

DOES GOD EXIST?

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

**Second Quarter 2021
Volume 48 Number 2**



Beyond Reasonable Doubt

Does God Exist? Lectureship Update

No Lectures are scheduled, but see page 7 for an opportunity to have a lecture-like experience with our DVDs and John Clayton.

We hope that all our friends and readers of this *Does God Exist?* journal are staying healthy during this pandemic. It seems the COVID-19 is starting to be conquered. We all need to rely on God to watch over us and protect us from this virus as well as from other maladies that we may face.

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www.doesgodexist.tv**

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Editor's Note by John N. Clayton:

Attacks on Christianity continue to increase globally. For over 50 years, the **Does God Exist?** ministry has been dedicated to showing the compatibility of science and the Christian faith. Atheists and skeptics frequently attack the historical accuracy of the Bible. Most of us, including myself, lack the knowledge of archaeology we need to defend against those attacks. We have a solution.

Many years ago, we met John Cooper, who has done research in archaeology and biblical history and has an advanced degree in Christian apologetics and philosophy of religion. He has spent many years traveling and studying in the Holy Land. For about five years, we worked with John to organize his teaching into a form that we could share with others. We have now produced a new video series dealing with biblical archaeology, the inspiration and accuracy of the Bible, and the historicity and divinity of Jesus Christ. The following is John Cooper's introduction to this study.



**BEYOND REASONABLE
DOUBT**

by John Cooper

Thank you for your interest in the most important of human endeavors—finding faith in God. It is with much excitement and hope that we announce a new video series entitled *Beyond Reasonable Doubt*. John Clayton asked me to put together this series on evidence for the reliability and inspiration of the Bible. As a natural and essential extension of that, I included the ultimate reason for Scripture—the revelation of salvation through Jesus of Nazareth as predicted and fulfilled in the pages of the Bible. Paul said to Timothy, “... from infancy, you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15 NIV 1984).

The apostle Peter wrote, “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15). The phrase “give an answer” is from the Greek word “*apologia*,” from which we get the term Christian “apologetics.” Some versions translate this phrase as “give a defense.” And so this video series *Beyond Reasonable Doubt* is an attempt to “give a defense” with “gentleness and respect” for the Christian faith to all who may ask us why we believe. Be it known that I had to leave out many things due to time, space, and audience attention span. We hope that this series will be a beginning point and catalyst for deeper digging into the field of archaeology and the Bible.

There seems to be some confusion about the very definition of biblical faith. If you were to look in a dictionary, you would find that it defines faith as belief without reasons or evidence. However, in Scripture, faith is based on solid facts, reasons, and evidence. We find a biblical definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1, “Now faith is

the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (KJV). Faith is based on reality and evidences of reality. On Pentecost, Peter proclaimed to the people, “Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a



man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know ... God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact” (Acts 2:22, 32). In Athens, Paul spoke about a day of judgment and said God “has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead” (Acts 17:31). So in the New Testament, faith is founded on evidence, facts, and proof.

Biblical archaeology is one way of gaining evidence of and information about people, places, and events mentioned in the Bible. Thus, it can increase our faith by acquainting us with evidence from the past that supports the historicity, authenticity, and reliability of the Bible. The information gleaned from these archaeological digs can also help us “give an answer to everyone” who asks the reason for the hope that we have.

We want to define the purpose for this series more clearly. This study is not just to find facts but also to find the meaning and relevance of those facts. I believe that every human being has at least four needs to make their lives fulfilling and meaningful. A scripture familiar to many is John 3:16, and it contains these four necessities:



“For God so loved the world,
 (1. We all need love.)




 that he gave his only begotten Son,
 (2. We all need to be valued.)

 that whosoever believes in him should not perish ,
 (3. We all need forgiveness.)


 but have everlasting life.
 (4. We all need hope.)

Therefore, our goal in this series is to help all who will look at the evidence openly and honestly to know “beyond reasonable doubt” that the Bible is reliable and trustworthy. We want people to find faith in God through his word and from that faith in Jesus of Nazareth to find love, value, forgiveness, and hope.

FOR **GOD** SO
LOVED 
 THE WORLD

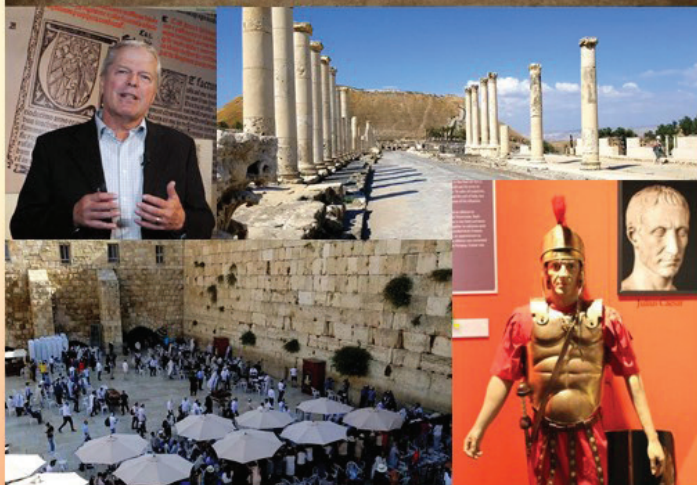
THAT HE GAVE 
 His only
 begotten **SON**
 **THAT WHOSOEVER**
BELIEVES in **HIM**
 should not perish
 •BUT HAVE•
 Everlasting
LIFE 
 JOHN 3:16

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



BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT

Hosted by John Cooper



9 Programs on 3 DVDs

Video Series Outline

- 1. Introduction to Biblical Archaeology and Faith**—What are biblical archaeology and biblical faith, and why are they important to us today?
- 2. The Textual Reliability of the Bible**—Is our Bible reliable, or is it full of errors and inaccuracies? How can we know if we can trust it?
- 3. Archaeology and the Old Testament (Part 1)**—This segment looks at archaeological discoveries relating to the Old Testament up to the time of the United Monarchy –approx. 1,000 B.C.

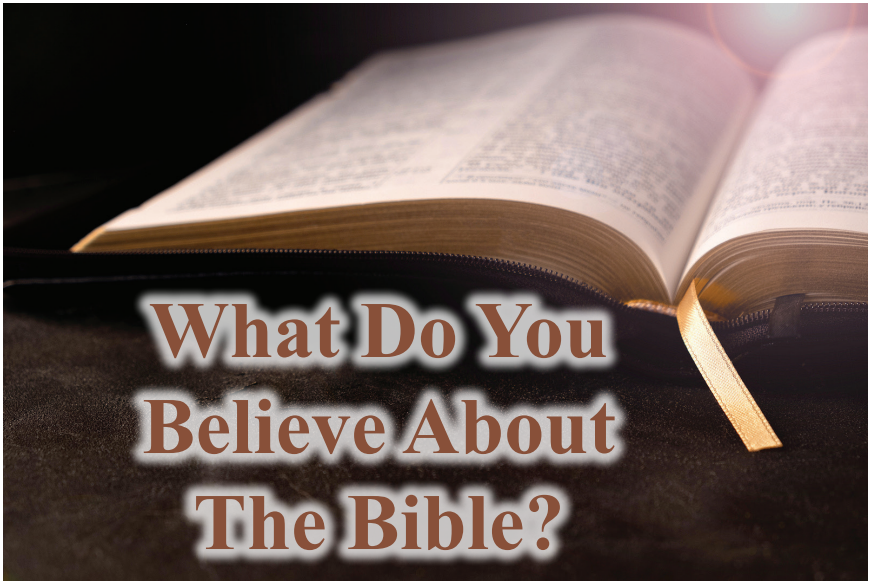
4. **Archaeology and the Old Testament (Part 2)**—This session deals with archaeological findings relating to the Bible from around 1,000 B.C. to about 400 B.C.
5. **Archaeology and the New Testament (Part 1)**—This presentation examines archaeological finds from the time of the life and ministry of Jesus in the land of Israel.
6. **Archaeology and the New Testament (Part 2)**—This session shares archaeological discoveries from the time of Paul’s missionary journeys.
7. **The Inspiration of the Bible**—This gives reasons for believing that the Bible is not just a human production but that God guided the writers. Therefore it is a book like no other that can give us hope, forgiveness, purpose, and eternal life.
8. **The Historicity of Jesus**—Did Jesus really live, or was he an invention of men? We examine sources that conclusively prove that Jesus was a real person of history.
9. **The Divinity of Jesus Examined**—The New Testament pictures Jesus as the Divine Son of God and Savior of mankind. This presentation examines these claims honestly and thoroughly.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY WITH JOHN CLAYTON:

Because of the COVID pandemic, we have suspended our lectureship schedule. In place of that, we are providing an opportunity for congregations to have a lectureship electronically. We want to give the readers of this publication the same opportunity to study with John Clayton.

We will mail you a DVD of the first four lectures in our video series. You or your group can watch the four programs writing down questions and challenges to the material. Please send us your questions via e-mail or postal mail, and John Clayton will respond to them. If you are satisfied with that material, return the DVD, and we mail you the next one. Your only cost is the return postage for the DVD.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please send us your name and address, and we will send you the first DVD. Watching the Does God Exist? presentations in the comfort of your home is an excellent way to receive the information without risk from COVID or the inconvenience of driving to a lectureship site. E-mail your request to John Clayton at jncdgc@aol.com.

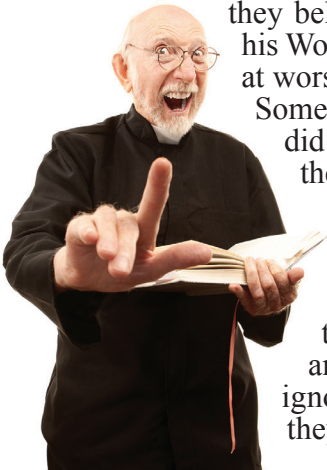


What Do You Believe About The Bible?

I hope you have read John Cooper's article and looked at the outline of the lessons. We live in an age of extreme doubt. The political circus going on in Washington, D.C., is destructive in many ways. It challenges our confidence in our leaders. It makes us realize that honesty and dedicated servitude are even rarer than we thought. It may even cause us to question some of our beliefs about institutions. Associated with that is growing doubt about God's existence and the credibility of the Bible.

For many senior citizens, belief in God and the Bible as his Word was an inherited faith. I was a rebel back in the 1950s because I was an atheist. When I challenged people to tell me why they believed in God and accepted the Bible as his Word, I usually got a shrug at best or a shove at worst. Those were questions you did not ask. Some of my peers went to church, but their lives did not show that they saw any value in what the Bible said about how we should live.

The same things were true in the time of Jesus Christ. The Pharisees that Jesus disputed and condemned were students of the Hebrew Bible. They spent much time studying and teaching the Scriptures and could quote them. The Jews were not ignorant of what the Scriptures said, but they simply could not apply it to their lives.



Religion was a vehicle of expediency to promote social structure and provide a platform for power struggles.

Things have not changed much. As an atheist, I had no difficulty pointing out the hypocrisy of organized religion. Preachers could quote Scripture just like the Pharisees did. Just as the Pharisees engaged in power struggles and compromised their morality, many modern preachers make the headlines for the very same thing.

So do we REALLY believe the Bible is the Word of God? The scientific evidence is very strong that there is “something out there”



that orchestrated creation. We can even demonstrate some characteristics of that something, but why should I believe that the Bible is the “Word” of that something. In addition to our personal doubts, so-called scholars bombard us with

charges that the Bible is full of contradictions and mistakes. We do not know enough to check out their claims, but we tend to accept anything that relieves us of responsibility for how we live our lives.

My training is in physics, chemistry, and geology. I never took a course in ancient history in high school or college. I had

one history class as a sophomore in high school that was very superficial and very secular. I know enough not to get involved in trying to prove or disprove the integrity of the Bible. I have listened to atheist professors. I have seen the attacks on the Bible in the media and have read books by skilled writers who do not believe in God. Rarely have I checked out the claims of these authors, nor have I visited the Holy Land. I became a Christian because I saw the futility and frustration of the atheistic way of life and the wisdom and beauty of the teachings of Christ. Still, I wanted answers to the attacks of atheists and skeptics.



I saw the work of John Cooper, which he presented in a way that I could understand. I knew that people who claimed that the Bible

was just a bunch of myths with no academic support were wrong. John Cooper's teaching gave me a much better understanding of why I believe what I believe. He has had significant experience in traveling in the Holy Land and visiting a vast number of archaeological sites. He has listened to and answered challenges from opponents of Christianity in the United States, Russia, and the Middle East.

I urge you to study this series. You can watch it free of charge on our doesgodexist.tv website. You can get it from us on loan or at our cost, or you can purchase it online at www.powervine.store. There is a study guide available for personal use or group discussions. We hope that this series will be a valuable educational tool so we will all know more fully why we believe what we believe.

—John N. Clayton

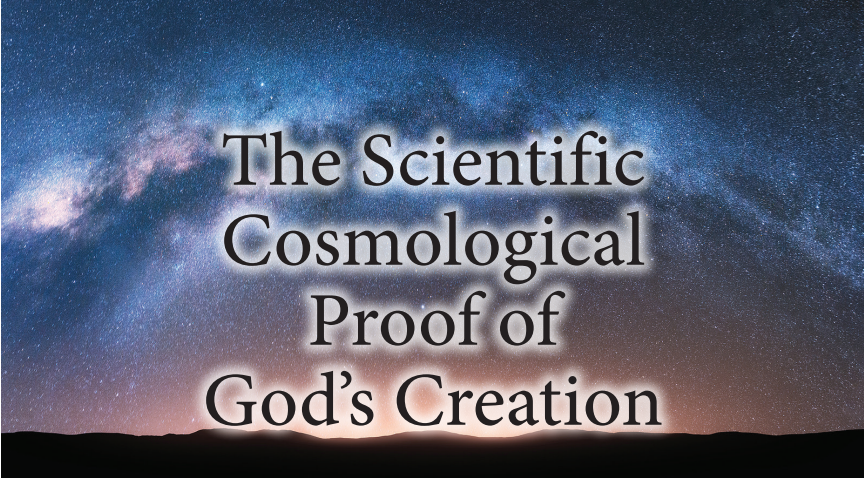


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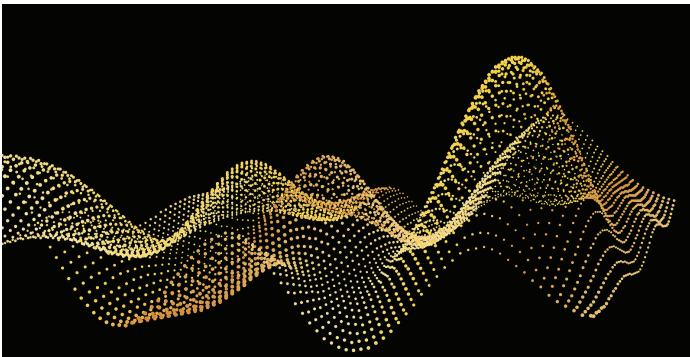
The Scientific Cosmological Proof of God's Creation

There is a massive amount of evidence available for the existence of God. One of the clearest evidences is the creation itself – the cosmos. By that, we mean outer space and everything that is in it. Carl Sagan was fond of saying, “The cosmos is all there is or ever was or ever will be.” With the discoveries science has made since Sagan’s death, it has become increasingly apparent that Sagan’s statement is not true. We know that there is much in the cosmos that is secondary to the cosmos and that the creation itself was prefaced by a whole history of changes in things we cannot see.

EVERYTHING IS WAVES.

Our modern understanding of the cosmos is that everything is made of waves. That means that even mass has the properties of waves—frequency, wavelength, and energy, related by simple equations. Energy is equal to the frequency of vibration times a value known as Plank’s constant. We can also relate energy to wavelength by the fact that frequency times wavelength is equal to velocity.

When dealing with creation, that velocity is the speed of light, so energy equals Plank’s constant times the speed of light divided by the



wavelength. Since energy equals mass times the speed of light squared (from Einstein), it will also be equal to Planck's constant divided by the speed of light times the wavelength. The wavelength of matter is simply so long that it cannot be detected.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

So what is the point of all that? It is just elementary algebra based on the now proven fact that everything is made up of waves. All scientific observations confirm that there was a beginning to everything we see and experience. This beginning was initiated by total energy. Frederick Hoyle called this the "big bang." That term stuck because no scientists would deny that massive energy produced quanta, which are bunches of energy that have a frequency. Light has a frequency, and as it moves, it has a finite speed and a wavelength determined by its energy.



To have energy, there must be frequency since Planck's equation is $E=hf$. (The letter h represents Planck's constant, and f is frequency.) Frequency is cycles per second, so time

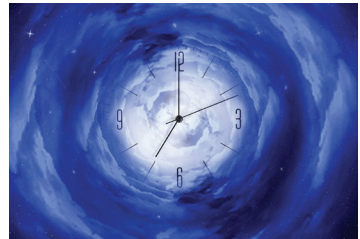
would come into existence as soon as energy produced frequency. Time did not exist before the release of energy. In science, there is now a consensus that the energy came from another dimension, and time itself is fourth-dimensional, not a three-dimensional physical quantity.

WHERE'S THE EVIDENCE?

The evidence for all of this has produced countless scientific papers and several Nobel prizes. Even the work that showed that radiation is still coming to us through the cosmos resulted in a Nobel Prize awarded to Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson in 1978. They discovered that cosmic microwave background radiation from the original "big bang" is universally distributed throughout space. For a very long time, scientists have known that the cosmos is expanding from a single point of origin. We cannot observe the "big bang" now, but since space and time came into existence simultaneously, we can see the entire expanse of space and time.

WHAT ENERGY SOURCE?

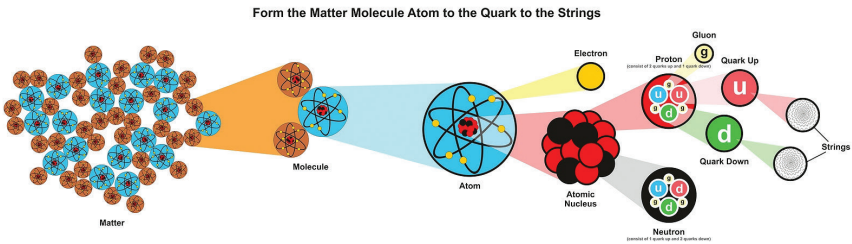
All of this evidence leads to another question. What is the source of the en-



ergy? If the cause of the creation was outside of space and time, one of the choices is that a mindless undirected cause did the creating based on chance.

We have only discussed the creation of mass so far. An equally interesting factor is the creation of electric charge. Most of us have heard the term “quark” in physics class. There are six kinds of quarks, and quarks combine to make up hadrons, with protons and neutrons being the most familiar. Quarks make up electric charge, and they are made of point particles called preons that do not have any size at all.

Realize that all of what we have described was designed to produce physical matter, which is the starting point of what Dr. Sagan saw and described. What we see in our telescopes and microscopes has been produced by things we cannot see and that do not take up any space and that reveal themselves through waves.



WHAT'S THE NATURE OF THE CAUSE?

The last question in this cosmological understanding is the nature of the cause. On the surface, it might seem that there are two choices:

1. The cause was blind mechanistic chance with no intelligence, no purpose, and no source.
2. The cause was an intelligence that built our cosmos by design and, for a reason, carefully integrated the elements into a physical cosmos.

You cannot just throw a bunch of energy out there and expect the result to be physical matter. The nature of physical matter is such that it tends to become disordered with time. The measure of this disorder is called entropy, and it can be calculated. If energy were simply thrown out there, entropy would take over, and the cosmos would not exist.

Entropy confirms that the creation began at a precise point, but the order built into matter demonstrates design and intelligence.

WE SEE DESIGN IN CREATION.

We see design everywhere we look in the creation. We see it not only in astronomical examples but even within the substrates of matter. Life is the most fantastic example of design. The countless examples of life's unique capacity to fit into virtually any physical system on Earth demonstrate its design. A scientist said that "The creation must have known we were coming,"



Our modern understanding and observations have confirmed the validity of the simple statement, "In the beginning, God created the *shamayim* and the Earth." In your King James Bible, *shamayim* is translated as "heaven." The more general meaning of that word is the cosmos. The physical creation screams that God is its creator.

—JNC

For documents and archives of this journal plus
booklets and more: www.doesgodexist.org



Today, we are seeing political extremism in the United States. It has been going worldwide for a long time, but now we see it in our own country. Those who take extreme positions in politics, education, and religion are guided mainly by ignorance. Those of us with a background in science continue to be appalled at the statements of politicians who repeatedly demonstrate that they do not understand the most basic facts of biology and medical science. The **Does God Exist?** ministry has been dedicated to education because most religious conflicts and division are rooted in ignorance.

This is an old problem. Acts 14:8–13 gives an account of Paul and Barnabas bringing relief to a crippled man. The bystanders who witnessed this amazing recovery immediately attributed it to Zeus and Hermes and decided that Paul was Hermes and Barnabas was Zeus. The notion that simple humans could do great things was beyond the crowd's comprehension. Some people rejected Jesus because he came from a humble background, did not have an elaborate physical structure to operate from, and spent time working with the common people. The general public wanted a flashy extreme solution to their problems with elaborate rituals.

Nothing has changed. People today still want leaders who are flashy, live in opulent surroundings, and offer entertaining messages. We have over 200 different denominational groups because people want someone to entertain them with something dazzling and unconventional. Here are some specific examples of this that we all should consider.



WE WANT FLASHY ACTIONS FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Acts 2:38–39 promised that those who become Christians would have “the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 8:9 tells us that this means we are not controlled by sin but by God’s Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 3:16, we learn that we are the dwelling place of God’s Spirit. For many people, that is too simple. They want a Spirit that overpowers and makes us do extreme physical things, including trances, tongue-speaking, prophesying, and casting out demons.

Paul warns us in 1 Thessalonians, Do not put out the Spirit’s fire. The Spirit covers for us in our prayers (Romans 8:26–28). Galatians 5:22–23 tells us that he gives us the ability to be patient. In 2 Corinthians 8:1–7, we learn that the Holy Spirit gives us the power to be cheerful givers. Numerous passages tell us that the Spirit helps us resist temptation.

WE TEND TO OVERREACT TO NEGATIVISM.



The fact is that the “Gospel” IS GOOD NEWS, not a bunch of condemnations and “thou shalt nots.” Over and over, the Bible tells us that the gospel is a positive, joyous thing. Read Ephesians 1:3; Galatians 5:1 and 5:22. Remember that among the fruits of the Spirit are joy and peace.

WE TEND TO OVER EMPHASIZE TRADITIONS.

In Matthew 15:3–9, Jesus addressed people who were hung up on traditions by saying, “You nullify the word of God for the sake of your traditions.” Colossians 2:8 warns Christians about philosophy that depends on human tradition.

We in the twenty-first century are loaded down with traditions. We think that we have to have a building to be the church, yet there is no command or biblical example of the church having a building. We have a tradition of singing four-part harmony using the diatonic scale, even though the biblical models were mostly chants of psalms. We have added musical instruments to make our worship more entertaining, even though the biblical church does not appear to have used instruments. We have a tradition of having a preacher with a religious title who tells entertaining monologues even though we have no command to do so.



The list of things we do by tradition is almost endless. Some of these traditions might be helpful, but others have been divisive and a waste of resources.

WHAT DOES GOD WANT?

In 1 Corinthians 9:19–27, we see what God desires of those who claim to be Christians. Be a servant to all men (verse 19). Put ourselves in the place of others (verses 20–22). Be temperate in all things (verse 25). Show purpose in our lives (verse 26). Exert self-control (verse 27). Remember that we can still be drawn away by Satan (verse 27).

I beg you to consider these things. You can choose to be extreme in how you do your work, what habits you have, how negative you are, and what view you give those who see you and your life. Show instead how you love peace, how you love everyone, and that you have Christian joy. Doing that means your life will bear incredible fruit.

—JNC

You'll recognize them by their fruit. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can't produce bad fruit; neither can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So you'll recognize them by their fruit.

—The words of Jesus from Matthew 7:16-20 CSB





A Bugs Life

by Don Betts

The Cicada is an enigma to entomologists
through the ages.
Their study is a stigma, as no reason is found
for its stages.

Periodical Cicadas have timing,
For which there's no reason or rhyming.
Millions appear all at once in the spring
A deafening crescendo erupts when they
sing.

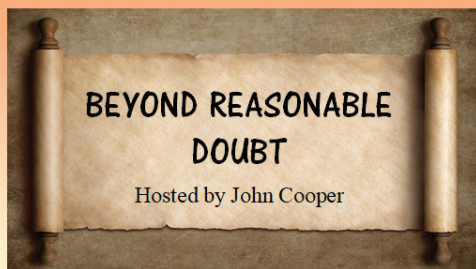
Their stay is not long, as the days go by
They shed skin, fly, reproduce and then die.
Just a week after appearing, the adults mate,
But the coming generation is unusually late.

Thirteen or seventeen, an odd fixation
For reproduction of the next generation.
Each female lays four to six hundred eggs
Into tree twigs, holding on with her legs.

Hatching nymphs fall to the earth,
Burrowing underground beneath the turf.
They live on fluids from the roots of a tree.
How they count the years is a mystery.
Depending on species, thirteen or seventeen
Is the number of years 'til they're once again
seen.

Centuries of study of this locust-like insect
Has scientists searching in retrospect.
What'cha wanna bet, after all is said and done
God created this one just for fun.
He may be laughing now at you and me
As we try to unscramble this Cicada mystery!

NEW VIDEO SERIES NOW AVAILABLE!



We have just completed a new video series with John Cooper, recorded at the Clayton Museum of Ancient History!

You can order
a 3 DVD set
from **DOES GOD
EXIST?**
Or online at
[www.
powervine.store](http://www.powervine.store)



Or you can watch
it online
for free at
[DoesGodExist.TV.](http://DoesGodExist.TV)

BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT

This series of lectures deals with biblical archaeology, the reliability of the Scriptures, and the divinity of Jesus. Your speaker is John Cooper, a Christian minister whose study and travels have given him a broad knowledge of the subject matter. The series uses video and photographs of important archaeological sites and artifacts. It was recorded in the Clayton Museum of Ancient History at York College in York, Nebraska.



- 1-Introduction (26 minutes)
- 2-The Textual Reliability of the Bible (25 minutes)
- 3-Old Testament Archaeology Part 1 (29 minutes)
- 4-Old Testament Archaeology Part 2 (28 minutes)
- 5-New Testament Archaeology Part 1 (23 minutes)
- 6-New Testament Archaeology Part 2 (28 minutes)
- 7-The Inspiration of the Bible (37 minutes)
- 8-The Historicity of Jesus (31 minutes)
- 9-The Divinity of Jesus (32 minutes)

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.

C. EVERETT KOOP (1916 – 2013)

U.S. SURGEON GENERAL 1982 – 89
PROFESSOR OF PEDIATRIC SURGERY



“If I didn’t believe that I had a God who was solid and dependable, a God who makes no mistakes, I couldn’t continue what I am doing. I need that certainty to assure me that what I am doing is the right thing, and I need it in my day-to-day existence with all the problems that I personally face. I would have a great deal of trouble with them if I didn’t have complete faith in Jesus Christ. I think that the hallmark of my existence is the integration of my surgical life with my Christian faith.”

“The fact that God is in control of this universe, as fallen as culture and civilization are, gives me a reason to go on. I never operate without having a subconscious feeling that there’s no way this extraordinarily complicated mechanism known as the human body just happened to come up from slime and ooze somewhere. When I make an incision with my scalpel, I see organs of such intricacy that there simply hasn’t been enough time for natural evolutionary processes to have developed them.”

“The other thing I would say is that the various abilities that I think I might have in surgery or decision-making processes are gifts from God. In the long run, I hold these in stewardship, and I am responsible to Him for the way I use them. For that reason, I try to integrate what I do in my professional life with what I believe in my Christian life so that I don’t live those two parts of my life in separate compartments.”

Source: *Scientists Who Believe: 21 Tell Their Own Stories*, Moody Press, 1984

Cynthia's Corner



We have discussed the credibility and inspiration of the Bible many times, and now we have a new video series by John Cooper dealing with the archaeological and historical proof of the Bible's inspiration. As a non-scholar and simply a Bible reader and believer, I base my life on the truth and inspiration of God's Word. The question is, how have I come to this faith?

First of all, without faith we cannot please God. His word says, "Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1, 6). Because he wants us to have faith, God gives us plenty of reasons to believe in him, his Word, and his Son. To prove he was God's Son, Jesus did many miracles that could only be done by the power of God. The lame walked, the blind saw, the deaf heard, the dumb spoke, and even the weather obeyed him! God proved Jesus was his Son by raising him from the dead on the third day! After his resurrection, Jesus walked among the living for 40 days and then physically ascended to heaven (Acts 1:3, 9).

After Jesus went to heaven, his apostles and other chosen men were given God's words and wrote the New Testament by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit (Galatians 1:11–12; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16). To prove their words were true and that they were speaking for God, they too were given the power to perform miracles as Jesus did (John 20:30, 31; Acts 2:22; 14:3; Galatians 3:5; Hebrews 2:4). When the apostles had died and the New Testament had been completed, the miracles ceased because they had served their purpose. They testified to Jesus as God's Son and the apostles as his chosen men to establish his church on Earth.

God chose men to write the Old Testament, and he spoke directly to them, including Moses and the prophets. God also did miracles in Old Testament times to prove his existence and sovereignty.

Does God Exist? was founded on the belief that faith in God and science are compatible since science is what we have learned about how God created the universe and our planet. "Dandy Designs" gives almost endless examples of God's creative designs and the reasons for them. Romans 1:19–20 (NIV 1984) says that we have no excuse for disbelief because, "What may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."

—Cynthia Clayton

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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.

Father's House

by Ron Hendron, Jr., © 2020,
(paperback) fathershousedevotion@gmail.com

We are always looking for new books that offer something different that we think our readers would like to know about. Sometimes we have reviewed a book that provides exceptional use as a class study or a devotional. This book, titled *Father's House*, takes a different approach to faith.

In the past, we have published articles by the author, Ron Hendron Jr., in this quarterly journal. His writing is clear and offers a unique approach to faith. He states that he has three hopes for this book:

1. That it will ignite a passion for God as Father and Creator by helping us receive his love as family.
2. That it will encourage us towards deeper faith by connecting us to the strength that comes from knowing our origin and reason for being here.
3. That it will help us lead more meaningful lives by connecting us to life-changing experiences through stories about his children.

The book is spiral-bound, 8½ by 11 inches, with 120 pages that you can lay open for class use. There are 13 chapters, making it fit a quarter of study, and the book includes a teacher's guide.

The first chapter is "Creation." It begins with, "Light—light everywhere God is light, so that's all there was. He didn't have a place. He didn't have time. He just was." The author then brings three figures into this introduction—Spirit, Planner, and Announcer. With that setting, the book quotes Genesis 1 to 3 in story-form, including Satan's origin. At the end of the chapter, there are 12 questions dealing with the subjects of the first chapter with references to Hebrews, Romans, Matthew, Job, and Revelation.

That will give you an idea of how different this book is. The study is deep, going into the kind of questions young adults ask. Chapter 6 contains a discussion of the Trinity based on The Planner (God), The

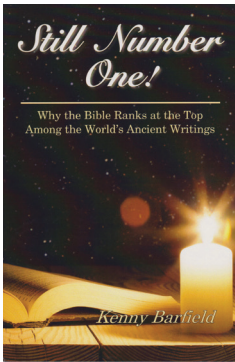
Creative Power of God (the Holy Spirit), and (The Communicator) Jesus. Other chapters deal with why we are here, the story of Adam and Eve with Satan and temptation to sin, and Cain and Abel.

Starting with chapter 11, Hendron studies three different Bible characters. Joseph's story provides a study of behavior, forgiveness, and peace. The study of Job gives insight into how God tests us and what he will allow. The last chapter relates to Jesus, God in human form, and faith. This is a very different study and one that will appeal to young adults and college students.



Still Number One

by Kenny Barfield, Lambert Book House Publisher, © 2021,
368 pages, ISBN-13: 978-0-89315-995-5299



This book is revised and updated from an earlier book titled *Why the Bible Is Number 1: The World's Sacred Literature in the Light of Science*. Dr. Barfield has been a science teacher at Mars Hill Bible School in Florence, Alabama, for many years and is active in apologetic efforts.

This book is divided into five parts and has a very extensive set of appendices. It opens with a preface that deals with Darwinism's abuses and misrepresentations.

The first part of the book involves medicine, biology, and the health sciences. There is a short comparison to other faiths and then an exhaustive discussion of alcohol and its abuses and the Bible's teaching about it. Next is a discussion of biblical food laws and the biblical approach to caring for the ill as opposed to Darwinian principles.

The second part of the book deals with the physical and earth sciences and shows the accuracy of the Bible as opposed to other religious systems. The third section is on astronomy and the space sciences tracing human understandings of the cosmos compared to biblical teaching.

Part 4 is a short comparison of the Bible and modern understanding, and part 5 summarizes the book's themes.

The appendices are surprisingly long and varied. There is an essay on the relation of science and faith and a review of famous men of science and faith. You will also find a comparison of geocentrism and heliocentrism and a discussion of Galileo. There is also a discussion of the movie *Inherit the Wind*.

Finally, there is a listing of videos that teachers will find helpful. *Still Number One* is a very useful book, and we highly recommend it.

DANDY DESIGNS

EATING IN SELF-DEFENSE



This grasshopper cannot fly, and it can barely jump. The western horse lubber grasshopper (*Taeniopoda eques*) protects itself by eating.

Western horse lubber grasshoppers live in the arid Sonoran area of the southwestern United States and

Mexico. They are larger than the average grasshopper at 2.75 inches (7 cm) long. Despite being a large morsel, they can sit on a bush in the desert and relax, knowing that predators will leave them alone. Their defense is that they eat toxic plants, which give them a nasty taste for any animal foolish enough to eat them.

To warn a potential predator that it does not taste good, horse lubber grasshoppers have distinctive colors with a shiny black body and yellow trim. Besides being a warning to predators, the black body also provides thermoregulation. On cold days, the black color absorbs heat, which speeds the metabolism of the insect. Without this thermoregulation, the horse lubber grasshopper would not survive in the northern portion of its range. It orients and positions its body to maximize sun exposure in the cool part of the day and then finds shade during the day's heat.

Horse lubber grasshoppers also produce a warning odor made from chemicals derived from the plants they eat. If a mouse threatens the grasshopper, it sprays the foul-smelling chemical and makes a hissing sound. It may also expose its bright red hind wings and wave its legs and antennae. A predator who is not smart enough to back off but eats the grasshopper instead will become sick or possibly die.

There is a fantastic variety of defense mechanisms used by the millions of creatures God has designed.

See our videos at www.doesgodexist.tv.

AYE-AYES' UNUSUAL CHARACTERISTICS



Scientists use animal classification systems based on old evolutionary assumptions. The result is that many times an animal does not fit any evolutionary model. An excellent example of this is a species of long-fingered, nocturnal lemurs found only in Madagascar called aye-ayes.

Aye-ayes have many unusual characteristics giving them a name that comes from a local phrase meaning something like “I don’t know.” Here are a few of the aye-aye’s traits:

1. They have large round eyes, which aid in night vision.
2. They use their continually growing incisor teeth to tear a hole in trees to reach grubs. Their teeth are so strong they can chew through cement blocks.
3. Their long middle finger is skeletal and has a ball-and-socket joint used to hook onto wood-boring grubs.
4. Their big toe is opposable to enable them to hang from tree branches.
5. They have fur with guard hairs they can raise to appear to double their size.
6. They use a unique system of foraging by percussive tapping on wood. They sense the echo with their bat-like ears to detect hollow areas where grubs are.
7. They build elaborate spherical nests made of leaves and branches.

Because of their teeth, nesting behavior, and long tail, your first guess might be that they are rodents. Despite the face of a possum, the teeth of a mouse, and the ear of a bat, they are classified as primates. This lemur is so unusual it has its own taxonomic family.

Aye-ayes have many unusual characteristics that point out weaknesses in the evolutionary taxonomic system. From an apologetics standpoint, it seems clear that God has created a variety of animals and given them characteristics to fill various ecological niches. Aye-ayes seem to be a special creation for a unique environment.

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).

APATHY AND DEMENTIA: Because we are living longer, the incidence of dementia has also increased. One form is frontotemporal dementia, which hits most of its victims between ages 45 and 65. There is a gene for frontotemporal dementia, but having the gene does not mean that the person is doomed to have the disease. Keeping your body and brain active may play a role in whether that gene will be expressed. Apathy may lead to dementia. Researchers at Cambridge University have discovered that there is a correlation between apathy and frontotemporal dementia. Their studies show that people who are lazy, in depression, or have lost interest in life becoming apathetic toward their daily activities are potential victims of frontotemporal dementia.



God never intended for people to be inert. Passively watching television instead of getting involved in activities, social interaction, or reading can make a difference in whether our gene for frontotemporal dementia will be expressed.

A person’s role in church activities may also be a factor in frontotemporal dementia. You can retire from your secular employment, but do not retire from God. Apathy may lead to dementia, but staying active supports mental health and freedom from frontotemporal dementia.



K2-141B IS NOT ANOTHER EARTH: The media has suggested that a planet called K2-141b may be inhabited. It is a little under 200 light-years away, and though it has some similarities, K2-141b is not another Earth.

Astronomers have discovered that its atmosphere has all the elemental components of rocks. That has to mean that the planet's surface temperature is hot enough to vaporize rocks, which would be more than 5,400 degrees Fahrenheit (3,000 C).

Without the variables that keep our planet cool, we could not have a surface temperature of less than 212 degrees Fahrenheit (100 C). The size, temperature, and activity of the Sun have to be just right. The amount of ocean surface that reflects solar heat back into space is crucial. The factors that restrict greenhouse gases, the relatively low value of volcanic activity, the lack of exothermic chemical reactions, the reflectivity of clouds, and many other factors influence our temperature.

Evidence shows that planets with conditions that permit surface temperatures between 0 and 100 degrees Celsius, allowing liquid water, are rare. If God has created life elsewhere on a planet where life can exist over the long haul, it will be another demonstration of incredible wisdom and design. Our planet is exceptional, and taking care of it should be a high priority for all of us.



WHAT COLOR IS YOUR RIVER? In our 12 trips down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, I saw changes in the water from time to time. The river was sometimes brown and at other times crystal blue, depending on how much upstream water was being released from the Glen Canyon Dam. I now live by the Saint Joseph River in southern Michigan. I have read the notes of the first explorers who came through this area in which they tell of being able to see the bottom of the river through 20 feet of water. Now you can only see about a foot down. Americas' rivers have changed through the years.

In 1984, satellites started taking pictures of rivers in the United States. Over 230,000 images have been analyzed by the University of Pittsburgh, the University of North Carolina, and Duke University. The data shows that only five percent of Americas' rivers are still blue. Twenty-eight percent are green, which in most cases is caused by algae. The remainder are yellow.

As rivers change from blue to yellow to green, what can live in the rivers also changes. In the Saint Joseph



River, the kinds of fish that live in the river today are far different from the native trout seen by the early settlers of this area. Today the river has large numbers of suckers and carp. There are some bass and panfish, and we do have salmon from Lake Michigan migrating up the river to spawn.

What color is your river? The more important question is, what is causing the rivers to change color? The causes, according to the studies, are farm fertilizer runoff, dams, sewage, and global warming. This is more than the loss of recreational use of waterways. Numerous diseases, including cancer, are related to what is in the water we drink, bathe in, and provide to our animals.

Christians must be vocal in encouraging our culture to initiate significant efforts to turn our waterways blue again.



EARTH ROCK FOUND ON THE MOON: Frequently, science clarifies biblical statements, but no scientific facts have ever contradicted the biblical account. Contradiction would be impossible since the God who created and made Earth also gave us the Bible. A recent example of their agreement is demonstrated by an Earth rock found on the Moon.



The simple clarity of the Genesis account contrasts with literally thousands of scientific papers and books giving details of the biblical statement, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1 KJV). Another interesting passage in Genesis is the second verse, which indicates a change in the Earth. The most accurate translation of verse two is, “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.”

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s daily blog announced the results of an internal X-ray scan of lunar sample 14321. Alan Shepard picked up that rock during the Apollo 14 lunar mission. It shows chemistry identical to Earth’s materials and completely different from lunar material. NASA says that the sample is older than Earth’s surface materials and indicates a dramatic event.

A celestial object like an asteroid or comet may have hit our planet and blasted material into space, with some of it landing on the Moon. The scientific information simply demonstrates the accuracy of the brief biblical account. Science and the Bible are symbiotic—each beneficial to the other and in agreement with each other. However, they explain different aspects of human concern.



MOON OPENS SUEZ CANAL: The Moon does many things that affect life on Earth. Sometimes its power can help in ways we never considered, such as opening the Suez Canal.

For a week in March, we saw news reports about a giant ship blocking that canal that carries much of the world's shipping. The offending vessel is one of the world's largest container ships, and it got stuck on the sand and turned sideways to block the entire channel. Tugboats and dredging vessels worked to dislodge it, but they were toy boats by comparison. You could think of a child with a toy shovel and sand bucket trying to free a beached whale and push it back into the ocean. "Experts" said it could take weeks to free the vessel.

Then, the March full moon arrived and helped to free the ship. The Moon does many things to support life on Earth. Its light helps nocturnal animals, and sometimes humans, to find their way. The Moon's gravity stabilizes the Earth's tilt which causes the seasons. The gravity also causes the tides that clean the ocean's shores and estuaries. The tides and the moonlight play an essential role in the reproduction of sea turtles and many crustaceans. The tides even help to free stuck ships.

On March 29, the container ship *Ever Given* became dislodged, opening the Suez Canal. The Moon's gravity raised the water level to lift it enough that the tug boats could move it. Tides are highest during the full moon. At that time, the Sun and the Moon are on opposite sides of the Earth. Their gravity pulls on the water raising the tides. In this case, that force was enough to free a ship the size of the Empire State Building from being stuck in the mud and open the Suez Canal. We never stop marveling at the powerful forces in God's creation.



FALLING BIRTHRATES WORLDWIDE: Falling birth rates worldwide are impacting the economy of virtually every country in the world. In the United States, Social Security and Medicare depend on having young workers paying in to cover the benefits

received by retirees. In 1980, roughly five workers were providing the taxes to support each retired beneficiary. By 2019, that number had dropped to 2.8 workers per retiree.

Countries have responded by paying citizens to have more children. Hungary is spending 5% of its



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GDP on free fertility treatments for women under 40. That country is also giving up-front loans to newlyweds that they can write off with each child born. It even offers a lifetime exclusion from income tax for mothers with three or more kids. Poland is giving \$140 per child per month. Russia is providing parents with two or more children with one-time payments of \$8,100. South Korea has spent \$130 billion on similar programs. In the U.S., the government is now giving payments to families based on the number of children they have. For years, Alaska has been sharing oil revenues with families based on the number of children.

Children are a blessing from God, but people who deal with disturbed children fear that some families may not be prepared to care for more children properly. Perhaps it is time for governments to find new and more creative ways to meet their economic issues.



WANT A NEW BODY? A new study by the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel, gives surprising information about how rapidly the human body generates new cells.

Different parts of your body turn over new cells at different rates. Fat and muscle cells make up 72% of our bodies by mass. Those cells last an average of 12 to 50 years. By number, there are far more cells in our blood, and they last only three to 120 days. The cells lining our gut live less than a week.

Every day, your body replaces 330 billion cells, which is about 1% of the total. That means in 80 to 100 days your body will replace 30 trillion cells. That is approximately the total number of cells in your body. So you want a new body, but do not forget the larger fat and muscle cells will last for years while the smaller cells get replaced. Some cells last a lifetime, including brain, heart, and eye cells.

A report like this can help us understand how complex the human body is. We are reminded of the words of the psalmist in Psalm 139:14, “I will praise you, Lord, because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”



VAPING DISEASE: States across the United States are rapidly approving the recreational use of marijuana, but scientific evidence suggests this is a dangerous development. Very little research has been done on marijuana vaping, but available evidence shows that vaping weed is at least as bad as smoking cigarettes.

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have identified a new disease called EVALI. That is short for E-Vaping Associated Lung Injury. An apparent culprit in this problem is vitamin E acetate, a sticky oil substance often added to

vaping products. This is especially common in vaping products that contain THC, the primary psychoactive compound in marijuana.



The CDC says that 84% of the EVALI cases involve cannabis-containing products. As of February 2020, cases of EVALI had caused 68 deaths in 29 states and the District of Columbia. Those numbers now are far more significant, and virtually all of them are in young adults. Teenagers are twice as likely to have “wheez-

ing or whistling” in their lungs after vaping marijuana compared to smoking cigarettes.

As followers of Jesus, 1 Corinthians 3:16 tells us that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Vaping weed is at least as bad as smoking cigarettes, and both are destructive acts that damage the body and can lead to death. As our society turns away from God and rejects the notion that our bodies are designed creations of God, young people are less concerned about taking care of themselves.



CHANGES IN EARTH’S MAGNETIC FIELD: Researchers in New Zealand have released a new study of changes in Earth’s magnetic field. In a magnetic reversal, changes in Earth’s magnetic field cause the north and south magnetic poles to switch. Researchers at the University of New South Wales have shown that this transition took nearly 800 years to complete, and during that time, the planet would have had no magnetic field.

The lack of a magnetic field would have been a major catastrophe. Our magnetic field acts as a shield against high-energy charged particles coming primarily from the Sun. Without that shield, there would have been severe environmental threats to life on Earth. The study suggests that tropical rain belts shifted, glaciers stretched across North America, and a severe drought hit Australia. The effects of the increased radiation on living things would have a strong genetic impact.

The researchers suggest that humans living during Earth’s magnetic field changes would have to retreat to caves for shelter from the radiation and the harsh weather conditions caused by the magnetic reversal. Our planet’s stability is a part of God’s design, and without it, we would not be here.



See our videos at www.doesgodexist.tv.

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

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