed His mind, and apparently is surprised by their response. In Genesis 6:5–7, the familiar story of Noah, God seems surprised by man’s obsession with evil and violence and expresses regret for having created man.

You either have to say that God really does not have the capacity to do what the Bible says He has the capacity to do, or you must admit that God chooses to withhold His capacity to know the future in order to allow man to make a choice between God and Satan. The bottom line question is whether God’s purpose in creating man will be served or not. Ephesians 6:12, 3:9–11 and Job 1 and 2 make it clear that we have a vital role in the eternal struggle between good and evil and God will not abort our ability to fulfill that role.

## **GOD KNOWS WHAT THE ULTIMATE FUTURE WILL BE.**

As a parent, there were times when my children would do something which I knew would have a certain result. I had a choice to make when that result was bad—would I let them suffer the consequences of the act I had told them not to do, or would I step in and stop what they were doing and prevent the undesirable result? We had some huge plastic blocks we had bought for our visually-impaired child, Tim, to allow him to build things which were large enough for him to see and



handle. I had warned Tim and our youngest child Wendy not to build the structure too high, because it would fall. They seemed obsessed to build the “castles” as high as they could. I had a decision to make as a parent—would I let them build the structure too high, knowing it would fall and that they would get bumped and be crying, or would I step in and stop the construction. It was not life and death, and I figured they might learn something, so I gave them a last warning and left them to their own devices. About fifteen minutes later there was a huge crash and significant wailing. I knew what the ultimate future was going to be, but I allowed my children to make a choice and to suffer the consequences of that choice.

God has told us the ultimate results of our choices. Galatians 6:7 tells us “whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.” Numerous biblical passages urge us to walk as God has called us to, because the consequences of not walking as God tells us to are going to hurt us. The eternal consequences of our actions are what God is primarily concerned with, and God allows us to experience some bad things knowing that they will help us in achieving what is of primary importance. Paul was a chosen vessel, but in 2 Corinthians 12:7 he indicates that God had allowed him to have a painful problem to make sure the eternal consequence of his actions were not bad. God knows there will be judgment, but the basis of judgment is always built on man’s obedience to God. God will not force anyone to go to heaven who does not want to go there, and such things as baptism and doing God’s will are choices mankind makes that will determine each person’s individual fate.

Paul’s discussion of predestination in Romans 8 is predicated on man’s response to God’s commands to make a choice. In Chapter 6 Paul talks about being baptized into the death of Christ so our old man is crucified with Him (verse 6) and our body of sin destroyed. The next several verses talk about being made alive to God through Christ and being made free from sin (verse 22). After comparing obedient Christians who live differently by choice and who have left behind their past, Paul describes the ultimate result of having made the right choices. Those predestined in Romans 8:28–35 are those who have been crucified with Christ as discussed in chapter 6. This predestination is not an individual promise with man having no role. It is a promise made to those who make a choice for God and follow through with obedience to that choice.

The question of whether God knows the future or not is complex in many ways, but the simple answer is that God knows what the future is for those who obey Him and follow His teachings, but He leaves it up to each of us to decide whether we will accept the future God wants for us.

—JNC

# IS SATAN REAL?



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Atheists and the media have always had a lot of fun with the religious concept of Satan. We are all familiar with comic strips showing people in hell with demons wearing red suits, horns, and pitch forks running around persecuting them and the “big boss,” Satan, watching all of the torment with

glee. There are countless jokes like the story about the man and woman who had been together on earth and never got married. They both died, went to heaven and decided to get married. Their problem was they could not find any preachers in heaven to marry them. Similar jokes abound concerning lawyers who also cannot be found in heaven. When I was a youngster there was a comedian named Flip Wilson whose favorite line for any wrong-doing he did was, “The Devil made me do it.”

Is Satan a myth? What does the Bible tell us about Satan and what is tradition? Part of the issue in this discussion is evil itself. Atheists like Richard Dawkins claim that evil does not exist. In *River Out of Eden* Dawkins wrote, “The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good . . . .”

The fact is that evil is real. Evil is not an object like a rock or a planet. Evil is a choice made by beings capable of making choices. Unless a person believes there is nothing that is ever wrong (which even an atheist is not usually willing to do), then evil does exist. Evil is not a creation of God. It exists because God exists, and if God is good and love, then the absence of good and love must exist. Good and love are manifested in God and have their capacity to act because of God. In the beginning, evil had no vehicle through which it could act. Before man came on the scene there was no evil because there was no living being able to make a choice. In the natural world evil does not exist. When a spider catches a fly and eats it, there is no moral issue. Birth and death are natural processes in the animal world. Animals have no self-concept, self-worth, politics, religion, or causes. The natural world runs on instinct, not politics.

The question then becomes whether we believe human beings are the only sentient beings through which evil can operate. This is where the issue of Satan's existence becomes relevant. In the Old Testament there is very little reference to Satan. The name "Satan" literally means "adversary," and in all five cases in the Old Testament Satan is shown as opposing the best interests of men. In Job 1 and 2 Satan is shown as the prince of opposition to God and this reference is repeated in the New Testament (see John 14:30; Ephesians 2:2). In the New Testament there are repeated references to spiritual beings, or angels. Many of these references are not in apocalyptic books like Revelation, but are seen in the letters. (See Ephesians 6:12; 3:9–10; and Jude 6.) In Matthew 4, Luke 4, and Mark 1 we are told that Jesus was tempted by Satan, and Hebrews 4:15 tells us that He "was in all points tempted like as we are." In 1 John 3:8 and Hebrews 2:14 we are told that the purpose of Jesus coming into the world was to "destroy the works of the devil." We are further told that when we die we become "as the angels of God in heaven" in at least some respects (see Matthew 22:23–30). To reject the existence of beings that are not human is to deny virtually the entire Bible.

If we agree that evil does exist and that there is such a thing as right and wrong, then the only remaining question is how this wrong functions. Do people just accidentally do it, or stumble into it, or is there an intelligence that propels evil towards us selectively? One of the interesting things about Satan and his communication techniques is that the only direct communication between Satan and other beings after man sinned are when those beings are not humans. Satan spoke directly to God in Job and directly to Jesus in the temptation of Christ. He contended with the angel Michael in Jude 9. The role of Satan and humans seems to be much more indirect. Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:27 not to give place to the devil. In 2 Corinthians 2:11 Paul writes, "we are not ignorant of his [Satan's] devices." In the case of Judas, Satan entered into him (Luke 22:3; John 13:27) and put things into his heart (John 13:2). In Acts 5:3 Satan is said to have filled Ananias' heart. Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 2:18 that Satan hinders those who are doing God's will, and in Luke 13:16 Jesus indicates that Satan had bound or controlled a woman. All



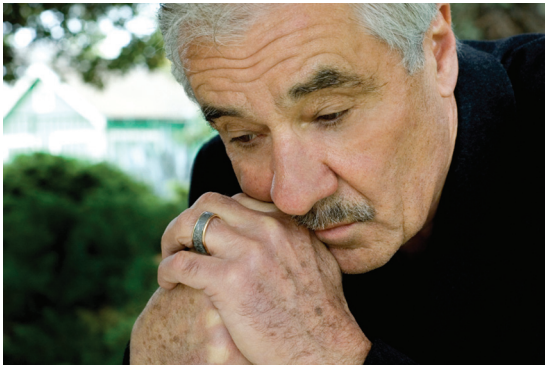
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Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 2:18 that Satan hinders those who are doing God's will, and in Luke 13:16 Jesus indicates that Satan had bound or controlled a woman. All

of these verses and situations indicate that there is a personal force that does evil to people individually and purposefully.

The conclusion then boils down to deciding whether we believe there are sentient beings other than humans, who like us have the ability to know the difference between good and evil and make active choices along that line. If we do not believe these beings exist, then we either deny the existence of evil or attribute it to man's brain in some physical way. If there is a God, and if man is spiritually created in God's image, then it would seem reasonable that there are other beings with whom we share a relationship with God. We know humans exist who reject God, so it is reasonable to believe that these beings may have rejected God. Science fiction writers have always focused on conflict between spiritual forces. The existence of an intelligent evil force is reasonable.

Satan is a malignant reality always hostile to God and God's people. He is not a physical being and he has been restricted in his access to humanity. He cannot overpower us, and in fact, if we resist him he will flee



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from us (see James 4:7). God has further promised us that He will protect us, but not in a way that removes our capacity to choose whether we will give in to Satan's influence. This promise and our willingness to use it is perhaps one of the great challenges to all of us as Christians:

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it (1 Corinthians 10:13, NIV).

Peter tells us what we must do to overcome temptations:

Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings (1 Peter 5:6–9, NIV).

—JNC

# GOD'S METHODS AND MAN'S BEING

“... Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth—everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made” (Isaiah 43:6–7, NIV)

It is always interesting to watch people with strong denominational attachments explain their beliefs about creation. I always wonder how long it will take for them to invoke a word or a belief that is not in the Bible or that contradicts what the Bible says. I look for terms that are indicators of following a denominational teaching and not comprehending the real message of the Bible. The tragedy is that this teaching misleads people into thinking that to follow the Bible you have to accept on faith an interpretation of biblical history in spite of evidence to the contrary. The fact is that everything the Bible actually says historically agrees in detail with the evidence.

One of the major sources of misunderstanding involves the methods God tells us He has used in the process of bringing man and man's environment into existence. The traditional denominational view is that everything happened like a magic show in which God does something and the subject at hand mysteriously appears with no cause and by a magical power known



only to the magician (God).

God repeatedly tells us that is not the case. Even in the Genesis account God tells us He used two processes. “And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made” (Genesis 2:3, KJV). In this verse the

Hebrew words *bara* meaning to **create** and *asah* meaning to **make** are both used. Some translations like the NIV do not treat this as being two distinct processes, so the NIV says “the work of creating that he had done.” The fact is that the two words in question are used in exclusive ways all through the Genesis account. In Genesis 1:1 we are told that “God created (*bara*) the heavens and the earth.” In verses 7, 16, 25, and 31 God made (*asah*) new things from what He had previously created. When God speaks of the production of man's

soul in Genesis 1:27 the word *bara* is used. In Genesis 2:7 when man’s body is described the word used is *yatsar* meaning to form or mold. The obvious implication is that man’s body is being made of material already in existence and referred to as “the dust of the earth.”

In Isaiah 43:7 (quoted at the beginning of this article) and in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 there are three components to man mentioned that these three Hebrew words can help us understand. First Thessalonians says “... May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (NIV). When these two passages are put together with Genesis, a better understanding of the whole makeup of man and the methods God used in the creation process become clear.

Genesis	Isaiah 43:7	1 Thessalonians 5:23
Man is created in God’s image (1:27) <i>bara</i>	Created for glory <i>bara</i>	Soul <i>psuche</i>
Man’s body is formed from the dust (2:7) <i>yatsar</i>	Formed <i>yatsar</i>	Body <i>soma</i>
God makes life (breath) in man (2:7) <i>asah</i>	Made <i>asah</i>	Spirit (breath) <i>pneuma</i>

The Hebrew word for breath is *neshamah* and is used in reference to man in Genesis 2:7 as well as in Genesis 7:22 in reference to animals. The concept is life force and is not unique to man. What sets man apart is the fact that we are created (*bara*) in the image of God and that spiritual makeup allows us to do things that animals cannot do. Bible translators have had a difficult time with this concept and in English the result is sometimes confusing. In Hebrews 4:12 we are told that our life force and our makeup in God’s image can be separated. When Jesus was hanging on the cross, He gave up His life force (Luke 23:46) because being God, He was not just in the image of God—He was God. In Matthew 10:28 Jesus tells us not to fear those who can destroy the body but cannot affect the soul—the part of us that is in the image of God.

David Kruse of Auburn, Indiana, sent me a chart that was printed way back in 1920 in a book titled *Dispensational Truth* by Clarence Larkin. We have modified the chart (above) somewhat to make it clearer, but we hope that this will be a visual aid to help you understand this concept.

—JNC

# NOISY BOOKS ON THE HISTORICITY OF THE BIBLE “TAKE THEM WITH A GRAIN OF SALT”

by Lydia Evdoxiadi Verniory

Editors note; Atheist writers have been flooding Web sites with claims that archaeology does not support the Bible, and that most of what is described in the Old Testament did not actually happen.

Dr. Lydia Evdoxiadi Verniory, is a cultural heritage consultant living in Geneva, Switzerland. She is an active archaeologist in the Middle East and lectures on current archaeological research issues. She works for museums, cultural foundations, and tourism organizations. She is a consultant to governments, businesses, foundations, and institutions around the world. We believe that her expertise makes this article very helpful in the area of archaeology and the Bible.



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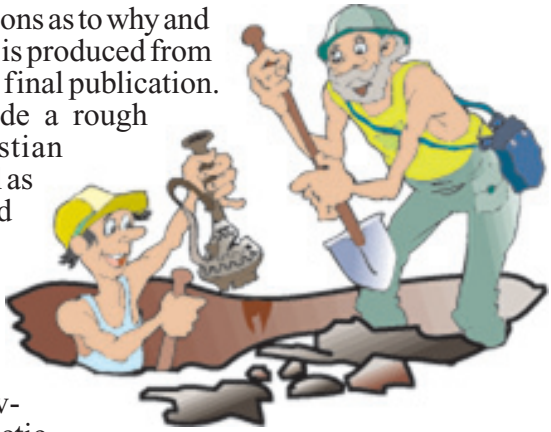
The main purpose of this article is to give an answer to many Christian people who read a bit too much in literature on recent archaeological research and how it disproves the authenticity of the biblical accounts as they relate to places, people, historical

events, monuments, inscriptions, and manuscripts. This literature is mostly promoted by archaeologists such as Dr. Willam G. Dever and Dr. Israel Finkelstein, as well as others. It constitutes a very aggressive wave of scholarship which mostly targets lay church/synagogue audiences, and to a large extent university students and professors who are eager to turn to other disciplines to answer practical and theoretical questions. In this article I argue that archaeology is simply a science that proposes multiple explanations to common questions.

In the past year, several Christians have been asking for some clues into what is going on, especially with regard to Dr. Finkelstein's book and relevant literature. The purpose of this article is to inform Christian communities and individuals who have contact with this literature. A special emphasis is put on the research strategies of such

scholarship as well as reasons as to why and how this type of literature is produced from the thought process to the final publication.

The aim is to provide a rough guideline to the Christian reader of all levels, as well as to reassure that even field specialists like myself are sceptical about current theories, their data validity and the questionable use of archaeology to those means. Just about every time I encounter a practicing Christian who has been reading



biblical archaeology commentaries this question pops up, “You are an archaeologist of the Middle East, what do you think of the *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology’s Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts* by Neil Asher Silberman and Israel Finkelstein?” Before the real conversation begins, there is usually a grave introductory statement of the type, “My friend read it, we argued over it, and he/she does not come to church any more.”

With much practical experience in the archaeology of the Middle East, I tend to avoid judgmental discussions of colleagues and I have a policy to make no personal comments. Instead, I prefer to address the questions and concerns more as products of a process, and to report the outcomes and impacts they have on others. This is due to the fact that people’s beliefs, especially those of researchers and scholars, change. We are consciously, and often subconsciously, conditioned by new theories, trends, ideas, and agendas as well as the overall political and religious tone of the times. This is natural and can even be positive for all those who live outside a vacuum.

In the Greek language a scientist, be it an archaeologist or other, is called *epistimonas*, which means one stands ABOVE a topic—evaluating and working carefully. The discipline of the knowledge of facts is a virtue and a quality in every researcher. I would like to argue that what makes the difference in what kind of archaeologist we are talking about does not depend so much on the knowledge of the subject. Any subject can be learned with enough discipline. What makes an archaeologist who is an active researcher stand out of the crowd is his or her willingness, and courage, to address “issues” and mostly “critical issues.”

In the archaeology of the Middle East, dealing with an issue such as the historicity of the Bible is a very empowering experience. Yet, in most of my personal and professional encounters with scholars who



work on these issues, I must say, paradoxically, that such research can begin from weakness. It often stems from internal questions on either the self-value of the researcher or the testing of the validity of a given truth. Strong researchers have a smoother approach. I like to call this point “the critical fork.” Option A tends to present research and research results with a sledge hammer — “Is it or is it not?” Option B tends to make a point on a map of many points and proposes solutions to current questions — “What are the possibilities?” Critical time and inherent decisions influence the formulation of any research question. That is to say, there are many ways to ask a question, according to one’s belief system and perspectives and this can produce as many results.

I observe lecture audiences of people who are not professional archaeologists and I find that the majority of people actually prefer Option A research. This is natural because when we look upon an “authority” on the matter, we want clear and confident answers. I find it very amusing that type A researchers tend to be males with deep voices, charismatic ways, and a sensitive temperament. They also tend to address lay audiences very often.

Option B researchers, on the other hand, tend to avoid lay audiences. They tend to lack patience because, as a matter of fact, they put considerable work into their analysis, and usually on a level that it cannot be easily conveyed to a lay audience. Therefore they do not see the use of doing so. I am more of the B type of researcher. However, when it comes to the shaking of other people’s belief systems in the name of research, I am more than glad to take a step down — which is quite an elevating experience. The best questions come from lay audiences. Currently, I am evolving into a type C researcher who cares to bridge the gaps in knowledge that are enormous only in our minds.

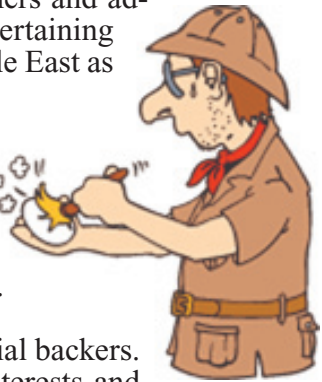
I will give you some practical advice on surviving with your faith after reading this archaeological literature. First, I would invite you to consider the following reflection which stems from my expertise and experience on issues between the East and the West. Here is a valuable key to understanding not only research on the Bible, archaeology, and the Middle East, but also on how knowledge is formed on certain regions and subjects of the Middle East. In fact, this figures in the course syllabus of a top institute in the world of archaeology on the study of the Middle East:

The growth of western knowledge about the East Mediterranean and the Middle East is closely related to the expansion of western trading and political interests in these regions over the last few centuries. The production of new knowledge — including archaeological and biblical perspectives on the ancient

and prehistoric past — has proceeded at an extraordinary pace. To a significant extent, however, this knowledge has been filtered through many old world views. One consequence of this has been the replacement of complex histories of interaction and exchange with overly simplistic views which equate the knowledge of the day with simplified knowledge on very complex issues.

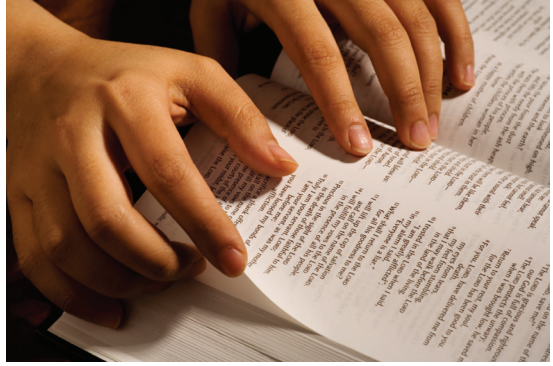
Here are some survival tips for beginners and advanced readers of archaeological research pertaining to the history and archaeology of the Middle East as it relates to the Bible:

1. Every book represents a point of view on a range of possibilities. The more reluctant the author is to discuss other views the more reluctant you should be to believe the validity of his or her work.
2. Realize that all research has financial backers. This translates into possible hidden interests and agendas, and subsequent ideological pressure on the researcher and the topic.
3. Read reviews of such books before buying them on the Internet. Usually a collation of experts and non-experts comment quite efficiently.
4. Discuss your questions following such readings with others in your religious and community environments. Many times non-experts can read between the lines very well. I submit some work to a dear friend of mine who is a lawyer and to my neighbor who is a therapist. Great insight in both cases.
5. Bring your questions and issues to your spiritual community and its leaders. Events and lectures can be organized to discuss, exchange ideas, and perhaps take positions.
6. Invite archaeologist experts in this region of the world from your religious community. They are more apt to understand where your questions are coming from and know how to handle them in an intelligent manner.



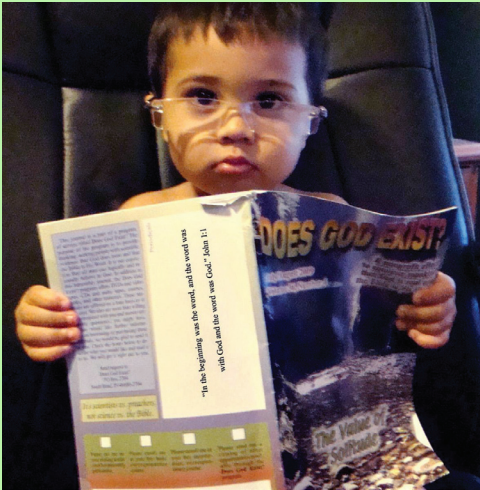
In this short article we explored key notions of alternative research strategies for answering questions pertaining to the authenticity of

the Bible through the lens of archaeological knowledge in the Middle East. Further, you were informed of the pivotal role of how knowledge has been formulated for studies that concern this area of the world. Last but not least, you were provided with short guidelines to informed reading skills.



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I would encourage you to persevere in the area of archaeological study for your own growth and enrichment as an accompaniment to your biblical study.

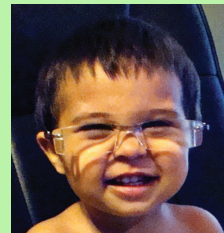


The DOES GOD EXIST? journal is read by readers of all ages. But for those of you who may be a little too young to enjoy the articles in this publication, we have good news for you!

You will be happy to know that we have a new Web site for our young readers. Check it out!

[www.ScienceTerrific.org](http://www.ScienceTerrific.org)

Our thanks to young Gabriel Wynn and Tom Wynn who took the pictures.



# Nobel Scientists and God

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

## Sir John Eccles Nobel Laureate in Medicine and Physiology

Science and religion are very much alike. Both are imaginative and creative aspects of the human mind. The appearance of conflict is a result of ignorance.

We come to exist through a divine act. That divine guidance is a theme throughout our life; at our death the brain goes, but that divine guidance and love continues. Each of us is a unique, conscious being, a divine creation. It is the religious view. It is the only view consistent with all the evidence.

There has been a regrettable tendency of many scientists to claim that science is so powerful and all pervasive that in the not too distant future it will provide an explanation in principle for all phenomena in the world of nature, including man, even of human consciousness in all of its manifestations. [Karl] Popper has labeled this claim as promissory materialism, which is extravagant and unfulfillable.

Yet on account of the high regard for science, it has great persuasive power with the intelligent laity because it is advocated by the great mass of scientists who have not critically evaluated the dangers of this false and arrogant claim.

I regard this theory as being without foundation. The more we discover scientifically about the brain, the more clearly do we distinguish between the brain events and the mental phenomena, and the more wonderful do the mental phenomena become. Promissory materialism is simply a superstition held by dogmatic materialists. It has all the features of a Messianic prophecy, with the promise of a future freed of all problems—a kind of Nirvana for our unfortunate successors.

We have to recognize that we are spiritual beings with souls existing in a spiritual world as well as material beings with bodies and brains existing in a material world.

The amazing success of the theory of evolution has protected it from significant critical evaluation in recent times. However, it fails in a most important respect. It cannot account for the existence of each one of us as unique, self-conscious beings.”

## *Cynthia's Corner*

Editor's Note: We have had a large number of requests from reader's to get to know Cynthia Clayton better after the article on relationships in the November/December issue. This column will provide that opportunity. We hope you will enjoy it and get a different perspective on some of the things we have discussed.

Since our marriage in June 2009 we have traveled together to many **Does God Exist?** lectureships as well as visiting both sides of our family. During visits to the congregations sponsoring the lectureships, I have been impressed with the nature and significance of New Testament hospitality. When Christians open their homes to strangers who are also Christians, they demonstrate what it means to be a part of the family of God and to be one in Christ (John 15:12; 17:20–23). I have been strengthened and encouraged in my faith by the Christians who have opened their homes to us without reservation, in trust and love as if we were really flesh and blood family members. To me this demonstration of Christian love and unity clearly shows Christian faith in action. Who else would invite strangers into their homes, giving them free rein, trusting that they are going to respond to this act of faith in a like manner? Christians show to the world that they really want to give as well as to receive when they show love and trust to their guests, and the guests return that trust and love with respect and honor to their host.



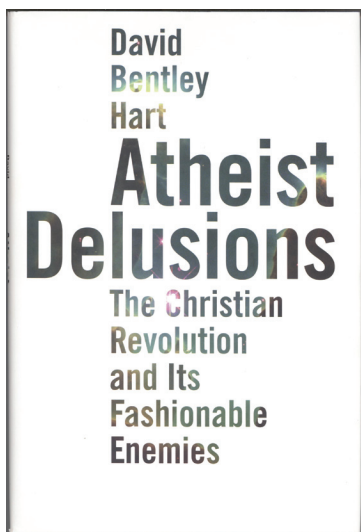
The bedrock of the Christian faith involves doing unto others as you would have them do to you (Matthew 7:12), going the second mile (Matthew 5:41), and loving your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:39). This showing of hospitality speaks volumes to nonbelievers. Would people of the world treat strangers in this way, and would the strangers respond in the same way? In truth, the argument for the Christian system, and Jesus being real and not just an intellectual exercise, is best demonstrated when the world can see Christ living in us as they see how we treat each other (John 13:35).



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

### **Atheist Delusions**

by David Bentley Hart, Yale University Press, 2010, 272 pages,  
\$17.00 (paperback) ISBN-13: 978-0-300-164299



This book is subtitled “The Christian Revolution and Its Fashionable Enemies,” and in the flyleaf the author says “Currently it is fashionable to be devoutly undevout.” We have had a number of articles in this journal over the past twelve months dealing with the ignorance shown in atheist attacks on God and on the Bible. Our discussions have been very basic and rooted in science and common sense. This book is rooted in history and philosophy.

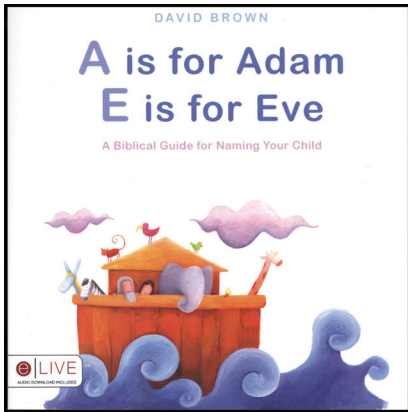
Hart shows how Christianity transformed the ancient world and brought dignity and value to humans, freeing mankind from the cruel pagan traditions into which man had fallen. The

book is divided into four parts: (1) Faith, Reason, and Freedom; (2) The Mythology of the Secular Age; (3) Revolution: The Christian Invention of the Human; and (4) Reaction and Retreat.

Hart writes strongly and belligerently. His style is like Richard Dawkins, but his message is very different. He accurately attacks the rather weak arguments of modern atheists like Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, Daniel Dennett, and Sam Harris. If you are looking for a book that does a pretty good job of demolishing the claims of these and other atheist writers in the field of history and philosophy, you will find this book useful.

## A is for Adam, E is for Eve

by David Brown, Tate Publishing, 2009, 92 pages, \$9.99, (paperback) ISBN-13: 978-1-60799-089-5



Most of us know that biblical names often have a meaning that describes a major circumstance in the lives of the characters. The name Moses means “drawn out of the water” and has connections to a major event in the life of Moses.

What David Brown has done is to go through a large number of biblical names and explain what each name means in the original language. The name Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist for example, means YaHWeH remem-

bers. God had made a promise to this man and God remembered the promise in conjunction with Jesus’ birth.

The book was intended to help people looking for a name for their child, but it would be very useful as a quick reference for people preparing lessons or sermons. It is a small 6-by-6-inch 89-page book, that can be a useful resource.

Admire God’s  
Dandy Designs on the web.  
[www.DandyDesigns.org](http://www.DandyDesigns.org)

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!

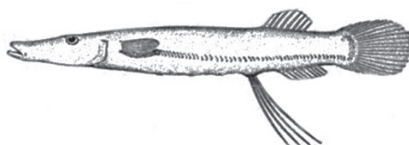


# DANDY DESIGNS

## FEATURING STRANGE FISH EYES

### THE SPOOKFISH EYE: SEEING WITH MIRRORS

As science explores the deepest parts of the oceans, new discoveries seem to come at a bewildering rate. The conditions deep in the ocean are very harsh—cold temperatures, limited amounts of light or any other kind of energy, and massive pressures. To design anything that can exist in this harsh, alien world is a challenge, and we are just now beginning to design equipment able to travel deep in the ocean and see what is there.



Brownsnout spookfish from an illustration in a book published in 1896.

[Wikimedia Commons](#)

Most animals see by having lenses that bring light to a focus on the retina of the eye where specialized cells carry the message to the brain. There are a number of problems with lenses. They can only look straight ahead of the animal, they are thick and bulky, and there is always a loss of energy and intensity as the light passes through the lens. Dr. Julian Partridge at the University of Bristol in England has studied an unusual fish called the brownsnout spookfish during a deep sea observing tour. The fish has two segments to its eyes. The lenses of the fish are set so as to see above the fish, and there are mirrors in the eye enabling the fish to see below it and to the sides.

Concave mirrors are used in most large telescopes. They have great light gathering ability, can handle unusual angles of light, and do not lose as much light energy as lenses. In the spookfish, organic crystals that have high reflectivity line the eye and are arranged so that their focal point is on the retina. This is a highly sophisticated design, and gives the fish visual acuity not seen in other forms of life. The fish is being studied to see how we can use the advantages of this system in our own designs.

This is just one more of a long series of cases where scientists and engineers look at the design God has built into living things so that we can imitate it to produce something that can benefit mankind.

Reference: *Popular Science*, April 2009, pages 10–11.



# THE BAFFLING BARRELEYE

Two thousand feet below the ocean's surface lives a fish with strange looking eyes. It is known as the barreleye. (*Macropinna microstoma*) If you saw it you would wonder how it could eat. The problem is that its eyes are on the very top of its head and its mouth



Photo © 2004 MBARI

is in the normal place for a fish — facing forward and on the bottom part of its face. So how can the fish see what is in front of its face?

It is easy to understand that a fish living deep in the ocean, is going to have most of its food, such as krill, falling down from the shallower depths. The eyes of the barreleye are facing up and are covered with a fluid-filled, transparent dome which protects them from jellyfish. It will sometimes eat fish that have gotten tangled in the jellyfish tentacles. For easier seeing, the eyes also have green lenses which filter out down-coming light.

The Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI) in California has solved the mystery of how these fish can see what is in front of them. The eyes actually rotate. The fish normally will have its eyes in the “up” position which it uses to watch for prey coming from above. The fish can then use muscles to pop its eyes forward so it can aim at its target and eat its food. The structure of the skull and the muscle placement allows this unusual adaptation so the barreleye is ideally suited to eat the food available at the depth where this fish lives.



The two dots which look like eyes are actually nostrils. The eyes are the green domes on top of the head under a transparent cover.

Photo © 2004 MBARI

There are many designs for sight in the animal world. The kind of food desired, the conditions under which the animal lives, and the anatomical structure of the animal all play a role in allowing the animal to survive. These intricate designs demand sophisticated engineering principles. We can clearly see God's wisdom and design in the barreleye.

Source: [http://www.mbari.org/news/news\\_releases/2009/barreleye/barreleye.html](http://www.mbari.org/news/news_releases/2009/barreleye/barreleye.html).

# News and Notes

## DOES GOD EXIST? 2010 SEMINAR IN THE CANYONLANDS, SEPTEMBER 19-24



A Grand Canyon view

Both photos: Cynthia Clayton

**PURPOSE:** To help Christians understand the Canyonlands area, the history of the earth as seen in the rock record, and how that history correlates with a literal understanding of the Bible.

**WHERE:** Leave from Flagstaff, AZ, and visit Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, Sunset Crater,

Zion National Park, Meteor Crater, Painted Desert, Petrified Forest, and points in between.

**CONDUCT:** Air-conditioned motor coach with lectures presented by John Clayton and Alan Doty en route. At each point participants will have the option of hiking or staying in one place and enjoying the view. Hiking is not required.

**PARTICIPANTS:** Anyone age eight or older who is willing to participate in lectures, devotionals, studies and wholesome activity.

**INCLUDED:** Bus transportation, mo-



Alan Doty, our guide through Bryce Canyon

tels, field guides, entry fees, breakfasts Monday through Friday. Not included: Other meals, gratuities, souvenirs, transportation to and from Flagstaff.

**COSTS:** No money is paid to **Does God Exist?**, to your guides, or to John Clayton. The only cost is for the items described above. Cost is: singles: \$898; doubles: \$797; three or four in a room: \$549. Trip insurance is available. To reserve space or for more information contact: Mark Story at Queenslander Tours, Mark@QLTours.com, phone (toll free) 877-865-6711; or John Clayton, jncdge@aol.com, phone 269-687-9426.

**HIPPOCRATIC OATH CHANGES.** A recent survey of medical schools in the United States shows that there have been major revisions in the Hippocratic Oath that doctors take as a reflection of how they will use their expertise. One hundred and fifty medical schools were surveyed with 98 percent of their graduates taking the oath their schools presented to them. Only one of those schools used the classical version of the oath. Other schools deleted sections that included the avoidance of sexual contact with patients, references to a covenantal relationship with God, and a refusal to do abortions and euthanasia. It is pretty obvious that the medical profession has given in to cultural pressure to allow doctors to do things that would have been unthinkable not too many years ago. Source: *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*, March 2010, page 3.

**HOBBIT DEBATE RAGES ON.** Between 2001 and 2003 remains were found in a cave in Indonesia of a human with a brain size roughly one-third the size of a modern human brain. The specimen was not a child and yet it stood about three feet tall. Dating of the specimens has shown that they are relatively recent—much younger than larger specimens found in Africa. Some scientists believe the specimens are from a deformed species of man associated with genetic disorders. Most people working on the specimens do not agree with that theory. The team of researchers says, “This is a new species that cannot be explained by any known pathology.” The main message is that man’s history on earth is very complex, and many biological changes have taken place to cause a wide diversity of races and physical features. The biblical definition avoids all of this by defining man in terms of his spiritual characteristics and not his body. We are created in the image of God and all of us have characteristics that reflect that spiritual makeup including creative ability in art and music, the capacity to worship, and the ability to feel guilt, sympathy, and compassion. Source: Michael Casey, Associated Press, Greensboro, NC, *News & Record*, March 7, 2010, page A2.

**NEW FACTOR IN GLOBAL WARMING.** Meteorologists at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) laboratory in Boulder, Colorado, have announced the discovery that there has been a huge drop in the amount of water vapor in the high atmosphere which has resulted in global cooling. The amount of cooling is 25 percent more than it otherwise would have been, and the lower stratosphere effect seems to be related to the oxidation of methane. Apparently climate is very sensitive to water vapor concentrations, and the whole discussion shows how little we know about all of the heat-release systems built into our planet. Source: *Science News*, February 27, 2010 page 11.

**TUTORING AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE.** Imagine moving to a new community with your family. Your children are in elementary school and you want them to get a good start in their new school and in the new community. When you get to school you find that all of the instruction is going to be in Russian, and that, in fact, no one in this school can speak English. This situation is exactly what many families in America are facing as they find themselves having been displaced from their home cultures and communities and take their kids to school for the first time. We now have a label in American education for these kids, ELL, which means English Language Learner. Recently we got to see a program in Lebanon, Tennessee, in which students at Byars Dowdy Elementary school were tutored by members of the College Hills Church of Christ. Christians have been teaching “English as a Second Language” classes in many countries, but here is an opportunity at home to serve people and be a unique help in the community. Information is available from Tina Anderson at [tinande@charter.net](mailto:tinande@charter.net) or from the College Hills Church, 615-444-9502.

**ACLU BEGINS “PERSONAL FREEDOM SURVEY.”** The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) makes personal freedom the buzz word in their campaigns, and now a survey has been mailed to begin a blitz of political leaders. The problem, of course, is that the only people that the ACLU wants to have freedom are people who subscribe to their moral and ethical code. They oppose abstinence-only education, the rights of unborn babies, the ability of babies to be adopted by couples who can adequately provide for their social development, the right of a church to restrict employment to those who believe what the church teaches, or any attempt by religious people to serve and/or educate others. Some of these issues are complex, but claiming to protect people’s rights when you deny the rights of people who do not share your moral views is hardly protecting freedom. Source: ACLU Flyer “ACLU Personal Freedom Survey,” March 2010.

**TROPICAL STORMS PREVENT EARTHQUAKES.** Severe earthquakes continue to cause misery to humans. We have pointed out that the capacity of earth plates to move provides new minerals and land areas where life can thrive, and that they are not without purpose. Now new evidence shows that the energies that earthquakes generate can be moderated by weather. Storms reduce pressure over land but not on the ocean floor. This imbalance slows quakes and makes them less destructive. The better we understand the design of the earth, the more likely we are to be able to avoid disasters. Source: *Science Illustrated*, March/April 2010, page 18.

**TEACHER ATTACK ON BIBLE CASE CONTINUES.** James Corbett teaching a European history class at Capistrano Valley High School has precipitated a court battle over whether a public school teacher has a right to attack the religious beliefs of students. One of Corbett's students recorded him saying the biblical creationism story is "religious, superstitious nonsense." The student sued and the case went to federal court. The National Educational Association (NEA), teacher's union, has called the suit "gagging teacher's in-class speech." The first court ruling was that what Corbett said constituted "improper disapproval of religion in violation of the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution." Corbet was not required to pay any money damages because the court said the law was unclear. Both sides have appealed the ruling.

This is a difficult area for teachers and students. How do you discuss the Crusades without getting into the foolishness of both sides in the conflict? Moslems certainly will be incensed at statements that might be made in American classrooms about Muhammad's military exploits in the history of the Middle East. The battle is not over. Source: *NEA Today*, March/April 2010, page 23. Also on [www.firstamendmentcenter.org/pdf/teachersguide.pdf](http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/pdf/teachersguide.pdf).

**HOMESCHOOL TEXTBOOK PROBLEMS ACCELERATE.** One of the problems that parents face in today's educational climate is the fact that getting their child a good education, free of atheist or religious bias, is almost impossible. Public high schools in many places have become atheistic in their approach to every subject, and frequently promote lifestyles and values hostile to what parents want for their children. We have mentioned in this journal a number of times that the teacher's union (NEA) has made political choices and moral decisions that many of its members do not support. However, in many school districts it is essentially required that a teacher be a part of the union. When I taught, you did not have to be a member of the union, but you had to pay dues as the union represented the teachers, whether they were members or not.

One consequence of all of this is that textbooks for home schooling reflect the religious views of whoever prints them. Bob Jones University Press and Apologia Educational Ministries are the two leading providers of biology books for homeschoolers. Their books sell for \$65 and \$52 respectively, and promote dispensational-millennial views of the history of the earth and of biology. With 1.5 million students homeschooled, and with 83 percent of their parents wanting religious instruction in the books, this is a big business. Parents who want to homeschool but do not want the indoctrination that goes with these books have a difficult time finding resources. The science content of the books, according to scientists who have studied them, is very poor.

The only option for most parents who want a solid science background for their students is to use whatever textbooks the local school system is using, and simply show evidence and discuss with their students anything that they feel is incorrect. We are available to help in this, and will help equip students for college work in which the same questions arise. Homeschooling is hard, but avoiding denominational indoctrination can be as much of a problem as avoiding atheistic views of humans and our role in the cosmos. Source: Associated Press, Greensboro, NC, *News & Record*, March 7, 2010, page A5.

**ATHEISTS OFFER PORN FOR BIBLE CAMPAIGN.** Atheist students at the University of Texas at San Antonio are offering pornography to any student over the age of 18 who turns in Bibles or other religious texts. The atheists maintain that porn is no worse than what is written in religious materials, and they call their promotion “Smut for Smut.” A university spokesman says the campaign is legal and there is no plan in place to stop it. Source: [mysanantonio.com](http://mysanantonio.com), posted March 3, 2010.

**PAUL'S PORTRAIT.** Archaeologists excavating a catacomb near the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome have discovered a portrait of the Apostle Paul dating back to A.D. 300. Paul is said to have been martyred around A.D. 65 — reportedly beheaded. A sarcophagus found under the basilica was dated to the first or second century and is thought to be that of the apostle. Skeptics of the Bible continue to explain away repeated finds that support the integrity of the biblical manuscripts, and this is another in a series of recent finds that make that difficult to do. Source: *Biblical Archeology Review*, January/February 2010, page 18.

**NEANDERTHAL ART.** One of the controversies among scientists and apologists is the place of Neanderthal man in the history of humans. There is a large genetic difference between Neanderthal and modern man, so many biologists have claimed that Neanderthal

was a species different from modern man. There have been finds of specimens that seem to be a mix of Neanderthal and modern man which would suggest they were not different species. We have pointed out in this journal that races can look a lot different and still be the same species. We would suggest that Neanderthal was another race of humans. Support for that view comes from finds of art and music works of Neanderthal origin. In *Scientific American* (March 2010, page 18) there is a report of more art work of the Neanderthals. This time it is jewelry made of carefully painted scallop shells and cockleshells. Archeologist João Zilhão of the University of Bristol in England says that “Neanderthals had the same capabilities for symbolism, imagination, and creativity as modern humans.”

**EARTHQUAKES, SUFFERING, AND GOD.** We have all been saddened by the devastating earthquakes that have ravaged Haiti and Chile earlier this year. Atheists continue to assert that these tragedies are incompatible with belief in God, because if a benevolent God existed He would not allow such things to take place. This view ignores a variety of facts:

1. The areas struck by these earthquakes are located along active fault zones that are constantly generating earthquakes. Haiti, like southern California, is where we have known for a long time that a major earthquake would eventually occur. These earthquakes are part of the system that recycles rock materials and forms new landmass and soils. We continue to ignore the fact that dangerous places should be avoided and special efforts should be taken to safeguard life in such areas.

2. Much of the massive loss of life happened because of human greed. Buildings had been built without obedience to code or rules for construction. In areas where such buildings were not dominant the loss of life was minimal. If Christian values were applied, much of the pain would have been averted.

3. In spite of the causes of the pain and destruction, it has been Christians who have addressed the needs in these areas most profoundly. Prior to the earthquakes very little was being done by anyone to address the poor conditions in Haiti and this neglect contributed to the suffering that we all observed.

4. If you do not have a purpose for life, then no explanation of a tragedy is satisfying. The Bible gives an explanation of why God created human beings and why He gave us choices. That understanding precludes God micromanaging mankind and his environment. For more on this we encourage readers to watch program number nine of our video series on [doesgodexist.tv](http://doesgodexist.tv) or read through the [whypain.org](http://whypain.org) Web site.

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

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