

DOES GOD EXIST?

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

**Third Quarter 2019
Volume 46 Number 3**



*Knowing God
Through His Word*

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We have been publishing this journal since 1970, and in all those years we have written numerous articles dealing with evidence for the existence of God from a scientific perspective. We have talked about cosmology and the question of the creation of time, space, matter/energy, and we have considered approaches from quantum mechanics and relativity. We have given many evidences of a teleological perspective, that there is design in the creation that cannot be explained by chance. We have dealt with those human characteristics that are not a product of the brain and suggest that we have been created in God's image. We have also talked about the concept of morality and why humans can be moral. All of these arguments tend to say that "there is something out there" without identifying in any detail what the nature of that "something" is.

In our first quarter edition of this journal, we talked about why we exist and knowing God can help us go further with that understanding. In the second quarter, we talked about knowing God through his creation. The existence of beauty tells us something about the nature of God. Quantum mechanics and the evidence of dimensions beyond



the space/time continuum in which we exist are now hot scientific topics that tell us more about what and who God is. God's capacity to love transcends the human ability to get past the struggles of life. The fact that God is outside of time answers our concerns about the future. It also enables us to comprehend how we can look to God as a friend during hard times.

In this discussion, we want to explore the fact that we can also know God through his Word. If the Bible is inspired, then it should help us to know God. If I might inject a personal parallel to this discussion, my relationship with my wife took place in a similar way. When my first wife Phyllis died in 2008, I found myself desperately in need of something that would replace what had been a good marriage. Through a series of unlikely connections, I began writing to a woman who had attended one of my presentations in Grand Junction, Colorado. In a period of months, I came to know this person well enough to believe that we had so much in common that marriage was possible. That marriage happened with virtually no personal contact. While there have been a few surprises, we are now in our tenth year of marriage, and the relationship has blessed me.

In the same way, I have come to know God through his written Word. John 1:1 tells us that "In the beginning was the Word" and verse 14 tells us "the Word became flesh." First John 1:1–2 refers to the same Word as the "Word of life. The life appeared; and we have seen it and testify to it." The Greek word used in these verses is "*logos*," and that word conveys what the dictionary calls "the distinct and superfinite Personality." There are five different ways in which the Bible helps me know God, just as the written correspondence with my wife Cynthia enabled me to know her before we were in each other's physical presence.

1. THE BIBLE ALLOWS ME TO KNOW GOD IN A NON-GENDER WAY.

Our culture is obsessed with concerns about gender. Whether it is "#MeToo" or transgender or sexual identity, people today tend to couch everything in some sexual way. The Bible repeatedly presents God in a way that transcends sexual concerns. When Proverbs 8 finds wisdom challenging us, wisdom is presented in the feminine gender. When Jesus portrays God reaching out to Jerusalem in Matthew 23:37 he portrays himself as a hen gathering her chicks. When Paul writes to the Galatians in Galatians 3:28 he says, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."



2. THE BIBLE ALLOWS ME TO KNOW GOD AS A KIND, JUST, AND MERCIFUL BEING.

We have all been around men and women who radiated kindness and fairness. You cannot read the life of Christ and not see that he attracted people by his fairness, his mercy, and his kindness. When the woman in John 8:1–11 was caught in the act of adultery and brought to Jesus with the suggestion that she should be stoned, the response of Jesus was kind and fair. He confronted the accusers with the challenge, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” Jesus did not condone her sin, but his kindness and compassion radiated the attitude God has towards our struggles. The word “*eleos*” translated “mercy” in passages like Matthew 5:7; 9:13; 12:7; and James 5:11 is most accurately translated kind and benevolent. The Old Testament word “*chesed*” in Hebrew involves loving kindness but is translated “mercy” in our English translations. When we think we see God being unkind or unfair, it is always a situation where humans are ignoring God’s purpose and reaping the consequences of what they have done. We tend to look selfishly at our own immediate gratification and not at the long term purpose of God when he does not act in the way we think he should, or when we think he should.



3. THE BIBLE USES DIFFERENT WORDS FOR GOD TO ALLOW US TO UNDERSTAND THAT GOD HAS AN INTEREST IN AND FUNCTIONS IN ALL ASPECTS OF OUR LIVES.

One thing I learned as a public school teacher of science was that kids who had a father who was interested in them and in all aspects of their lives had a distinct advantage over kids whose fathers were disinterested or non-existent. When you dig into the different words used in the Bible for God, what you find is that each of those words was associated with a different part of human life. “*Yahweh*,” “*Elohim*,” “*Adonai*,” and a variety of less common names each conveyed God’s involvement in an area of our lives. Translators struggled with



this varied use. That is the reason we have “God,” “Lord,” “Jehovah,” “I Am,” “Father,” etc., used in different passages in the Old Testament. What this tells me is that God is a personal God, active and concerned with all aspects of my life. God is not some judge sitting in a judgment seat looking for ways to condemn me. He is an active, personal being who, as the Bible puts it, “... not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

4. THE BIBLE HELPS ME SEE GOD AS THE CREATOR OF BEAUTY, POWER, WONDER, AND WISDOM.

Have you ever sat by yourself in a place of incredible beauty and thanked God for what he has prepared and allowed you to perceive? In scripture, we see people mesmerized by what surrounds them. Proverbs



8 reminds us that wisdom was involved in the creation process. Psalm 19 tells us that, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and skies proclaim the work of his hands.” David looks at his own body in Psalm 139:14 and expresses amazement at how God made him. Psalm 23 speaks of God’s

support for us in the trying times of life. Jesus calls his followers to reflect on the beauty of the lily, and Romans 1:18–23 tells us we can know God exists by seeing the design and complexity built into all that surrounds us.

One of the most delightful passages in the Bible is Job 38–41 where God unleashes a barrage of facts at Job and his friends. God challenges their attempts to explain things too complex for human understanding. Modern science is still investigating some of those things, but all of them speak of the beauty, power, wisdom, and design of God. This understanding brings me to the statement of David in Psalm 8:3–9: “When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them. You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor. You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you have put everything under their feet: ... LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!”

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5. THE BIBLE SHOWS ME THAT GOD HAS AN ETERNAL PURPOSE IN ALL THAT HE DOES.

Isaiah 55:11 finds God saying, “so is my word that goes out from my mouth: it will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” Time after time the biblical record shows that the purpose God had for something was accomplished. It does not always happen in the way that God desired, but it happens. Like the Athenians of Acts 17, we frequently do not understand the spiritual purposes that God has for the things that happen, but the end result is always what God intended.

That is not just true of the biblical characters like the ones described in Hebrews 11. The Bible tells their success stories and their failures. How things worked out for them helps me to know God and to know that God has a purpose for my life just as he does for every human on the planet. The problem is that many of us do not allow God to accomplish his purpose. If that happens, God uses someone else to achieve that purpose. We are not just mindless robots programmed to a certain destiny. We are creatures who can love, and to love means to be able to choose not to love.

The beautiful exchange between Jesus and Peter in John 21:15–22 shows God’s purpose in Peter’s life. Jesus uses “*agapao*” asking Peter to be prepared for what is in front of him. Peter keeps responding with “*phileo*” indicating friendship but not a self-sacrificing love. God had a purpose for Peter, and we know that Paul was referred to as “a chosen instrument” in Acts 9:15. These men could choose not to accept the purpose for which Christ had called them. Paul expresses fear about that very fact in 1 Corinthians 9:27.

It is incredible to me that God has a purpose for my life. Like Paul, my past has opened the door to that purpose. I serve a God whose capacity to love and to lead me to something far better than I could ever do on my own propels me forward. Do not assume you are just a speck drifting aimlessly through space/time. You are a being created spiritually in the image of God, and God has great

things planned for you. God is a God of purpose, and his will always gets done. I just want to be a small part of that purpose. As I get to know God better through his Word, my confidence in being with God in eternity grows — and yours will too.

—John N. Clayton





Culture Shock and Faith in America Today

Our lectureships on the compatibility of science and belief in God and the Bible as his Word have taken us to many different places. Doing lectureships in England and Scotland was a very different experience than doing the same lectureships in Chester, California, and Mountain View, Arkansas.

Recently we did programs in Chester and Mountain View that highlighted how different cultures can exist in the same country



Chester, California

and face very different challenges. Chester is just outside of Reno, Nevada, and is made up of people who have either retired or have two homes, with Chester being the “place to get away to.” People own expensive boats and snow equipment and live in expensive homes. Their education level is high, and they are “self-made,”

independent people. Their interest in and involvement in religion as a whole are marginal. There are relatively few church buildings in the area, and the attendance on any given Sunday morning is minimal in those churches. Tourism is probably the primary source of outside money. Snow sports and water sports dominate the recreational activity of most people living there. The main social issue in Chester seems to be drugs, including the abusive use of alcohol.

Several weeks after being in Chester, we presented a lectureship in Mountain View in the middle of the Ozarks. We presented our

program at the Stone County Fairgrounds. That was because interest was so high and church participation was so great that there was concern over whether the local congregation had enough room to accommodate all the people who would be likely to attend. I was in Mountain View a year earlier and was aware of the substantial religious interest in the community.



Courthouse at Mountain View, Arkansas

There were half a dozen theaters offering country music shows and all of these had religious themes. Several other theaters offered southern gospel shows with well-known gospel singers, like Jimmy Driftwood. While I presented my materials in the fairground program building, a rodeo with young people involved in horseback riding was going on in the arena just outside. The primary source of outside money coming into the community was once again tourism. Mountain View's location on the White River has exceptional trout fishing along with hunting and caverns to explore. The theaters and inexpensive lodging and camping sites also provide for considerable growth in the community. I counted 26 church buildings in this community while I was there. That is about five times the number I saw in Chester.



Chester and Mountain View both are composed of Americans. Even though everyone is an American, their politics, moral values, and needs are radically different. Our lectureship in California was viewed as something new. The issues I presented were interpreted as

a mandate for change. People were concerned with how to change society not only in Chester but also in Washington, D.C., and the Bible Belt. Resistance to my presentations centered around how to keep religion out of the schools and the courts. The level of ignorance about what the Bible actually said was very high, with considerable interest in the meaning of the Hebrew words in Genesis and how those words support the latest understandings of science.

In Mountain View, the concern was about how to maintain the status quo. Science was, in general, viewed with some disdain. Suggesting that science and faith support each other was new to most people in attendance. Our two-hour program on evolution showing that all evidence for evolution supports the biblical account was



met with amazement. The idea of going back to the Hebrew words to resolve the conflict was new to many in attendance. This discovery led to some in-depth discussion about other church issues. People began to realize that if you took the Bible literally, going back to the literal meaning of the words in the original language, most sources of division among believers could be eliminated. The level of biblical knowledge was much higher in Mountain View than it had been in Chester. I did not have to explain why what Moses taught Israel did not apply to Christians, so animal sacrifice and food restrictions are not a part of Christianity.

As I considered this difference between Chester and Mountain View, I was reminded of how different my experiences in Scotland had been from any place in the United States. The Scottish people were eager to hear about the existence of God and the validity of what Christ taught. However, because of their history with the Scottish Catholic church and the wars and conflicts they had endured, they did not want to hear anything about “church.”

What is interesting about all of this is that the same cultural struggle was going on during the life of Christ and the existence of the first century church. How Jesus and the apostles dealt with all



Edinburgh, Scotland

of this contains great lessons for us. Jesus dealt with the Jews, their religious traditions, and their desire to maintain the status quo. He also dealt with the Gentiles who brought all kinds of secular beliefs to Christ and the church. They promoted a wide variety of religious beliefs which opposed most of

what the Bible teaches. The political entity that ruled everything was Rome which held control over both the Jews and the Gentiles. Rome had no moral basis for how they ruled but simply allowed anything that did not threaten the Emperor or his agents.

Notice the similarities:

1) THE JEWS— Similar to the religious community in Mountain View. They resisted any change, wanted to maintain the status quo, and generally opposed any new understanding of either the Word of God or the evidence. Their interest in politics was to get government officials to facilitate their control over the people. Their resistance to Christ was in ignorance of much of what the Word of God actually taught.

2) THE GENTILES— Similar to the religious community in Chester. Both cultures had substituted what they wanted socially for what God instructed them to do. Both wanted to use religion to suit their own agendas. It is hard to miss the connections between Demetrius and the Temple of Diana at Ephesus in Acts 19:23–32 and the use of religious holidays in our time as major secular business opportunities in America.

3) THE GOVERNMENT— In Jesus' day the Roman government ruled with an iron fist. To the Romans, there were no absolutes of a moral nature. Unwanted babies were thrown into the street to die. Executions were carried on without trial and frequently at the whim of the Roman authorities. The killing of male babies shortly after the birth of Jesus is a classic example. The death of John the Baptist by Herod the Tetrarch is also typical of this. John was executed because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, who resisted John's teachings about divorce. Her daughter's dancing caused

the execution, and the Roman authorities did nothing to stop it (Matthew 14:1–12). Paul’s journey to Rome in Acts 23–28 shows the way the Roman government worked.

In the past 25 years the governments of the world, including the United States, have become increasingly resistant to the moral teachings of the Bible. Laws about prostitution, abortion, drugs including marijuana and alcohol, marriage and divorce, public prayer, freedom to evangelize, euthanasia, freedom to speak publicly about religious subjects are just a few of the things that are increasingly atheistic and lack any semblance of morality.

So how did Jesus and the apostles handle these problems? Let me suggest four things they did that need to be emulated by Christians today:

1) JESUS AND THE APOSTLES SEPARATED THE SECULAR AND THE RELIGIOUS.

I recently read in the papers about a denominational preacher who said from the pulpit that anyone who voted for a candidate of a certain party was going to be disfellowshipped. I have seen church bulletins that attacked individuals who were campaigning for a public office, and I know of denominations that donated to a political candidate’s campaign.

In Matthew 22:21 Jesus was asked if it was lawful religiously to pay taxes to Caesar. His response was, “So, give back to Caesar what

is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.” In Matthew 17:24–27 Jesus had a fish deliver his tax money and Peter’s tax money to the Roman government. Jesus certainly knew about the moral corruptness of Rome, but he did what he taught in Matthew 22. Paul explained this further in Romans 13 when he instructed the Christians to pay taxes and to respect authorities and honor civil government. What if the government forbids the teaching of Christianity? In Acts 4:17–20 we have an example of that possibility. The arresting agency was



not the Roman government, but the Jewish establishment. Even so, Peter and John set a principle when they said, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you , or to him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.” If it ever got to the point of having to violate the law to obey God, we would have to obey God even if it meant going to prison.

2) JESUS AND THE APOSTLES FOCUSED ON THE SPIRITUAL AND AVOIDED THE PHYSICAL.

When Jesus met Nicodemus who was a ruler of the Jews in John 3:1–15, he opened the discussion by saying, “no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” Nicodemus had the same problem we have in understanding this statement. He tried to grasp it physically, which obviously cannot be done. Jesus continued the discussion by saying that it is “being born of the Spirit” and that he is speaking not of “earthly things.” Most of the time when people have trouble with the teachings of Jesus it is because they are trying to make physical applications of something spiritual in nature. Baptism, communion, promises about answers to prayer, and prophecies about the future in many cases fall into this area of concern.

When Paul spoke to the educated elite of Athens in Acts 17:16–31, he spent most of his time trying to get them to understand that God was not the physical images they saw around them. He told them that God was that Being in whom “we live and move and have our being.” Our obsession with the material world has cost us dearly in trying to reach out to a lost and dying world. Perhaps one of the greatest obstacles we have created in the modern world has been our use of brick and mortar in reaching out to people. Church buildings were unknown to the apostles. Meeting in homes and public facilities worked well for them and, when tried, it has worked well in modern times. Perhaps spending millions on facilities which we use for our own benefit has been a great deterrent to evangelism. If we have a building and do not use it to meet the needs of people, we are making a grave error.

3) JESUS AND THE APOSTLES DEALT WITH REAL PROBLEMS.

The majority of topics presented at many church services and religious workshops are things of no interest to the average person on the street or the average young person. Dealing with possibilities of when Jesus is coming again, the history of a denomination or religion, methods of taking care of orphans or the poor, differences between social groups, what is permissible in worship services, who is qualified to be an elder or a deacon or a minister, or whether we should have Sunday night services are not a concern to a man who is contemplating

suicide. What topics does Jesus deal with in the “Sermon on the Mount” in Matthew 5–7? Making a quick list, what we see is how to deal with lust, divorce, oaths, retaliation, enemies, giving and possessions, anxiety, judging and the principles of the golden rule.



On the Areopogus looking toward the Acropolis.

For almost 50 years I have had a running dialogue with young people who are troubled by the church. Their trouble is that the church is not addressing the real issues they are dealing with. Much of what they have received at camp and church activities has been entertainment and not how to deal with each other, with parents, with school, and with their physical needs. Now as I have aged and am working more and more with seniors, I have seen a similar problem at the other end of life’s journey. When I do a program in a retirement center or a senior retreat I see people wanting to be instructed about euthanasia, how to deal with pain and dementia, how to deal with sexual needs in

a meaningful way, and what to do about possessions as the end of life comes. Christians may have these issues worked out because of their knowledge of God’s word,



but people in the world, no matter what the culture or traditions, want to have real solutions to their daily needs and problems.

4) JESUS AND THE APOSTLES LED AND TAUGHT BY EXAMPLE.

How did Jesus live? What did he own? Luke 8:3 tells us that a group of women “were helping to support them out of their own means.” In that culture, it is amazing that women took care of food and shelter for Jesus and his disciples. Jesus stated that “foxes have



dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20). As we read about Jesus, we see a man who knew hunger and thirst (Matthew 4:2; 21:18), knew fatigue (Matthew 8:24; John 4:6), experienced distress and wept (Luke 19:41; John 11:35), and

experienced love (John 13:1; 15:13). When one reads the life of Paul, it is hard not to be amazed at his willingness to give up an extravagant lifestyle which he could have had as a Pharisee trained by Gamaliel (Acts 22:3).

What we do not see in the Bible is the leaders of the church being paid to do other disciples’ work. Paul frequently took on his trade as a tent maker to support himself to avoid being a burden to the church. This does not mean that there were not times when it was necessary for the early church to provide for the physical needs of an evangelist or elder. However, the example of not merchandising religion was rarer then as it is now. That allowed the church to be planted and to grow in every culture and among all kinds of people.

In today’s world, the most successful evangelizing will be done by individuals who teach and address the needs of people in their own homes, in the marketplace, and on the job. There is an old saying that goes, “I would rather see a sermon than hear one.” That is as true today as it has ever been.



—JNC



GOD BEFORE “IN THE BEGINNING”

by Ron Hendron

The Bible begins with these words, “In the beginning” So, whose beginning is it? What kind of beginning is it? We can see by looking at the first verses that it is the beginning of the universe. It is also the beginning of the greatest story of all time.

Curiosity leads me to ask, “What do we know about God before the beginning? What do we know of the Author of the story? Is there a story before the story?”

CLUE Number 1

We find one of the clues in 1 John 1:5 which says, “God is light, in him there is no darkness.” So before the beginning of the universe, God was light. Notice that it does not say “a light.” If he were “a light,” that could possibly mean that there are/were other lights. The Author of the beginning is trying to establish that he does not have a contemporary. There is not a round-table of many gods.

What do we know about light? It has no physical substance, but we can see it. You know when it is present. It is useful for seeing and navigating, and it is portable. We can take it wherever we go, as in a flashlight.



Darkness is not portable. Light is pure and cannot be polluted or corrupted. Light does not break or fade, but it can be hidden. Life needs light. It is somewhat easy to explain what light does, yet very difficult to explain what it is. We can say the same thing of God as well. Yet, even though God is light, that does not fully explain him. Psalm 104:2 says that he “wraps himself in light as with a garment.” God is light, but light is just a layer of who he is.

CLUE Number 2

We find a second clue about God before he started creating in John 4:24 which says, “God is spirit.” Light is visible where Spirit is not. The Greek word used for “spirit” is *pneuma* which means



“breath” or “wind.” We cannot see the wind in the sky, but if the clouds are moving, we know it is present. The wind is more noticeable when it comes in contact with something, such as our bodies. You could say that the presence of wind produces activity. Light illuminates

objects. Spirit engages them.

CLUE Number 3

We find a third clue about God before the beginning in Galatians 5:22–23. It says, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” This passage gives us a view of God’s personality — what God is like. Using some of our insights about wind, we see that these traits suggest activity. They show God’s nature and how he acts. He did not learn to be that way; he simply IS that way. Wherever his light shines, love comes alive, joy comes alive, and peace comes alive.



WHAT THE CLUES TELL US

We know at least three things about God before he started creating. So what was God doing or planning before the creation?

I believe we can find the answer in Psalm 139:

Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in your book
before one of them came to be.
How precious to me are all your thoughts, God.
How vast is the sum of them!

—Psalm 139:16–17

Before God started creating, he was planning a family and a place for us to live. He provided a home for us in the universe. Before he started writing the story, He was planning who would be in it. We are living the story. We are the reason for “In the beginning.” There must be excitement in heaven as God introduces each new person into the story.

CONCLUSION

Most believers come to know God as eternal—he always existed—and that is about as much as they know. But God is not abstract and impersonal. He has a personality. He is responsible for the planned design of all things created, but he is more than a Creator. He is also a Father. We are not arbitrary or accidents or evolved amoeba. We are planned children. Before the beginning we can say that God is light, he is Spirit, and he has personality. But it would seem that the most accurate of all descriptions is that he was a Father planning for a family, and we can be part of it.



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SCIENTISTS AND GOD

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

MAX PLANCK
(1858-1947)

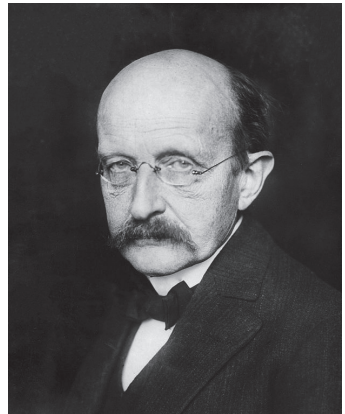
German Theoretical Physicist
Founder of Quantum Theory
Nobel Prize Winner 1918



“As a man who has devoted his whole life to the most clear headed science, to the study of matter, I can tell you as a result of my research about atoms this much: There is no matter as such. All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force which brings the particle of an atom to vibration and holds this most minute solar system of the atom together. We must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent mind. This mind is the matrix of all matter.”



“There can never be any real conflict between religion and science for the one is the complement of the other.”



Cynthia's Corner

KNOWING GOD THROUGH HIS WORD



God reveals himself and his divine nature through the things he has made (Romans 1:20). He also reveals himself directly to us in the written Word—a love letter if you will. He tells us who he is, why he created us, what our purpose in life is, who Jesus is, and why he came to Earth. God's Word, the Holy Bible, reveals all those things and more. Nonbelievers scoff at this, saying the Bible is just words written by men. Let us look at the evidence.

The Bible gives us ample reasons to believe it could only be written by divine inspiration (Galatians 1:11–12; 1 Thessalonians 2:13). The evidences are many: (a) prophecies fulfilled such as Isaiah 53; (b) scientific knowledge revealed long before humans understood it; (c) historical accuracy regarding dates, events, people, and places; (d) archaeological support for biblical events, places, and people; and (e) the miracles described in the Bible that can only be done by divine power. God used miracles to prove to doubters that he exists and that Jesus was his Son—God in human form. God proved that by raising Jesus from the dead. Hundreds of people witnessed the resurrected Christ, and the resurrection has changed the lives of countless people since then.

Atheists have a problem with God because they do not understand who he is and his purpose for us. We learn those things from the Bible. Because God is a Spirit and cannot be seen by human eyes, his word describes who he is: he is light, he is love, he is truth, he is the beginning (*alpha*) and the end (*omega*), the Creator of all things—including time, space, and matter/energy (Genesis 1:1). He sent his only Son, Jesus, to become human to show us who he is, and also who we are—sinners separated from God.

The New Testament describes Jesus' life on Earth, his death and resurrection. It tells us clearly why he walked the Earth and why he died on the cross. Jesus died to pay the price for the sins of every human who ever lived. His blood sacrifice was for all people for all time (Hebrews 7:27). When we come to believe in God and Jesus, repent of our sins, and decide to live for God, we are buried by baptism into Christ and are “born again.” We are forgiven and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us overcome sin and become more like Jesus (Romans 6 and 8). Most of the New Testament describes in detail how to live a godly life, how to overcome the temptations and trials of this world, and how to have the assurance of eternal existence with God when our bodies die. —Cynthia Clayton



BOOK REVIEWS

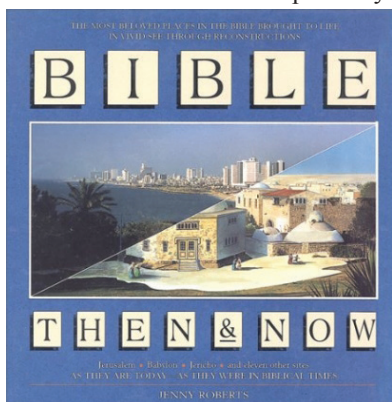
The books that are reviewed in the Book Reviews section are not available through us, but can be obtained from a local bookstore or through many online bookstores.

Bible: Then and Now

by Jenny Roberts, Chartwell Books, © 2001,

144 pages, (hardcover), ISBN-13: 978-0-7858-1445-0

Although this book is out of print, used copies are available on Amazon and probably other booksellers.



While this is not a recent book or a book on apologetics, it helps us understand the geographic world of Jesus' day and what those same places look like today. Since our theme this quarter is "Knowing God Through His Word," understanding more of the land in biblical times can help us relate to the biblical events.

The book has modern pictures of 14 ancient cities as they are today. Facing each image on transparencies is an artistic work of what the

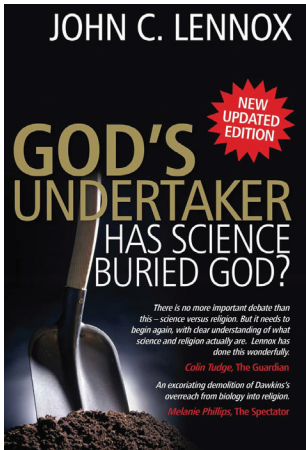
city would have looked like during biblical times. You can lay the transparency on top of the modern picture to see what is left today and what was there when the biblical events took place. The book describes each city's history with numerous photographs of the major archaeological discoveries.

The biblical locations depicted in the book are: Babylon, Athens, Hebron, Bethlehem, Damascus, Ephesus, Nineveh, Cyprus, Jericho, Caesarea, Tyre, Joppa, Capernaum, and Jerusalem. Placing the transparencies over the modern-day photos gives an idea of how much (or little) has changed in thousands of years. The book also contains information about the River Jordan, mountains of the Old Testament, the Persian Empire, Egypt, and other locations.

I found this to be a fascinating book for learning Bible history. It provides an understanding of how what you see now reflects what happened in the past and the setting in which it occurred.

God's Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?

by John C. Lennox, Lion Books, © 2009,
224 pages, \$12.95 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-0745953717



Dr. John Lennox is professor emeritus of mathematics at the University of Oxford and has written several books on the compatibility of science and faith. This book originated from a course taught by Dr. Lennox at the University of Oxford titled “Faith, Reason and Science.” Even though it is scholarly, it is also very readable.

In this book, Dr. Lennox deals with the clash of worldviews. He examines the scope and limits of science and evolution. As a mathematician, he is interested in the information contained in the genetic code

and the mathematical improbability of it deriving by chance.

Dr. Lennox has warnings for both scientists and believers. He tells about how Galileo, as a Bible believer, advanced a better scientific understanding that went against not only the churchmen but also the philosophers of his day. They were disciples of Aristotle and interpreted the Bible to fit an Aristotelian view of the universe. Referring to the refusal of the authorities to accept Galileo’s more scientific perspective, Lennox has this warning: “Philosophers and scientists today also have a need of humility in light of facts, even if those facts are being pointed out to them by a believer in God.”

On the other hand, Lennox warns believers not to fall into the same errors. He gave this warning for religious leaders: “The important lesson is that we should be humble enough to distinguish between what the Bible says and our interpretations of it.” In other words, both sides must follow the facts wherever they lead, free from devotion to HUMAN doctrines.

According to Lennox, materialism is “self-defeating.” Here is his explanation: “The scientist’s confidence in reason ultimately depends on the existence of a rational and purposeful Creator. Otherwise, our thoughts are nothing more than electro-chemical events, the chattering of soul-less synapses. If you take the atheistic, naturalistic, materialistic view, you’re going to invalidate the reasoning process,”

You do not need a Ph.D. to understand the point Dr. Lennox is making about self-defeating materialism. If you want more wisdom from John Lennox, we recommend that you read his book.

DANDY DESIGNS

Planting Trees

For plants to grow, there must be soil, moisture, and the planting of the seeds. Many places have moisture and soil that could support plant life, but how do you get the seeds to that area? The solution is God's horticulture system.



Around the interstate highway system in our area (southern lower Michigan), we see the growth of red cedars (*Juniperus virginiana*). These desirable trees are slow growing and can become valuable timber. The state does not plant trees, and yet many red cedars are growing along our highways.

The animals planting those evergreens are birds. The cedars provide valuable habitats for the birds, and the birds plant the trees. Cedars produce blue berries that the birds eat. If you put one in your mouth, you would cringe at its bitter taste and obnoxious consistency. Birds eat them with zest and in large quantities. Birds get nutrition from the berries, and their digestive systems are specifically designed to process the seeds for growth. The birds drop the seeds along with natural fertilizer in barren places. Birds and trees benefit from this symbiosis in God's horticulture system.

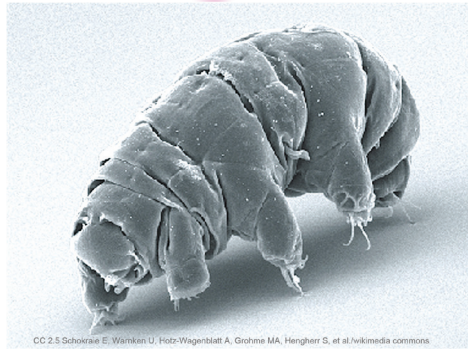
Other important seeders are squirrels. They are designed to bury seeds such as acorns, but their brain limitation causes them to forget a percentage of the seeds they bury. The design of fruits and nuts provide nutrition for animal life while the animals provide a means for the plants to grow in places far from their ancestors.

When scientists look at the diet of dinosaurs by examining their petrified excrement, they find that dinos were the seeders of their day. The plant-eating dinosaurs spread the seeds of the plants they ate along with nutrients that allowed fantastic jungles to form. The meat-eating dinosaurs kept the population of plant eaters under control so they would not eat all of the plants.

When we look at all the different kinds of seeds, the nutrients they contain, and where they can grow, we see a plan and design. Humans are still learning how to copy God's horticulture system to feed our growing population.

Indestructible Tardigrades

Imagine an animal that can survive without water, can withstand 300-degree temperatures, can live without oxygen, can survive the vacuum of space, can survive almost any amount and kind of radiation, and can hibernate for decades. This is not science fiction; it is an animal phylum known as tardigrades, often called “water bears.” There are as many as 1,200 species of tardigrades, and they live all over the Earth.



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In 2007 scientists put two species of tardigrades in containers and launched them into orbit and opened them up to cold, airless space with no protection from the punishing radiation of the Sun and stars. When the tardigrades returned to Earth, they were alive, and they are still producing offspring that are also alive and reproducing.

These animals are microscopic, about half a millimeter long when fully grown. Under a microscope, they look like a combination of a chubby bear and a single-eyed alien. They have legs but no circulatory system or skeleton. In extreme environmental conditions, they curl up and enter a survival mode called cryptobiosis. When conditions improve, they revive and resume their normal life processes. They eat algae and aquatic plants.

Scientists have studied the tardigrade genome and found ways to improve crop survival in bad weather. The United States government has allotted \$5 million to scientists attempting to find ways to protect vaccines and human blood using what they learn from the genome of tardigrades. Other uses include preserving organs for transplant and producing a sunscreen that protects against ultraviolet rays as well as reducing radiation damage in cancer treatment methods.

The development of life on Earth has not been a hit-or-miss process. As science looks at smaller and smaller things that our technology allows us to see, we realize that there is a whole world of carefully designed microscopic plants and animals that form the base of the animals we CAN see. Every time we look into the world around us, we see that a wonder-working hand guided by an intelligence far beyond our own has gone before and provided for our well-being. Thanks to technology, we realize that now more than ever before.

News and Notes

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

BIBLICAL PROTEIN. Some time ago, an article appeared in one of the atheist journals ridiculing the idea that men such as John the Baptist and Samson could live on a diet of locusts. The question is whether eating locusts and honey is unwise nutritionally and medically (not to mention aesthetically). I never had an answer to that allegation until I came across an article concerning medical research on the subject.



It turns out that the protein content of all insects, especially locusts, is very high. Locusts and grasshoppers have over three times as much protein as chicken and fish and over four times as much as pork and lamb.

Beef is more than three times lower in protein than locusts. Among insects, the protein content of locusts is very high. For example, locust protein content is three times as rich as ant protein.

So that seems to settle the question of biblical protein. From a nutritional standpoint, I would have to say there was great wisdom in eating locusts. I cannot comment on the flavor, but for the time being, I suspect McDonald’s will stick with hamburgers.



NEANDERTHAL RESEARCH. The popular perception of Neanderthals has been connected to the term “ape-man” often used to describe them. At the Max Planck Institute early in the twentieth century, a French paleontologist depicted Neanderthals as “apelike and backward.” In 1953, a movie titled *The Neanderthal Man* popularized them as primitive humans with passions and desires common to apes. The view for years was that the Neanderthals were brutes who huddled in cold caves gnawing on slabs of slain mammoths.

The truth is that Neanderthals walked upright and had larger brains and larger lung capacities than modern humans. They made complex tools, built shelters, created and traded jewelry, wore clothes, created art, buried their dead, had language and a form of worship. What has convinced scientists to change their understanding has been Neanderthal research and the sequencing of the Neanderthal genome. Comparisons of the Neanderthal genome and the modern European genome shows that up to 4% of modern human genes came from Neanderthals. They were not brutes or ape-men. They were totally human.

Dr. Joao Zilhao, a Portuguese paleoanthropologist and an expert on Neanderthals, says: “The mainstream narrative of our origins has



been fairly straightforward: the exodus of modern humans from Africa was depicted like it was a biblical event: Chosen ones replacing debased Europeans, the Neanderthals. Nonsense, all of it.”

Neanderthals were not apes or brutes of a different species of humans. They were a race of humans that had specific

physiological characteristics that are somewhat different from the appearance of humans today. The Neanderthal Museum near Dusseldorf, Germany, displays a recreation of a Neanderthal groomed, wearing a business suit, and looking like the politician he could have been. As Neanderthal research continues, we will see what develops.



GALLUP POLL ON RELIGIOUS BELIEF. The latest Gallup Poll on religious belief shows a disturbing trend. The Associated Press reported that the percentage of U.S. adults who belong to a church or other religious institution has dropped by 20% over the past two decades to a low of 50% in 2018. The most significant drops were among Hispanics and politically among Democrats.



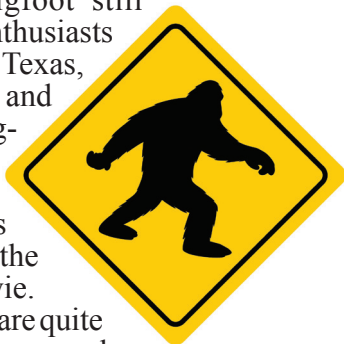
Atheists will say that all of this is just a sign that as people become informed and involved in change, they turn away from God. We would suggest that the problem is with the way Gallup has posed the questions. Most Hispanics have come from cultures where Catholicism has

been forced upon people. Catholic teachings on birth control and the problems produced by church support of unpopular politicians have contributed to many Hispanics not continuing allegiance to the Catholic church, especially when they immigrate to new cultures. In the same way, many Democrats have found themselves at odds with traditional religious practices and requirements.

We provide evidence for the existence of God and the inspiration of the Bible as his word. What the Gallup Poll on religious belief does not address is that many people who have stopped belonging to a particular church or religion are still firm believers in God. While organized religion is in decline in America, many people still have a firm conviction about the Bible as God's Word and Jesus Christ as the son of God.



BIGFOOT CONFERENCES. Bigfoot still draws large audiences. This summer enthusiasts are holding Bigfoot conferences in Ohio, Texas, the Smoky Mountains, Oregon, Georgia, and at least one international conference. Bigfoot has different names and stories from all over the world. In British Columbia, indigenous tribes have Sesquac which has been anglicized to Sasquatch. In China the name is Yeren, and in Australia it is Yowie.



The reasons people believe in Bigfoot are quite varied. For many, Bigfoot is a proof of human evolution—a missing link. For others, Bigfoot is a symbol of freedom in the modern world—a simple creature that lives “free of civilization’s rules and boundaries.” Lynne McNeill says that Bigfoot “satisfies a deep human hunger for the mysterious and the magical, and serves as proof that humans have not totally dominated nature.” The famous anthropologist Jane Goodall said she believes in Bigfoot and gave her evidence as: “I guess I’m a romantic. I don’t want to disbelieve.”

We applaud Ms. Goodall's candid admission. When people reject God, they are very likely to grab hold of a substitute, and many people use Bigfoot as a substitute for the faith they have discarded. This journal is dedicated to evidence. We contend that the evidence must resolve questions of the existence of Bigfoot or any other creature. There is absolutely no evidence for a Bigfoot creature that has stood up to scientific study.

Bigfoot is a myth that draws people to Bigfoot conferences around the world. In contrast, there is enormous evidence for the existence of Jesus Christ as the Son of God. His activity in human lives is not a legend but a living testimony for those who continue to serve him.



QINGJIANG DISCOVERY. Paleontologists who study the earliest fossils of life on Earth refer to an event they call the “Cambrian Explosion.” The fossils from that event are unique because they have advanced body plans and no previous ancestors. A vast range of marine species that lived in an ancient sea suddenly appeared in the fossil record. Scientists have discovered fossils from the Cambrian Explosion (Qingjiang biota) in Qingjiang, China, and they are calling it one of the most significant fossil discoveries in the last 100 years.



It appears to be an ancient mudslide that buried a vast range of fossils. The site contains at least 20,000 individual specimens. At last report, 4,351 fossils have been examined, and they represent 101 different species. Fifty-

three of those are new to science meaning that fossils of those species have not been found before. Because they were buried so quickly, not just shells, but even some soft parts have been preserved.

This find gives further support to the Cambrian Explosion model that says marine life suddenly appeared on planet earth. This conflicts with the Darwinian concept that life evolved over a long time with one form gradually changing into another. The biblical narrative tells us “... God said, ‘Let the water teem with living creatures’” (Genesis 1:20). That is what the Qingjiang fossils show.



Visit: [Facebook.com/evidence4god](https://www.facebook.com/evidence4god)

BLACK HOLE PICTURE. On April 11, 2019, scientists released the first actual image ever taken of a black hole. Astronomers used eight radio telescopes to see wavelengths that are beyond human vision.

This scientific accomplishment is significant because it allows scientists to test some of the predictions of Albert Einstein even down to the shape of the hole. A black hole is so massive that even light itself cannot escape the gravitational pull. The relationship of gravity and the shape of space is a concept proposed by Einstein that has radically improved our understanding of the nature of the universe.



There are important implications for apologetics in this discovery as well. A significant question that has been debated by atheists and believers for hundreds of years is whether the universe had a beginning or whether it has always existed. The biblical concept is that there was a beginning. Well-known atheists have claimed that matter/energy is eternal and just gets changed from one form to another forever.

The nature of a black hole is that it sucks in everything that gets near it, including light. If the universe has existed forever, and if black holes are continuously sucking in all matter including electromagnetic radiation, what would be the ultimate result? It seems pretty obvious that everything would have been sucked up by black holes and there would be nothing left but one supermassive black hole. That obviously is not the case, so there must have been a beginning to the creation.

If there was a beginning, there had to be a cause to that beginning. If there was a cause, there has to be a Causer. The design, intelligence, and purpose that we see in the cosmos identify some of the properties of that Causer, and God fits those criteria uniquely.



CHICK-FIL-A GIVING. San Antonio, Texas, and Buffalo, New York, have kicked Chick-fil-A out of their airports for “aiding and abetting Christian organizations.” What is especially ironic is that it is the charity work of Chick-fil-A that those cities object to.

Chick-fil-A is accused of “anti-equality giving.” They gave significant amounts of money to the Salvation Army, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and a home for troubled young men in Vidalia, Georgia. The main problem, according to those challenging Chick-fil-A is that these organizations promote a traditional Christian understanding of sex and marriage.

The programs that Chick-fil-A contributed to were sports camps and school programs for inner city kids. The Salvation Army has a budget of about two-billion dollars which it uses to provide aid for the homeless, anti-trafficking programs, disaster relief, etc., but not for policing LGBT civil rights. The Fellowship of Christian Athletes asks its leaders not to engage in homosexual or heterosexual acts outside of marriage as well as pledging not to use drugs, alcohol or tobacco. Once again, it is not carrying on an anti-LGBT campaign.



Have we reached a point in America where anyone who has strong moral standards and Bible-based beliefs is being denied the opportunity to own a business? The fact that they close their restaurants on Sunday continues to cause attacks on them. Are Christian moral standards a crime?



strong moral standards and Bible-based beliefs is being denied the opportunity to own a business? The fact that they close their restaurants on Sunday continues to cause attacks on them. Are Christian moral standards a crime?

ARE MOST SCIENTISTS ATHEISTS? Baruch Aba Shalev wrote a book titled *100 Years of Nobel Prizes*. That book contains a report on the Nobel prizes awarded between 1901 and 2000. It shows that during that period when 423 prizes were awarded, 65.4% of Nobel Prize laureates identified Christianity in its various forms



as their religious preference. Scientists who identified themselves as Christians won 78.3% of all Nobel prizes in Peace, 72.5% in chemistry, 65.3% in physics, 62% in medicine, 54% in economics, and 49.5% in literature.

So, are most scientists atheists? Certainly not. You do not have to put your brain in park to be a Christian. Believing there is intelligence and purpose in the creation gives searching people a leg up in any attempt to understand the world in which we live.



See our videos at www.doesgodexist.tv

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

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