

DOES GOD EXIST?

ARBEIT MACHT FREI

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Volume 40 Number 1



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

Main entrance to the Nazi
Auschwitz I concentration camp

WHY DOESN'T GOD STOP IT!!!???

Does God Exist? Lectureships

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In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
Genesis 1:1

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

Home phone: 269-687-9426 FAX: 269-687-9431

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

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WHY DOESN'T GOD STOP IT!!!???

In recent months it seems that atheists have moved away from attacking belief in God on the basis of scientific evidence to attacking God on an emotional and moral level. Atheists seem to have backed off from talking about naturalism and evolutionary explanations for the complexities seen in the natural world—perhaps because they perceive the weaknesses in their arguments. Instead they



Hurricane Sandy Destruction

have been pouring out articles and books on the question, “Why, if there is a God, would he allow mankind to suffer old age, wars, ethnic cleansing, pedophile behavior, mass murders, horrific diseases, and natural disasters?” Religious people seem to evade the question by simply saying that it is God’s prerogative. Such an answer does not address the fundamental issue of why a God who is described as loving, compassionate, all-powerful, and of perfect judgment and justice would allow all of these things to exist. Atheists argue that either there is no God to stop all of this, or if there is a God, he does not have the power to stop it or does not want to stop it; thus he is not worthy of worship. This is a very old argument which has been debated by philosophers and theologians for centuries. The bottom line is that there are some practical, basic understandings that we all need to resolve this issue to our own satisfaction.

PPOINT 1—THERE IS EVIL AND IT IS BY NATURE **H**HORRIFIC.

Atheists have tried to distance themselves from the reality of evil by denying it exists. In his book, *River Out of Eden*, Richard Dawkins says, “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.” Jesus Christ on the other hand says, “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are

not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places” (Matthew 24:6, 7).

Jesus does not indicate that God causes these disasters to come to human beings, but he observes that they will happen. Jesus dem-

onstrated that he could control the elements in Matthew 8:23–27, so the question remains why he does not stop the disasters we have identified. Why should God allow an earthquake or a tsunami to kill thousands of people, many of them helpless and innocent children and babies?



It is also important to notice that the painful nature of man’s existence due to these things does not escape God’s notice. Most of us know that the shortest verse in the Bible is “Jesus wept” in John 11:35. What tends to escape us is WHY Jesus wept. The event in these verses is the death and resurrection of Lazarus. When Jesus is told that Lazarus was critically ill, his comment is, “This sickness will not end in death” (John 11:4). Notice that Jesus does not say that Lazarus will not die. He just says that is not the way this event will end. The verse goes on to say that through this incident “God’s Son may be glorified.” Over and over Jesus tells those around him that he is going to bring Lazarus back from the dead (see verses 11, 14, 23). When Jesus finally gets to the tomb of Lazarus in verse 33 we are told that Jesus “was deeply moved in spirit and troubled” and he finally breaks down in tears in verse 35.

There is no way to read through all of this and not realize that when Jesus (God in the flesh, John 1:1–14) came to earth and saw how much it hurts to lose those whom you love “Jesus wept.” We do not have a God that cannot be touched with our infirmities, but “who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). Evil is real, and the disasters that afflict us are horrific, but we have a God who knows and has endured what we face.

PPOINT 2—EVIL IS NOT AN OBJECT, BUT A CHOICE WITH HUGE IMPLICATIONS. We tend to anthropomorphize evil: in other words, to treat it as a created object. When someone asks, “Why did God create evil?” it is likely he has

not really thought about what evil is. Evil is not like a rock or some other physical object. Evil is the choice of a sentient being. The Bible maintains that God created man “in his own image.” In Genesis 3:22 God indicates that man has become like the Godhead (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) saying, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil.” Acts 17:29 states it well as Paul tries to explain to the philosophers of his day saying, “Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone” It is difficult to get people to get rid of this “ignorance” as Paul refers to it.

The implications of this choice are both beautiful and tragic. Love beyond the instinctive love of a parent can exist only if there is choice. It is only possible for someone to love you enough to have the oneness that Genesis 2:24 describes because he has the choice not to love you. There is a massive difference between sexual love that is the product of choice and expressed in a life-long commitment, and rape which is not love at all, but the exploitation of another human being for selfish, evil purposes.

God created man with the capacity to choose between good and evil. This choice gives us many good things that distinguish us from all other life forms on the planet, and brings beauty to us in our relationships and in our creativity. While we have all these wonderful things in our lives because of this unique nature that we possess, there is also a negative aspect of being able to choose. We can reject love because of ignorant selfishness. We can numb our capacity to feel guilt and sympathy and behave like animals with a survival-of-the-fittest mentality. The kind of world we live in and how we treat one another is rooted in what we choose to do.

PPOINT 3—MOST OF THE HORRIBLE THINGS MANKIND EXPERIENCES ARE DUE TO HUMANS CHOOSING EVIL INSTEAD OF GOOD.

Man’s inhumanity to his fellow man never ceases to amaze me. How can an adult sexually abuse a child? How can a man murder tens of thousands of human beings simply to satisfy his desire for political power? How can someone contaminate a whole ocean or river or the atmosphere just to gain wealth? How can someone build



buildings with inferior materials knowing that when earthquakes or hurricanes come that the buildings will fall and kill their inhabitants?

There have been a few things mankind has done that have been simply a product of ignorance. No one knew what asbestos would do to people when pipes were insulated with it in the early twentieth century. The long-term effects of drugs ranging



from thalidomide which caused birth defects to the psychologically crippling effects of crack only became known to man after the use of the drugs were widespread. We now know that a vast percentage of cancer has been caused by man-made carcinogens in the environment.

War, slavery, sexual exploitation, greed, corporate dishonesty, genocide, infanticide, and abuse of all kinds are not done in ignorance. Nor are they the acts of God done with malicious intent towards mankind. One other group of afflictions that mankind endures are natural disasters that are not man-caused. Tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes, lightning strikes, and asteroid strikes are not caused by mankind. The reader may notice that some natural disasters are not in this list, and that is deliberate. Floods are natural disasters, but mankind's misuse of the land is a major contributor to floods. Landslides are frequently related to human activity. The fact is however that sometimes massive suffering happens because of a natural cause that is totally unrelated to man as a causal agent.

Your author does not pretend to have an answer for every scenario, and I certainly would not give a glib response to someone who is suffering because of a natural disaster that he had no control over. In reality however, even in these natural disasters human ignorance and bad judgment are almost always a factor. Building a city along a known fault line is a recipe for disaster, and yet cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco, California, are still being built along active fault lines. Placing humans in areas that are volcanically active is sure to cause human suffering. Even when disasters do not involve foolish failures to heed obvious hazards there are usually warnings of dangers. In recent tsunami disasters it was not local people who were victimized. When the waters went out exposing the ocean floor the locals headed for the mountains knowing what was coming. It was tourists gathering sea shells who paid a high price for not heeding an

obvious warning of a disaster in the making. The earth is an active, growing, changing structure, and some common sense is needed to survive its growth pangs.

POINT 4—THE QUESTION “WHY DOESN’T GOD STOP IT” IS ROOTED IN THE ASSUMPTION THAT THERE IS NO ULTIMATE PURPOSE IN MAN’S EXISTENCE.

Why do you exist? Why is there something instead of nothing? What can possibly be the purpose of a creature like me? The psalmist says it beautifully in Psalm 8:4–8, “What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him rule over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim through the paths of the seas.”

To the atheist who relies on naturalism and evolutionary explanations the answer is that we have no purpose. Man’s position on the earth is totally because he is more fit due to his opposable thumb and larger and better organized brain. Anthony Smith quotes atheist Julian Huxley on the purpose in life, “‘We are, ... just as much a product of blind forces as is the falling of a stone to earth or the ebb and flow of the tides.’ We have just happened, and flesh was made man by a long series of singularly beneficial accidents” (*The Human Pedigree*). To the atheist man is just another animal, no better or no worse than any other animal and able to survive only because he is more fit. For most people atheism ultimately leads to nihilism.

The Bible on the other hand, portrays man as having a God-given purpose. Ephesians 3:10–11 tells us that God’s “intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

The Bible makes it clear from Genesis to Revelation that evil is personified in a heavenly being who is at war with God. Ephesians 6:12 tells us that “our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and



against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” We are given glimpses of this struggle in Genesis 3 in the struggle between God and the serpent. The entire book of Job discusses the question of the nature of God and the role of man in the struggle between good and evil. Jesus was tempted by the evil one in Luke 4 and the apostles had running battles with the evil one in Matthew 16:23; Luke 22:31; John 13:27; Acts 5:3; 2 Corinthians 12:7; etc.

Christians recognize that mankind is in a war, and the enemy uses physical and spiritual terrorism in an attempt to defeat God. Horrible things happen to us because evil has a massive capacity for bringing pain and suffering to mankind. There are spiritual beings involved in this war, and humans are foot soldiers in the battle that is raging.

As long as creatures of free-will exist, love can exist. As long as there are creatures that can choose, good will be in the world. The Bible identifies these goods as “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control” (Galatians 5:22–23). Atheists will do these things only if they are seen to promote their existence as the most fit. Christians will do these things in all situations and may render themselves less fit physically knowing that their spiritual destiny is more important.



Barbwire fence in Auschwitz I camp

CONCLUSION. Could God stop the awful things that happen? Certainly! If he did so, however, evil would be muted in its fruit. The awful consequences of what the Bible clearly identifies as evil or sin — sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy, drunkenness, orgies, (Galatians 5:19–21) — would never be apparent. Every time the battle has been waged the consequences of rejecting good and God’s way of living have been horrendous. How much of the tragedy of human experience has been caused by selfish ambition? How much has been caused by drugs, promoting drunkenness, impurity and debauchery? Sometimes these evil things have been promoted by a religion. Polygamy, polyandry, discord, envy, and even fits of rage have dominated some religions

and have been a temptation to others. God did not create man to be a robot or a puppet. Human beings have been given the freedom to choose between good and evil—and religion as well as atheism can be evil. Satan chalks up gains when there is division, hatred, and/or abuse in a church population.

Ultimately dealing with why horrible things happen has to be answered in the context of man's purpose in existing. God warned ancient Israel about the consequences of not living as God has called us to live in Deuteronomy 28:15–68. Israel did not heed God's warning even though great blessings were promised as well as the warnings of the consequences of living in opposition to God's ways (see Deuteronomy 28:1–15). In Jesus a way to overcome evil has been provided for all people. That way has worked when it has been tried. The blessings many of us take for granted are rooted in at least a partial following of God's way. Now in the twenty-first century we seem to be turning away again and embracing the things of evil that have brought war and pain to mankind in the past. The horrible consequences of rejecting God can be seen in the prison camps, the mass graves, the gas chambers, and the killing fields of the world. How anyone can deny the presence of evil in view of all this clear evidence is hard to comprehend.

The message of Christian faith is that ultimately God WILL stop it! If you do not believe in God and do not believe in life after this life is over, then what we see happening around us makes no sense at all. If you do believe in God and in heaven and hell then you believe that God will put an end to all evil—even an end to death. “The old order of things has passed away” (Revelation 21:4) and there will be a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:1–2). Man's purpose in existing will have been realized. The perishable (physical) will have “been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality” and death will be “swallowed up in victory. ... through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:54–56).

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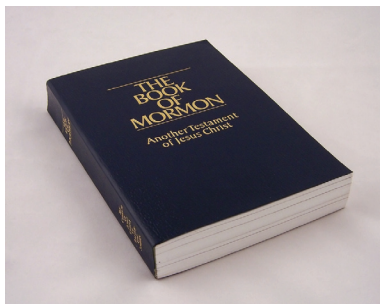
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—John N. Clayton

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IS THE BIBLE ACCURATE?

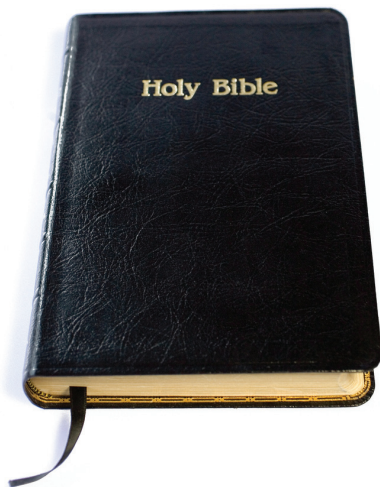


200,000 ERRORS IN NEW TESTAMENT TRANSLATIONS?

If you have had Mormon elders knock on your door recently, you may have found that one of their plugs for the Book of Mormon is to say that there are 200,000 mistakes in the translation

of the New Testament and none in the Book of Mormon. We will not go into the errors in the Book of Mormon, although there is much material available on that subject, but we would like to respond to the 200,000 errors they mention. That figure has come from several prominent theologians who are biblical minimalists. It is also being quoted by atheists in their attempts to discredit Christianity.

We recently attended a conference on this subject at Ohio Valley University in West Virginia. The conference speaker was Dr. Michael Moss, an expert on this subject. Here are some interesting facts about the ancient Bible manuscripts.



1. Of the 200,000 most of the “errors” are variants. If the translator said Christ Jesus instead of Jesus Christ, this is counted as an error. If the choice of several versions of a word was inaccurate it is counted as an error—to, two, and too would be an example in our language. If a letter was left out or there was a spelling error it is counted as a content error. There are only about 400 “errors” that are outside of these variants.

2. Of these 400 “errors” only 50 would make a difference in the message of the passage, and none of these would have a doctrinal significance.

3. The Bible is 99.5% textually accurate. The *Iliad* by Homer, which was reconstructed from various manuscripts in the same way as the Bible, is 95% accurate.

4. There are more copies of New Testament documents than all other classical works combined—over 5,700 complete or fragmented Greek manuscripts from A.D. 100 to 150. Second to that are copies of Homer’s *Iliad* which number 643. After that we have Demosthenes with 170, 20 for Tacitus, 10 for Caesar’s *Gallic Wars*, 8 for Thucydides, 8 for Herodotus, and 7 for Plato.

5. There are 24,000 partial and complete ancient copies of the New Testament in various language translations. In addition there are 86,000 quotes of the New Testament by early Church fathers—enough to reconstruct all but eleven verses of the New Testament.

Attempts to denigrate the Bible on the basis of translation problems or lack of manuscripts are misguided and inaccurate. The problems that do exist are minimal and they are easily answered by reasonable study.

—JNC



“TEBOWING”

BY WAYNE TURNER

“What is Tebowing?” you might ask. It is named for Tim Tebow, the 25-year-old quarterback of the New York Jets. In a sport where reputations are built on physical strength, violent force, and often seemingly abusive behavior, Tebow is known for kneeling in prayer, or as it has become known in the media, “Tebowing.” It is interesting how controversial this has become.

Tebow was born in the Philippines where his parents were Baptist missionaries. After his family returned to the U. S., he was home-schooled, but allowed to play football for a local high school team. He had a stellar career at the University of Florida, winning the Heisman Trophy as a sophomore in 2007. He was drafted by the Denver Broncos in 2010 and later traded to the New York Jets.

Faith has always been an important part of Tebow’s life. So what’s the problem? Tebow is being criticized for being too outspoken about his faith. Even some believers fear he is being seen more as a cliché than a genuine demonstration of faith. Other NFL players have started mocking him. When the Detroit Lions played the Broncos, a Lions player “Tebowed” after sacking him. Another Lions player did the same after scoring a touchdown. Jake Plummer, former Broncos quarterback, admitted his admiration of Tebow’s ability, then expressed the wish that he would “just shut up after a game and go hug his teammates.” Kurt Warner, another NFL quarterback with a reputation for having once been too outspoken about his faith, in an interview with Dan Bickley of *The Arizona Republic*, suggested that Tebow needs to realize that being too overt causes people to become defensive and resistant. “You have to be more strategic ... The greatest impact you can have on people is never what you say, but how you live.”

Athletes who pray or publicly acknowledge their faith are nothing new. So, why the reaction to Tebow? Perhaps the answer is best suggested in an item by CNN contributor William J. Bennett, “Don’t Mock Tim Tebow.” Bennett believes the reason for the criticism of Tebow is because some people are “bothered by his faith, character, and conviction.” Then he adds, “Too many in our culture deride good men such as Tebow because they make them feel uncomfortable ... that all good actions are a front for ulterior and bad or low motives.”

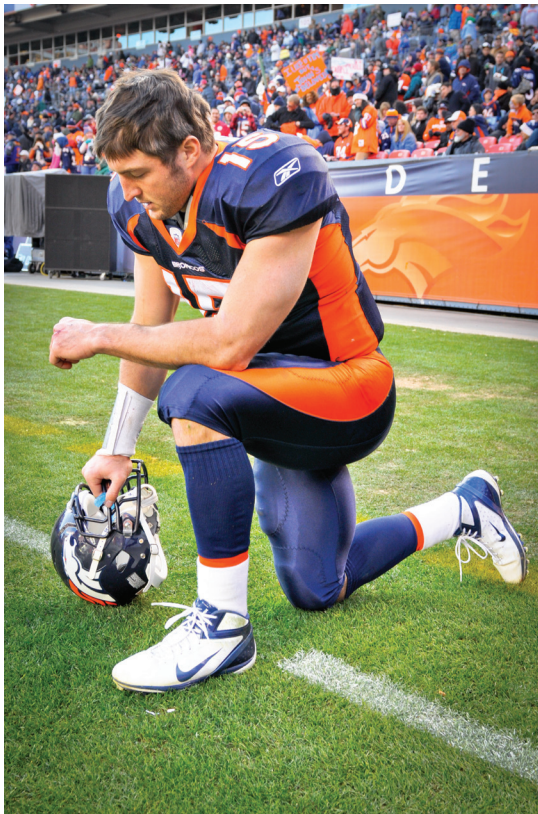
On one hand, should we allow others, especially non-Christians, to deter us from doing what we believe is right? We have sung “Dare to Be a Daniel” believing that his courage and determination to pray to God despite the king’s threat of death is an example we should

follow. We cannot allow the world to intimidate us into silence or inactivity. Our mandate is to do what is right at all times, regardless.

At the same time, Warner's suggestion that Tebow be "more strategic" may also have some merit. To borrow a thought from Proverbs 27:14, "If a man loudly blesses his neighbor early in the morning, it will be taken as a curse." A good thing, at the wrong time or done in a thoughtless way, can have a negative impact on people. There is nothing wrong with sharing faith or praying publicly. Yet, didn't Jesus warn of doing things to be seen by others? Ecclesiastes says that there is "a time to embrace and a time to refrain, . . . a time to be silent and a time to speak." There are appropriate times to do some things, and also times not to. Peter encourages Christians to make sure that if they suffer, it is not because they have done anything to deserve it.

Rather, God's people are to live in a way that leads others to respect them and through them, God. "Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of wrong, they see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us." Thus, by doing good, we are able to "silence the ignorant talk of foolish men."

The various criticisms of Tim Tebow remind us that as believers, we have an image challenge. There are those around us who do not like what we are or what we represent. If we appear to be religious clichés, we will be ignored. If we stand up for what is right, we will be accused of being self-righteous and judgmental. If we



Tim Tebow "Tebowing"

don't, we will be seen as weak—possibly even hypocritical. We are not here to please other people. While we do not want our words or actions to detract from our message, neither can we compromise what is right.

ARE ANIMALS HUMAN?

by Phillip Eichman



Recently, science programs on television have suggested that animals are capable of some very human mental processes such as grief, love, analyzing past experiences, and contemplating future events. As a biologist, I find these claims a little

surprising and more related to the assumptions of the observer than to actual behavior of the animals. In the past we have always thought of humans as the only personal, thinking creatures. It is true that many animals, especially birds and mammals, have complex nervous systems and behavior patterns. Even the most complex animals, however, are not capable of the higher cognitive processes that we associate with humans.

Most pet owners will readily claim that their favorite animal has a “personality.” I have been around many different kinds of animals and my experience would confirm that animals are capable of exhibiting behavior that seems to suggest “personality.” Although some pet owners may disagree, in reality these are particular behaviors that we interpret as personality.



Unlike humans, animal behavior is controlled primarily by instinct and under certain circumstances even the most domesticated of animals will revert to their natural instinct. I will always remember when Pierre, the toy poodle who was seldom allowed outside unattended, rolled in something smelly in our backyard to the horror of my overly fastidious aunt. Pierre was still a dog, and somewhere under all of that fluffy

fur the instincts of that species were hidden, no matter how much he seemed like a “person.”

So why would these programs claim that animals are capable of this human-like behavior? This is basically an attempt to account for the presence of personality in human beings. In the biblical account

human beings are created by and bear the image of a personal God. The fact that we have personality and are capable of complex thought processes comes from the Creator. In naturalistic explanations for the origin of humans, God is eliminated as the source of



personality. Complex thought processes and personality in humans are assumed to have arisen through chance events and evolutionary processes. It is for this reason that evolutionists must attempt to look for human-like behaviors in animals.

Francis Schaeffer pointed out in his book *Genesis in Space and Time* that there are only two possibilities for origins, either an impersonal beginning or a personal beginning. As Schaeffer explained, an impersonal beginning fails to explain the existence and complexity of the universe and the existence of personality in human beings. Only a personal beginning with a personal Creator can fully explain the existence of personality in humans.

Animals were also created by a personal God, and this may explain why animals have some very human-like behavior at times. There are limits, however, to animal behavior. Only human beings bear the image of the Creator, and this is the source of what makes us truly human.



LOVING EACH OTHER AS CHRIST LOVES US

by Dr. Paul Douglas Smith



Jesus commands us in John 15:12 to love each other as he loves us and Galatians 1:4 tells us that Jesus gave himself to redeem us from our sins. In John 10:11 and 15, Jesus tells us, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. . . . As the Father knoweth me, even so I know the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.” We are his sheep!

Jesus was born a King and he ruled a kingdom (Matthew 2:2; John 18:36), yet he took upon himself the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7). Paul tells us in Philippians 2:8 that Jesus “being found in fashion as a man, he humbled

himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Here we see that Jesus loved us so much that he sacrificed his own life to rescue us from the penalty of eternal damnation—and that is not all! In 2 Corinthians 8:9 Paul writes, “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your [OUR] sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” Jesus stepped down out of his royal apparel, and out of the spiritual kingdom he ruled, to don a human form so that we can become rich in his grace and mercy and share with Jesus in his eternal kingdom.

Jesus laid down his life for us through humility and death, and he expects the same from us. In other words, since Jesus willingly gave so much for us, we should be willing to do the same for both him and mankind. In fact, Jesus plainly teaches in John 15:13, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” This not only refers to humanity, but also to Jesus because in John 15:14 Jesus calls us his friends! Solomon, the wisest man ever to live, wrote,



“A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly; and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24 [cp. Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10]). Jesus is our Lord and King; he is our brother, and he is our friend! We are also to love and care for our enemies in the same way (Matthew 5:43–44).

Love is an action word. In 1 John 3:18 we are taught that our love for others must be in deed and truth. We must help the poor and destitute

with their physical needs (1 John 3:17), as well as with their spiritual needs, and not shun those who have fallen (Romans 15:1–2; Hebrews 13:3; Jude 1:23). We also must not become self-righteous; allowing our attitude and example to become a stumbling block that causes another to fall and turn away from Christ (Romans 14:13). Likewise, we must not allow our life-style to be an influence which causes another to stumble, nor shall we create an environment that will become spiritually detrimental to one who is suffering or who is spiritually immature (Romans 14:21; 1 Corinthians 8:13).

In Matthew 16:25 Jesus teaches us that “whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.” What does this mean? First, it means if we choose a worldly lifestyle over a godly one, we will be spiritually alienated from God (James 4:4). Secondly, the day is coming where we will be persecuted and killed unless we deny Christ (Mark 13:9–13). Those who deny Christ to save their own lives, and receive the mark of the beast, will be considered liars and identified with antichrist and reap eternal damnation (1 John 2:21; Revelation 19:20). But those who endure to the end and those who are martyred confessing Christ as Lord; they will reap eternal life (Mark 13:13).

We are never to turn from helping those who are in danger spiritually or physically, even if it requires putting our own life on the line by doing so. Even in death we can save lives by donating our physical organs to those who have need of them! Many have come to know the Lord or have had their faith strengthened by such acts of Christian heroism and generosity.

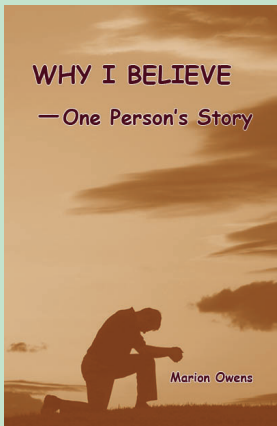
Our life is not our own (Genesis 2:7; Ecclesiastes 12:7). We are to use it to glorify God (1 Corinthians 6:20), not abuse, waste, or defile it by dedicating it to the world. Paul tells us in Romans 12:1, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your

bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” Doing so will glorify God and lead others to him, and we will be laying up treasures in heaven which will show that our heart is already there (Matthew 6:19–21).



DOES GOD EXIST?

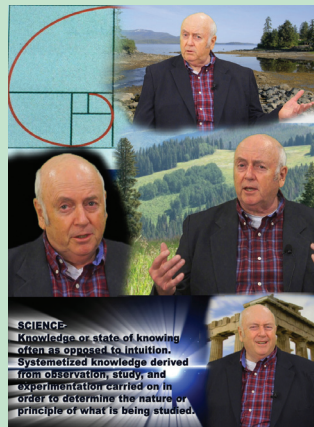
New Resources



Why I Believe
Book by
Marion Owens



Marion Owens wrote a book concerning his experiences of becoming a believer. He lists reasons for his belief.



Does God Exist?
New video series
with John Clayton



John N. Clayton has an updated new series of 32 video programs exploring the topic of "Does God Exist?" These videos are available on DVD from the sources below. You can also watch them online at DoesGodExist.TV.

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South Bend, IN 46680-2704

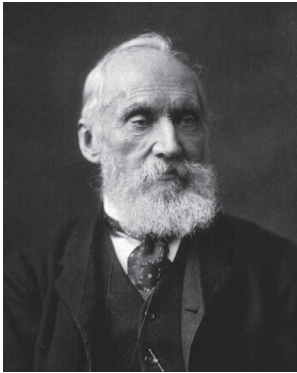
SCIENTISTS AND GOD

Editor's Note: Our thanks to Tihomir Dimitrov on the nobelists.net website for quotations from many of the founders of modern science who were also fundamental believers in the God of the Bible. As we share these quotations we are reminded that being a good scientist is not at odds with belief in God.

LORD KELVIN

1824-1907

British Mathematical Physicist and Engineer
Founder of Thermodynamics



“Do not be afraid to be free thinkers. If you think strongly enough, you will be forced by science to the belief in God.” “The atheistic idea is so nonsensical that I cannot put it into words.”

“Overpoweringly strong proofs of intelligent and benevolent design lie all around us; and if ever perplexities, whether metaphysical or scientific, turn us away from them for a time, they come back upon us with irresistible force, showing to us through

Nature the influence of a free will, and teaching us that all living things depend on one ever-acting Creator and Ruler.” “We feel that the power of investigating the laws established by the Creator for maintaining the harmony and permanence of His works is the noblest privilege which He has granted to our intellectual state. As the depth of our insight into the wonderful works of God increases, the stronger are our feelings of awe and veneration in contemplating them and in endeavoring to approach their author.”

“I have long felt that there was a general impression in the nonscientific world, that the scientific world believes Science has discovered ways of explaining all of the facts of Nature without adopting any definite belief in a Creator. I have never doubted that that impression was utterly groundless. Science can do little positively towards the objects of this society.” “But it can do something, and that something is vital and fundamental. It is to show that what we see in the world of dead matter and of life around us is not a result of the fortuitous concurrence of atoms.”

Cynthia's Corner



My dad lived through the horrors of World War II. What he saw and experienced profoundly affected him all his life. It has affected his faith in God. He and many others have questioned the existence of a loving God when they have seen unspeakable cruelties and injustices committed—some even in the name of God. When we see evils in the world, do we question why God allows them, if he exists and if he cares? Do we believe the existence of a loving God as our creator means he protects us from all evil or there can be no evil if he is real and he is love as the Bible says (1 John 4:8)?

There is such a place where there will be no evil and only love, peace, and joy. It is a spiritual heaven reserved for those souls who choose, while on earth, to follow God and Jesus and to obey his Word (Revelation 21:1–5, 27).

While we live in our bodies on this earth, we live in a world and in a body that are decaying. We live in a world of illness, disease, death and, yes, evil. Why is there evil if God is only good? Very simply, because he created us, and angels, with a free will to choose whether or not to love him and obey him. He did not create robots. God loves us and desires us to love him in return (Matthew 22:37). That is only possible when we have a choice.

Some angels have chosen to rebel against God (Jude 6) and they tempt and deceive mankind to do the same. God clearly communicates to us in his Word, the Holy Bible, that we humans are in a spiritual war; that there are “spiritual forces of evil” in this world, and that we are to “stand against the devil’s schemes” (Ephesians 6:10–13). God urges us to “abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul” (1 Peter 2:11). “When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed” (James 1:13–14).

Basically, and very simply, God created a magnificent world and universe in which we exist in human form. He has written to us (the Holy Bible) and has come to us in human form himself (Jesus) to show us who he is and how to have a relationship with him now and eternally in heaven. But, we choose who and what to live for in this life. Some choices have evil consequences and eternal consequences. We should choose wisely.

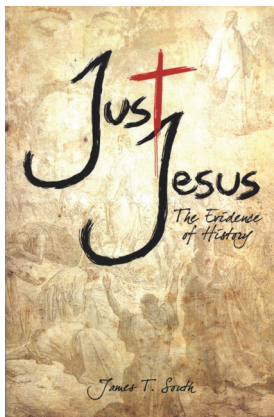
—Cynthia Clayton



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

Just Jesus: The Evidence of History

by James T. South, DeWard Publishing Co., © 2012,
147 pages, \$9.99 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-1-936341-42-9



This book is subtitled “The Evidence of History” which is what the author is offering to us, that makes this book different from the hundreds of other books about Jesus that are on the market. We agree with Mr. South’s view that there is not a great deal of material on the historical evidence for Jesus that is written for the everyday person.

Some years ago we published a booklet by Steve Williams titled *The Real Jesus of History* which deals with the false historical claims made by some who wish to discredit Christ on a historical level. That book is a class study guide with discussion questions at the

end of each chapter.

Just Jesus takes a different approach. It gives short discussions about relevant questions concerning Christ—what we can know and how we can know it, how Jesus lived, and how Jewish was Jesus. There are two chapters on the historical data about the death and resurrection of Christ and a final chapter on knowing Jesus today.

One of the main strengths of the book is that it explores the material that the media presents in attempts to discredit Christ as the Son of God—the Jesus Seminar and its weaknesses, Jesus as an “Exorcist,” the use of BC/AD versus BCE/CE, the Judas gospel and the Gnostics, Jewish burial customs, and Christ’s appearances after his crucifixion are all included.

This book would make a good adult Bible study and could be used in youth group classes. It is well written, easy to read, and functions at a good level of understanding. We recommend it.

The Meanest Man in Texas

by Don Umphrey, Quarry Press, PO Box 181738, Dallas TX 75218, ©2007,
286 pages, \$14.95 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-0-9714958-6-9

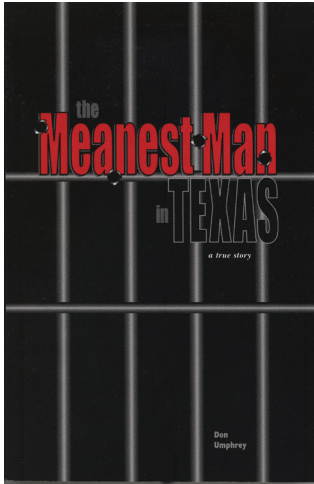
Those of us who work in prison ministry are familiar with a book written by a young news reporter named Don Umphrey and published in 1984 by Thomas Nelson Publishers telling the life story of Clyde Thompson. It has been used for years to help prisoners realize that no matter how heinous their crime, and no matter how hopeless they feel things are, there is always the possibility of starting life over and finding forgiveness and a good relationship with God. Clyde Thompson was a convicted murderer with a long list of crimes of which he had been found guilty, including jail breaks. The book graphically described conditions in the prisons where Thompson was housed. It was also graphic in its description of the brutality of murders that Thompson was involved in.

Gradually Clyde Thompson found faith. This happened in part as he tried to prove the Bible was full of contradictions. Thompson began to clean up his life. He began to talk to and work with other prisoners enabling them to change their lives. He eventually became a jail chaplain.

A woman named Julia Perryman, who was a victim of scoliosis and felt imprisoned in her own body, became aware of Thompson's story and in spite of her parent's objections began to correspond with Thompson. Eventually love blossomed and they were married. Thompson was pardoned in 1963 and rebuilt his life with Perryman's help. Thompson died in July 1979.

This is an amazing story that brings together so many issues and needs of our day. Don Umphrey, who is now a professor emeritus at Southern Methodist University, through Quarry Press has brought the book back into print. Umphrey has been working with Buck Griffith, who has a long history of great work in the prisons of Texas and operates New Life Behavior Ministries in Corpus Christi.

This book is brutal and disturbing, "a love story that defies logic," and amazing but true. It can be very useful in reaching out to people who have made a mess of their lives and are on the verge of giving up hope. God did not give up on Clyde Thompson and he is not willing that any should perish—if they will only surrender to him.



DANDY DESIGNS

THE AMAZING FROZEN FROG



There are many animals that survive in very cold climates. Most of them survive the cold temperatures by avoiding exposure to the extreme temperatures. They may do this by going deep underground or by hibernating in a way where their biological systems slow down long enough to survive the duration of winter. There is one frog however, that survives

the coldest Alaskan winter. This frog is called the wood frog (*Rana sylvatica*) and is found even north of the Arctic circle.

The wood frog begins its life cycle in pretty typical fashion. Fertilized eggs are laid in ponds and lakes and the frog wanders several miles on land to hunt insects and other food sources. In the fall they do not burrow deep under ground but hunker down in moss or leaves or sandy soil. As the temperature drops below zero the frogs are literally frozen and will stay frozen for up to eight months. One organ after another freezes adjusting to the very cold temperature. The liver of the frog freezes early producing a solution of glucose as it does so. The glucose is distributed throughout the frog's body so the cells are saturated with glucose which prevents ice from forming in the cells. Two thirds of the frog's body turns to ice which is outside the cells, with all organs frozen solid.

In the spring the frogs thaw from the inside out. The heart begins to beat — although no one knows what makes it start up. Other organs beginning with the liver and including the brain kick into gear one after the other, and glucose levels return to normal. The frogs then hop back into the pond or lake for reproductive purposes and the process is repeated.

Researchers are hoping that understanding this frog will lead to ways of freezing and thawing human organs for transplant purposes without damaging them. Without incredible design and planning, life could not exist in such alien environments as northern Alaska. The remarkable chemistry of wood frogs is another testimony to the fact that throughout the earth we can see design in all kinds of life forms — even what one researcher calls a “frogcicle.” Source: *Alaska* magazine, October 2012, page 28.

THE INCREDIBLE AUTONOMIC SYSTEM

In June 2012 I had the great pleasure of taking my grandchildren to Disney World. In spite of all of the hype and commercialism of Disney, there is always learning available, and always a constant reminder of God’s design and wisdom in the world in which we live. One of the parks in the Disney World complex in Florida is the Animal Kingdom® Theme Park where a great deal of information is available about how animals live and survive in the natural world. We took the safari ride in which the humans are in an “open-sided safari vehicle” and the animals are running free in a natural setting. We went through an area where hippopotamuses were in a river, and the guide was explaining that a particular hippo we were looking at was sound asleep. About the time she said that, the hippo rose and exhaled, blowing a blast of air and water droplets into the air, and then the animal submerged again. “I thought you said he was asleep,” one child said to the guide. “He is,” said the guide. “They do that in their sleep.”



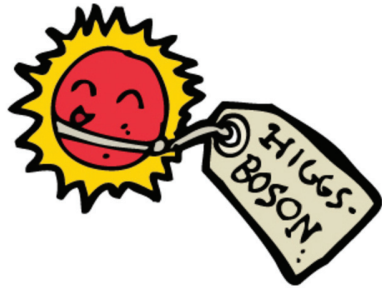
While the child seemed unconvinced, it reminded me of how many autonomic systems there are in living things. You do not have to think to breathe. The autonomic system is part of our hard-wired system connecting our brain to various body functions that are carried on without our thinking about them. In our own bodies there are many autonomic systems connected with digestion, respiration, salivation, perspiration, pupillary dilation, and the like. In humans we know that these systems are located in the medula oblongata, and they are divided into three control centers—the respiratory center, the cardiac center, and the vasomotor center. These are further subdivided into different systems and controls so that our bodies run without our having to think about all of these functions.

In the case of the hippo, the design of the animal’s buoyancy, the location of its nostrils, and the timing sense it has allow it to breathe, hold its breath, and then breath again autonomically. This is a wonderfully designed system, peculiar to the needs of this animal. Ours too is suited to our needs—we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14).

News and Notes

UPDATE ON SOLAR FUEL. We have stated in our material that the sun converts 540 million tons of hydrogen into helium every second. Newer measurements have upped that figure to 700 million tons. The power of the sun and the incredible quantity of fuel consumed every second tells us that God has designed an energy source that is beyond our comprehension in many ways. We just need to learn how to harness it to solve our energy problems. Source: *National Geographic*, June 2012, page 44.

GETTING UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE HIGGS BOSON. The scientific community rejoiced when on July 4, 2012, the people who were operating the Hadron Collider announced that they had found the Higgs Boson with a 99.99% certainty. The discovery strongly supported the “Standard Model” of how the universe works. Of the 17 particles predicted by the Standard Model, 16 had been found previously, but the Higgs Boson was the most elusive. Writers are now turning their attention to the implications of the Standard Model as supported by this newest research. One of the major implications is that some 20 constants have to be exactly what they are to 32 decimal places for the Standard Model to work. Being able to attribute that kind of precision for that many constants on a blind chance basis is unacceptable for many researchers. Source: *Good News* magazine, September/October 2012, page 23.



JUNK DNA DATA ACCELERATES. When the human genome was being worked out, the 3 billion base pairs that make up our DNA coalesced into only 22,000 genes, which is only 2% of the human genome. That meant that 98% of the human genome did not seem

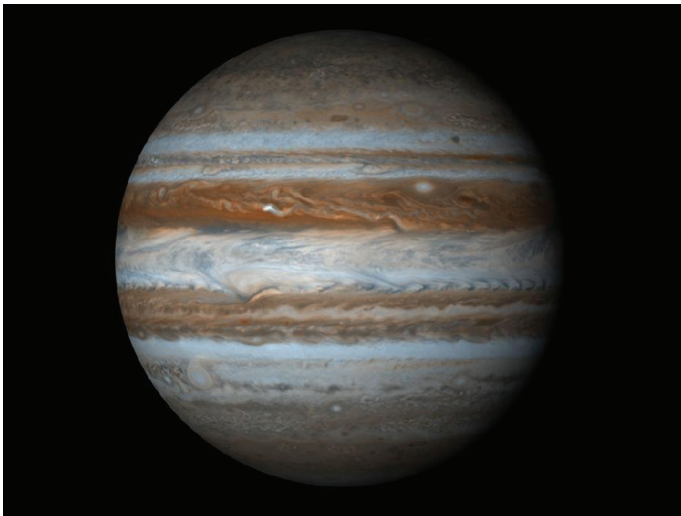
to have a function, and that material was called “Junk DNA.” It was considered to be material left over from the evolutionary processes that shaped our genes. Since that time the U.S. National Institutes of Health have had a project called Encyclopedia of DNA Elements (ENCODE). Four hundred forty-two scientists working in 32 labs have been involved in studying the “nongene portion” of the human genome. This section is made up of some 4 million constantly communicating switches which make an uncommitted cell in a growing embryo determine what kind of cell it will become. Dr. Eric Green, the director of the National Human Genome Research Institute says, “This is a powerful resource for exploring the fundamental question of how life is encoded” and it turns out this “junk DNA” may be the answer for curing a huge number of diseases, including cancer. It seems that the error here was assuming that chance explained the genome, and that if you did not see a purpose for something, it was junk. If we believe that life is intelligently designed, then we are not surprised that there is a purpose for all we see that makes up our genome. Source: *Time*, October 22, 2012, page 19, and *Scientific American*, October, 2012, page 80.

INTERNET GAMBLING MOVES FORWARD. For many years there have been those in Congress who have tried to make it legal for gambling to be carried on by anyone with a home computer. HR 2267 was the main bill that was written by former Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass., retired in January 2013). While there is gambling available online, it is illegal in Hawaii, Indiana, Louisiana, Montana, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, and Washington state. The estimated social costs of internet gambling were instituted nationwide is 25 billion dollars per year. Many of us live in states where casinos have been legalized, and know the effect of these institutions. It is hard to visualize the results of nationwide legalized internet gambling. As morals collapse in our culture because of the rejection of religious values, the overt cost to all of us in practical dollars-and-cents terms is huge. Source: Stop Predatory Gambling Foundation (quoted in *Citizen*, March 2011, page 8), *Citizen* magazine, March 2011, page 4.



MITES IN AMBER DEFY EVOLUTION. Researchers studying arthropods preserved in tree sap (amber) from the time of the dinosaurs have been amazed to find two species (*Triasacarus fedelei* and *Ampezzoa triassica*) that are the same now as they were then. Evolutionists maintain that changes in the environment select mutations that give a better chance of survival for the organism. The conditions present during the time of the dinosaurs were radically different from today which should mean all forms of life would be changed to meet the changing environment. Dr. David Grimaldi of the American Museum of Natural History says, “Dinosaurs have come and gone, but the mites have hardly changed.” The article in *Science News* (October 6, 2012, page 14) says “the mites’ basic blueprint was built to last.”

JUPITER SAVES US AGAIN. One of the points we have made in discussing the design of the solar system is that our major planets



protect the earth from encroaching asteroids and comets that would otherwise strike us. In *The Week*, October 5, 2012, page 21, is a report that amateur astronomers have recorded four

asteroid strikes in the past three years. Glenn Orton of NASA says that Jupiter may sustain an asteroid impact every week. He goes on to say that Jupiter acts as “a big gravitational vacuum cleaner” for asteroids and comets that would otherwise strike the earth. The main point is that there is a real survival purpose for the Jovian planets as they protect our planet from intrusions from outer space.

NEW DATA ON ALCOHOL. We have maintained for many years that alcohol is the most destructive recreational drug in existence in today’s world. In the Alcoholics Anonymous 2012 Facts on Alcoholism, alcoholism is referred to as “the most neglected health problem in the United States today.” They say that 10 million Americans

suffer from alcoholism, costing the nation 43 billion dollars a year. The number of teenagers drinking today is 3.3 million indicating the problem is going to get worse. Fifty percent of all fatal accidents involve alcohol, 80% of fire deaths, 65% of drownings, 40% of assaults, 77% of falls, and 55% of arrests. We would maintain that Christians need to oppose alcohol's use and not support those who promote it.

CIRCUMCISION ISSUE CONTINUES. We have mentioned several times in this column that there has been an ongoing debate about whether circumcision is the mutilation of a child and therefore a form of abuse, or whether it is a religious rite. In San Francisco last year there was a ballot initiative that would have made circumcision a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 or a year in jail. There is an anti-circumcision group called "Intact America" that is lobbying against circumcision. We want to emphasize that Christianity does not take a position on this subject. In the Old Testament it was a "sign of the covenant" between God and Israel. Muslims consider circumcision to be a purification ritual and will do it at any age. What has happened is that Medicaid has stopped paying for the surgery in 18 states and some insurance companies no longer cover it, and the rate of hospital circumcision in the U.S. has dropped from 79% in the 1970s to 55% in 2010. From an apologetic standpoint, circumcision does have health benefits, especially in the transmission of STDs, so there was more than one reason for its use in Old Testament times. Source: *The Week*, November 2, 2012, page 11.

JIM THORPE GETS HIS DUE.

We have mentioned in our lectureships that the famous American athlete Jim Thorpe, who participated in the 1912 Summer Olympics and who was a Sac and Fox Indian from Oklahoma, had many physical characteristics similar to Neanderthals (see our News and Notes, September/October 1999). He is a demonstration that claims of the evolution of man confuse races with species. *Smithsonian* magazine (July/August 2012, page 62) has a good personal article on Thorpe including some pictures that will be of interest to some of our readers.



Jim Thorpe in 1912 Olympics

ARE WE GETTING SMARTER? Twenty-eight years ago Dr. James Flynn in New Zealand discovered that IQ scores were rising at a rate of .3 points a year, and the term “Flynn effect” was begun. Since Flynn’s work that trend has continued, and there have been claims that human intelligence is evolving. The problems with all of this are many. First, there are many different kinds of intelligence. My disabled son, Tim, will score near normal on a verbal IQ test. If the test involves logic or problem solving he will score less than 50, where 100 is considered normal. The effects of technology and the industrial revolution, and the effects of education also have to be included. We would suggest that the Flynn effect is a function of these catalysts, not that we are any more intelligent than our ancestors. Source: *Scientific American*, September 2012, page 44.

GIRLS IN CONTACT SPORTS. One of the more complicated consequences of women pushing for equal rights has been the question of whether girls should be excluded from anything. In our area of Michigan and northern Indiana there have been a number of girls who wanted to participate in high school wrestling, and a number of boys who refused to wrestle them. According to *Citizen* magazine (November 2012, page 7) 1,604 girls played high school tackle football in 2011. The underlying issue in all of this is whether there are roles that each of us has that are controlled by our physical and social situation in life? Besides sports, the whole question of what women should do in the work of the church is also involved in this issue.

DISPENSATIONALIST BROADCASTERS SET UP FOR SECOND COMING. Trinity Broadcasting Network and Daystar Network have set up studios in Jerusalem preparing for the second coming of Christ. Daystar streams a live shot of the Mount of Olives where they believe Jesus’ second coming will take place. Both organizations will broadcast some shows in Hebrew to “reach out to Jews ... and become ... a completed Jew.” This is all a part of the denominational belief that Jesus is about to return and set up a physical kingdom in Jerusalem on David’s throne following the Rapture and the seven-year tribulation which will involve a military war with converted Jews being his foot soldiers. Most young earth creationists are coming from this belief system, and almost all homeschool material is saturated with its teachings. In The November/December 2008 issue of this journal we had an article on this teaching and how it causes faith problems. You can obtain this article on the doesgodexist.org web site or send a stamped postage-paid envelope to us if you would like a copy (all free of course). Source: *The Week*, October 12, 2012, page 9.

GOD’S PROVISION NOT USED WELL. There are those who look at the poverty and starvation in the world and blame God for the pain that hunger inflicts on many innocent people. The fact is that God has provided for human beings in an incredible number of ways, and one of those ways is to provide food resources that are much better than the ones we traditionally use. A classic example is in *National Geographic* (November 2012)—a tree called the “Mighty Moringa” by the people studying it. This is a tree that can grow up to 12 feet in a season, and virtually the whole tree can be eaten. The leaves of the moringa have 25 times the iron in spinach, 17 times the calcium in milk, 15 times the potassium in bananas, 10 times the vitamin A in carrots, and 9 times the protein in yogurt. Many of the plants we cultivate have low vitamin content and are difficult to grow, but we develop tastes for highly specialized flavors. One wonders if, like the manna that ancient Israel used, we do not have a wide range of nutritious plants out there that simply have not been developed as food sources.

MORE BAD NEWS FOR MARIJUANA USERS. An article in *The Week* (September 14, 2012, page 21) reports that research on school children who started smoking pot regularly before age 18 lost an average of eight IQ points. The increased use of marijuana in our society is having a number of effects on our population, and the effects on developing brains appear to be some that have not been studied before.



YEAR END REPORT AVAILABLE. This journal is sent free to all who request it, but it is expensive to produce, print, and mail. We do this work with a very small staff and do not solicit funds from anyone and we have no sponsoring group covering the expense. It is only because many individuals voluntarily send financial support to us that we are able to continue having this material available. At the end of every calendar year we prepare a report on the **Does God Exist?** ministry. We share what has been accomplished, what work is being done, and give a financial report for the year. We have ended 2012 in the black thanks to the help that many of our readers have sent us even though we do not solicit funds. If you would like a copy of our report for 2012, just let us know and we will send it to you either electronically or by mail in printed form.

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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