

DOES GOD EXIST?



**Second Quarter 2022
Volume 49 Number 2**

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

Evidence for God in Living Things

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In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.
—John 1:1-3, 14

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Evidence for God in Living Things

In the more than 50 years that I have been presenting lectureships throughout the United States, I have noticed a big difference between what people react to in rural areas and urban environments. The difference is not a matter of education or knowledge but evidence and observation. If you have spent your life surrounded by concrete and educators who try to tell you what to believe, your appreciation of the natural world is less acute than if you see it yourself. I have even noticed a difference between student response in a university that is a land grant agricultural and engineering school and a school that emphasizes philosophy and humanism.

We can categorize the evidence for God's wisdom in creating living things into several different areas. Each category offers a portrayal of design and wisdom beyond the reach of those who have not seen it for themselves. Carefully studying those areas shows that chance explanations fail. Here are some examples.

THE ROLE OF MIGRATION

Common sense might suggest that some places on Earth are simply unfit for living things. In Alaska, we find a geologically young area that is very sterile. There is no soil for plants to take root because vulcanism and glaciation are still shaping the land. Humans find it a challenge to grow crops in that area.

The migration of salmon solves this difficulty. Salmon are designed to return to the stream of their birth when they reach sexual maturity. They lay and fertilize their eggs, and then they die. Their decaying bodies provide the nutrients that allow plant growth. Birds and bears



are the obvious living things that survive because of the salmon, but those fish provide food for dozens of other creatures directly or indirectly. In that way, no area becomes devoid of life.

The migration of birds maintains

polar areas that would seem to be hostile to life. Some birds, such

as the Arctic tern and the Hudsonian godwit, travel 25,000 miles providing life-supporting resources to places 12,000 miles apart. These birds are equipped for long flights by being able to fly while they are sleeping and adjusting their body functions to fit their migration.



Arctic Tern

Their droppings nourish plants, and their eggs feed land animals.

Monarch butterflies migrate from areas all over North America to a wintering area in Mexico. Loons travel between Canadian areas



Monarch Butterfly

and semitropical areas. Sea turtles migrate to lay their eggs in one particular location. Hummingbirds travel huge distances fulfilling their role as crucial pollinators for widely separate areas. The list of living things that migrate over vast geographic areas is extensive, and research-

ers try to understand what they do and how they do it. The ability to make these migrations involves using specialized equipment that seems designed to fit the migration.

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MECHANISMS THAT ALLOW BALANCE IN THE NATURAL WORLD

One thing that escapes many people is how important it is that plants and animals keep a balance in the natural world. This becomes

more apparent when a predator is eliminated from an ecosystem. For example, in the Midwest in recent years, we have had a problem with deer populations. A hundred years ago, wolves and mountain lions ate deer and kept their populations within a level that did not exceed their food supply.

Because the predators have been eliminated, deer populations have grown until there is not adequate food, so

the deer are starving, and forests are being destroyed. Maintaining fish populations has been very difficult. When people fished all of the bass out of one of our local lakes, minnows multiplied out of control. That turned the lake into a biological desert because the minnows died due to a lack of food.

We see a documentary that shows wolves pulling down a moose or lions killing a wildebeest and

consider it brutal and cruel, but they often eliminate the weak and aging animals. The human lack of understanding of how to keep balance in the living things we have control over has resulted in some animals becoming extinct. The “fit” do not always survive if we throw the ecology out of balance.

Whitetail Deer



Smallmouth Bass

Gray Wolf



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THE SYMBIOTIC NATURE OF LIVING THINGS

Closely related to balance in the natural world is the design of symbiotic relationships. We can see this when two or more living things depend on each other to survive. A bee pollinates a flower, and the flower must have the bee to reproduce and expand its territory. The bee depends on the flower's nectar for survival. If all the bees are killed, plants will die. In recent years, fruit growers have had to contend with bee die-offs, and maintaining the balance has become exceedingly difficult.



There are numerous cases where symbiotic relationships are so complex that scientists are still trying to understand them. However, most of them are quite simple, such as oak trees and squirrels. Oak trees produce acorns which provide food for squirrels. Squirrels bury the acorns, and their brains are structured so they do not dig up all of the acorns. The acorns that are left buried become new oak trees. Without the squirrels, the forest would cease to exist once the older trees die.



Sometimes an animal alters its environment so that other life forms can exist. For example, beavers dam up a stream to make a pond. The pond not only allows fish to live, but plants that need moist conditions also depend on the beaver. The plants, in turn, provide food for the beaver. Removing beavers from an area means that certain plants will not survive. Likewise, insects frequently have a symbiotic relationship with plants. Several species actually raise plant material as the basis of their food. When you see a relationship like this, you have the old chicken or egg question about which came first—or were they created together.



THE DESIGN OF EVOLUTION

Perhaps one of the great examples of God's role in living things is the design of plants and animals that allows change. If plants could not change, then all the plants would die every time the climate changed. Darwinists constantly point to cases where an environmental change threatened to eliminate a group of living things, and adaptations allowed the plant or animal to survive.

Humans have used this capacity to produce better crops and livestock to feed the growing population. Corn and wheat have been improved to give greater yields. Adaptive breeds of cattle exist today because humans have used selective breeding. The Scottish



Scottish Highland Cattle

cattle with their insulating hair survive in a climate that a Charolais would not survive. New varieties of livestock and crops have been developed over the years to provide food to meet the world's needs.



Charolais Cattle

The more we understand the genome of various animals, the more we see that they are

designed for a given environmental situation. It has taken hundreds of years for humans to understand how this works. People in rural areas where these principles are applied, see the hand of God that allows a wide variety of plants and animals.

Atheistic evolutionists take the obvious changes built into living things and try to eliminate God as the designer of those changes. However, when you spend every day working with the plants and animals that radiate the wisdom of God's design, it becomes very easy to understand that we can know there is a God through the things he has made (Romans 1:20). Attributing what we see in living things to blind mechanistic chance requires imagination. For those of us who see design in the world around us, chance is statistically impossible to accept.

—John N. Clayton

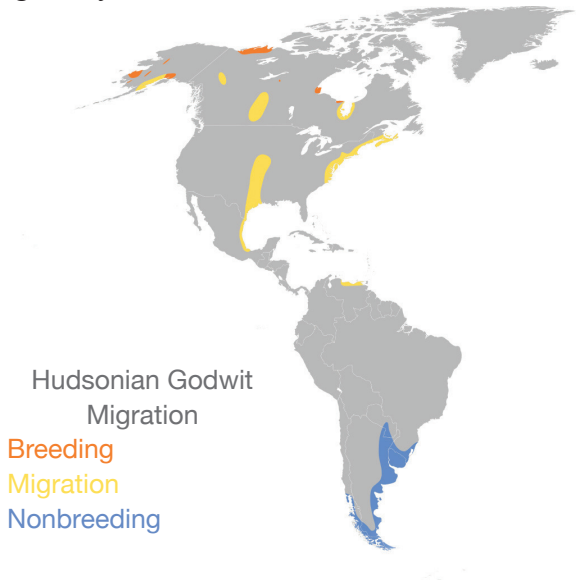
Shorebird Migration



Hudsonian Godwit

One of the great mysteries of the natural world is the way various shorebirds make their incredible migrations. One of the most studied shorebirds gets part of its name from Canada's Hudson Bay, where it was first identified. The second part of its name comes from its two-syllable cry of "god-wit." The Hudsonian godwit (*Limosa haemastica*) is a bird with remarkable migrations. They lay their eggs in Alaska and northern Canada in the spring. Then, in June or July, they leave their hatchlings to fly 4,000 miles to the northern Amazon. After that, they make another 2,000 mile flight to Chiloé Island off the coast of Chile. Then, the following spring, they fly from Chile to the northern areas where they lay their eggs and repeat the cycle.

A mystery is how the young Hudsonian godwits make their journey without adult instruction about where to go. Since these birds live ten to twelve years, they will



make the journey as many as 24 times. Hudsonian godwits weigh less than an ounce when they hatch, but in a couple of hours, they are running around catching mosquitoes and flies. Then, before starting their journey south, they bulk themselves up to 12 times their original weight.

Another mystery about the birds is their anatomical preparation for the flights. A typical Hudsonian godwit will have blood sugar concentrations that would be in the diabetic range for humans. Before their migration, the birds' pectoral muscles double or triple in size, as do their hearts and lungs. To balance this increase, their gizzards, livers, and kidneys shrink. When they arrive at their destination, all of their organs readjust to the normal range.

As the birds fly their long journeys, one side of their brain will sleep while the other side stays awake and alert, and later the sides will switch. It is called unihemispheric slow-wave sleep, and it allows them to fly day and night. In addition, their respiratory systems are highly efficient, allowing flight at high altitudes with less oxygen. That is essential since they fly over the Andes Mountains.

Also mysterious is the ability of Hudsonian godwits to navigate their journey. Researchers say the birds know and understand weather systems, including wind and rain. They navigate with their vision using stars and landforms, and even smells seem to guide them. But that still does not explain it all. They also sense Earth's magnetism, but scientists are not sure how. One hypothesis is that their vision is linked to Earth's magnetic lines of force by "quantum entanglement," a phenomenon Einstein called "spooky action at a distance."

The journey of Hudsonian godwits allows them to secure food at random locations, and their diet of mosquitoes, insects, and worms benefits their environments as much as the birds themselves.

The design of Hudsonian godwits speaks of wisdom, planning, and highly sophisticated applications of physics. Understanding these birds should inspire wonder in a thinking person about the source of such abilities. Truly "we can know there is a God through the things he has made (Romans 1:20.)



—JNC



Color vision differences in various creatures result from eye design. Humans see color because we have three kinds of cones in the retina that respond to different energies of light. Our eyes have color cones sensitive to red, green, and blue. If light stimulates all three types of cones, we see it as white. When light stimulates red and green cones but not blue, we see yellow. Other combinations result in every color we can see. Some light energies do not



trigger any of our cones, yet they affect us. For example, our eyes do not perceive ultraviolet energy, but UV rays can cause sunburn. Likewise, we cannot see infrared energy, but we can feel it as heat.

Animals have many color vision differences compared to humans. Why do deer not see the orange jackets that hunters frequently wear? A deer cannot see very much color at all. That means a hunter standing still in the woods wearing an orange camouflage outfit will be invisible to a deer but highly visible to other hunters. Some animals that do not see color can see light energies that we cannot. For example, a rattlesnake can see infrared, which is a lower energy than the visible light we see. A warm-blooded animal such as a rat or mouse gives off infrared radiation. A rattlesnake can see the infrared light coming from the rat on a dark night when there is no light visible to humans.



The National Science Foundation reported on a jumping spider (*Saitis barbipes*) found in Europe and North Africa with no red color sensitivity. A red ball would appear gray or black to those spiders. However, the males

of these furry spiders have a bright red crown and legs. Even though potential mates cannot see the red, certain areas of the spider's body strongly absorb ultraviolet light. Those areas appear as "spider green" to other jumping spiders.

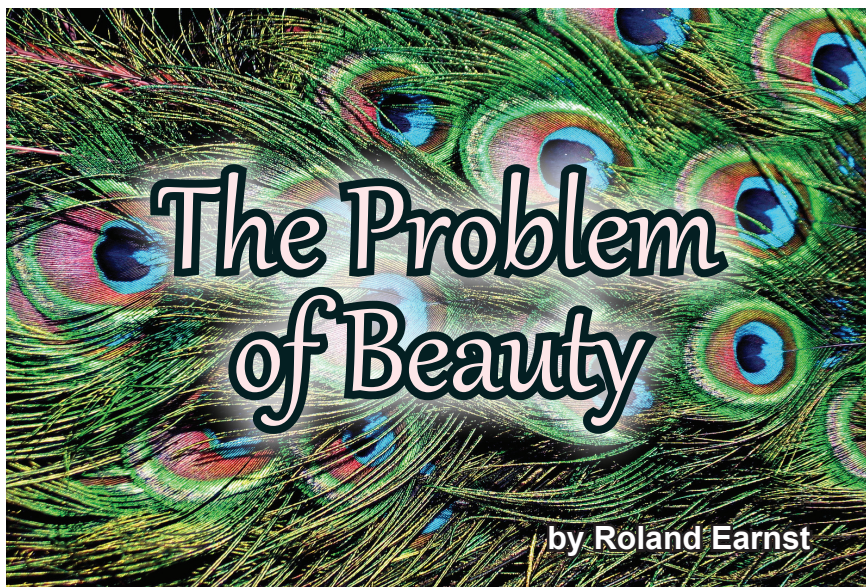
In addition to color vision differences, some animals have specialized vision tools to help them survive. For example, a water turtle's eyes have polarized corneas. That polarization allows the turtle to see reflected light because it is polarized parallel to the reflecting surface. A turtle needing to locate water will simply scan the horizon to see polarized light reflected from the water's surface. Other animals, such as birds or fish, have polaroids in a vertical orientation, enabling them to see through clouds or water without having to deal with glare.



Designing cells that can detect light is only part of the story. Making eyes that meet the peculiar needs of various animals is much more difficult. Your vision is just one more support for David's statement, "I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14).

—JNC





One of the challenges that skeptics use to argue against the existence of God is often called the problem of pain. The argument goes something like this: “Why would an all-powerful and loving God allow pain and suffering?” We have dealt with that problem before, including on our website whypain.org. However, there is a contrasting argument for the existence of God that some have called “the problem of beauty.”

The problem of beauty asks the question: “How is it possible that evolution by natural selection could create such beauty in living things?” In other words, “How could natural selection acting on random mutations create beauty which seems to have no survival value?” Darwinian evolution operates on the survival of the fittest. However, survival of the fittest cannot explain many cases of beauty which seem to make animals less fit and thus less likely to survive.



How can the seemingly simple process of natural selection explain all of the beauty in nature? Look around, and you will see beautiful designs that naturalistic evolution attempts to explain without a designer. Why are male cardinals so beautifully red? Why do butterflies have such exquisite designs and colors? Some animals display beautiful colors that make them more vulnerable to predators. A male bird may sing for an hour, announcing himself not



only to prospective mates but also to predators. How can those beautiful features promote the survival of the fittest?

Lyrebirds, flowers, starfish, butterflies, and seashells all display beautiful features that cannot be explained as survival benefits. In some cases, they may be at least partially explained by mathematical

principles. But then, where did the mathematical principles in our three-dimensional world originate except from the Creator of



Superb Lyrebird

all things? Why does the nightingale sing beautiful songs to the darkness? Why do some lizards display colorful crests? How can colorblind cuttlefish change their colors at will not just to camouflage but to send messages to other cuttlefish or predators, or just to dazzle any observer? Why do flowers

display not only beautiful colors but also soothing fragrances? The beauty of nature is visual, auditory, and even fragrant. Most of all, it is priceless.

A humpback whale's intricate and beautiful song lasts for half an hour. Does it have anything to contribute to the survival of these mammals? Well, in a way, it does. When human technology reached a point where the humpback's song could be heard and recorded in the



Crown of Thorns Starfish

1960s, more people than the whale hunters got a chance to hear it. The exposure of that song to the general population of humans played a large part in the passage of laws preventing the slaughter of those animals. But that is evidence for human appreciation of beauty, not evolutionary natural selection. For those who suggest the male humpbacks use their songs to attract females, there is little to no evidence that the females are even paying attention.



Sacred Lotus

No proponent of Darwinian evolution would suggest that humpback whales are even remotely

related to nightingales, but those birds also sing long, complex, and beautiful songs. Rather than singing into the ocean, nightingales sing for hours into the night. As those small birds sit on a branch singing but not moving, they make themselves easy prey for predators.



Nightingale

Instead of singing from twilight into the night, why do they not just be quiet and stay safe until morning? When scientists tape-recorded nightingales and slowed down the tape, lowering the pitch a couple of octaves, they discovered something

very interesting. The result was that the nightingale's song sounded much like the song of a humpback whale. On the other hand, if you take the humpback whale song and speed it up while raising the pitch, it compares to a nightingale. Why should they be so much alike? Evolutionists like to call this sort of thing "convergent evolution." I have another suggestion. Perhaps they got their music from the same original Composer.



Humpback Whale

Why do humans appreciate beauty? It brings us joy, eases our stress, and touches us deeply. Does a dog stop to admire a sunset,



listen to beautiful music, or enjoy the beauty or fragrance of flowers? Do beautiful animals admire their own beauty? Do the birds sing because they love to hear music, or are they just doing what their Creator programmed them to do? Why did God design and program these animals in this way? Is it because he created us to enjoy beauty and gave us an earthly sample of the heavenly beauty he has planned for us? In other words, is beauty another evidence that God exists? I prefer to see the problem of beauty as the blessing of beauty.

Scientists talk about “emergent order,” referring to how the beauty of life emerged without any design or intelligent guidance. Instead, they say it was accomplished by a set of simple rules laid out originally by Charles Darwin and refined into what is now known as Neo-Darwinism. In his 1859 book *On the Origin of Species*, Darwin presented his principle of natural selection, but he realized that it could

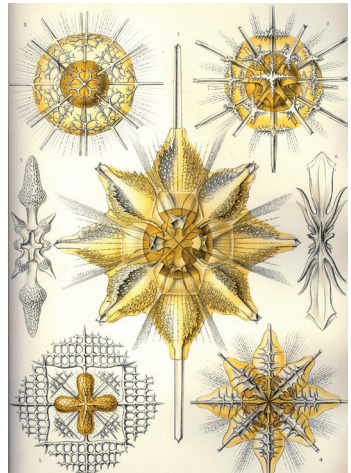


not explain the “selection” method used in all cases. Moreover, he was troubled by the excess beauty in nature and unnecessary frills and flourish, which he could not explain by natural selection. A year after that book was published, his frustration caused

him to write, “The sight of a feather in a peacock’s tail, whenever I gaze at it makes me sick.”

To cover those cases where natural selection cannot explain the beauty in nature, he introduced “sexual selection” in his 1871 book *The Descent of Man, and Selection Related to Sex*. Sexual selection involves the beauty often seen in male birds in general and peacocks in particular. According to Darwin’s sexual selection theory, the reason for the beauty of the peacock’s tail is that the peahens prefer such gaudy but impractical decorations. The same applies to many other species, such as bowerbirds or birds of paradise, where the males display striking colors or impressive actions to attract a mate.

German zoologist and eugenicist Ernst Haeckel was also an artist who popularized Darwin by his artwork published in several books. His drawings depict the beauty he saw in even one-celled animals called *Radiolaria*. He attributed the beauty to natural selection and mathematical principles. Darwin’s hypothesis enamored Haeckel so much that he went out of his way to promote it in books of drawings. However, his drawings sometimes show his bias for Darwinism. In *The*



Haeckel's Radiolaria

Natural History of Creation, he displayed one engraving comparing human embryos with embryos of pigs, sheep, and chickens, suggesting that the development of those embryos repeats the path of evolution. However, he manipulated his illustrations to prove his point. Other scientists later pointed out the flaws, and his dishonesty discredited his scientific credentials. Still, he promoted Darwinism believing that evolution was heading toward a grand achievement of design without a designer.

Physicist and Nobel laureate Steven Weinberg is an atheist who rejects belief in God because of the problem of pain. He explains that in his book *Dreams of a Final Theory*. However, he cannot explain

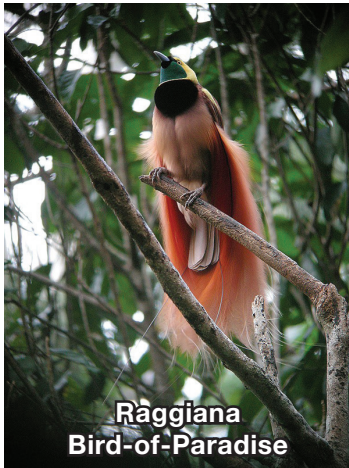
the problem of beauty. He made the understatement of the century when he wrote, “I have to admit that sometimes nature seems more beautiful than strictly necessary.” Evolutionary biologist and atheist Richard Dawkins, writing in his book *Climbing Mount Improbable*, told about when he was driving through the countryside with his young daughter. The girl was excited about seeing “pretty” wildflowers. Dawkins asked his daughter what she thought was the purpose of wildflowers. She replied, “To make the world pretty, and to help the bees make honey for us.” Dawkins said he was sorry that he “had to tell her that it wasn’t true.” According to Dawkins, biology is the study of things



that appear to be designed for a purpose, but his atheism forces him to argue that there is no purpose.

There are many examples of the problem of beauty. Various species sing songs and perform dances that go beyond what survival would require. Gibbons sing duets, and birds of paradise display their beauty with song and dance. Bower birds go to excess extremes to create works of art. (see the Dandy Designs article on page 24). Birds known as whydahs have extravagant and impractical





**Raggiana
Bird-of-Paradise**

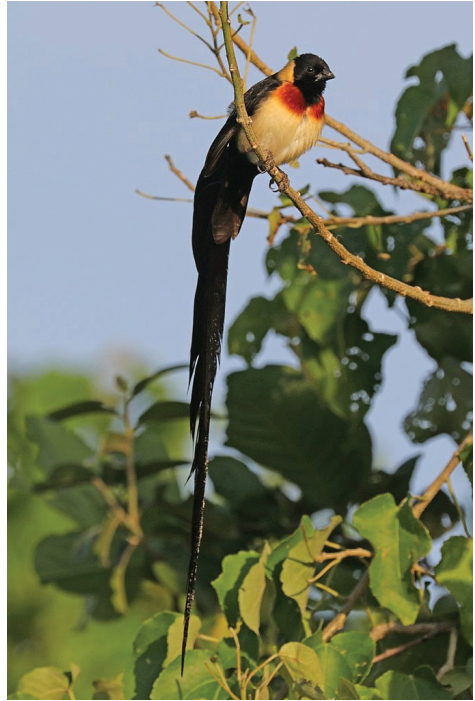
the purpose of adapting to the environment. Are these colors for survival of the fittest or what David Rothenberg, a philosopher at the New Jersey



Humans are obsessed with beauty. We use cosmetics and clothing trying to make ourselves more beautiful. We seek to create beauty in music and art, and we continually long for something even more beautiful. What is the purpose of beauty? It is not to provide pro-

tails that are longer than their bodies. Like the peacock's tail, these attributes seem inefficient and not a method to adapt to the environment.

Parrots come in a variety of dazzling colors that do not seem to be for



**Long-tailed Paradise Whydah
"Why dah long tail?"**

Institute of Technology, calls "survival of the beautiful"?



tection or solve problems. The purpose is to bring joy, peace, and meaning to life. However, as we seek beauty, we long for something even more beautiful. We strive to create it, but we also desire to find it in nature.

The prophet Isaiah in a vision, saw God’s throne room where one seraph cried out, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isaiah 6:3). God’s glory is displayed in the beauty we see on this planet. The curse of sin has marred that beauty, but it still peaks through. It reminds us of the Creator of “every good and perfect gift” (James 1:17). Theologian N. T. Wright asked the question that we all face at some time, “If the earth is full of God’s glory, why is it also so full of pain and anguish and screaming and despair?” That is the problem of pain, but I think we can see a glimpse of the answer in the so-called problem of beauty.

I suggest that humans appreciate and desire beauty because God created us in his image. God creates beauty in the world around us to give us a sample of what is possible. When we see beauty, we long for more because there always seem to be imperfections in the beauty we see here. Peacocks die. Colorful fall leaves turn brown and fall to the ground. The beauty of a sunset is fleeting. We long for more. We want to know what more God has in store for us.

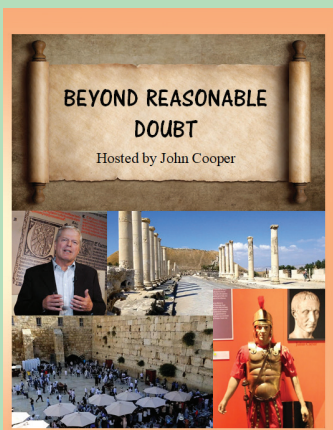


The Apostle John saw a vision of what God has waiting for those who accept his gift of eternal life. In Revelation chapters 21 and 22, he struggled to describe it in terms of the familiar, such as gold, pearls, and jewels, but he knew those words were inadequate. In the beauty around us, we see a glimpse of the glory of God’s beauty. We long for the revelation of the pure beauty of God’s kingdom. As we struggle to answer the problem of pain, perhaps the answer is right before our eyes. The problem of beauty is only a hint, a clue, a sample of the ultimate beauty. I cannot wait to see the real thing.

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John Clayton has a video series of 36 half-hour programs on **Does God Exist?** They deal with the topics in this issue of our publication and many other topics. You can watch them free online or order them on DVDs. He also has an audio course with 26 sessions available on CDs or free online.



Beyond Reasonable Doubt is our newest video series with John Cooper dealing with archaeology, the Bible's reliability, and the historicity of Jesus.

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To order the video DVDs or audio CDs, go to powervine.store.



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.

George Francis Rayner Ellis (1939 –)

Emeritus distinguished professor of complex systems in the Department of Mathematics at the University of Cape Town in South Africa.

Co-author of The Large Scale Structure of Space – Time with U. Cambridge physicist Stephen Hawking.

President of the International Society on General Relativity and Gravitation 1989 – 1992.

Awarded the Order of the Star of South Africa by Nelson Mandela in 1999.

Past Pres. International Society for Science & Religion.

Won the Templeton Prize in 2004.

Elected a fellow of the British Royal Society in 2007.

One of the world's leading theorists in cosmology.

“Amazing fine tuning occurs in the laws that make complexity possible. Realization of the complexity of what is accomplished makes it very difficult not to use the word ‘miraculous’ without taking a stand as to the ontological status of the word ... God is the creator and sustainer of the universe and of humankind, transcending the universe but immanent in it ... God’s nature embodies justice and holiness, but it is also a personal and loving God who cares for each creature, so the name ‘father’ is indeed appropriate.”

“God’s nature is revealed most perfectly in the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, as recorded in the New Testament of the Bible, who was sent by God to reveal the divine nature, summarized in ‘God is Love.’”



This quote was taken from *What Your Atheist Professor Doesn't Know (But Should)* by Stephen Williams.

Cynthia's Corner

EVIDENCE FOR GOD IN LIVING THINGS



“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” (Psalm 139:13–14). I have been blessed to give birth to two healthy babies. To experience life growing inside you and being able to give birth to a human being is a miracle. To watch them grow in size and knowledge and abilities the first few years is astounding. In fact, children’s brains develop connections faster in the first five years than at any other time in their lives. This is God’s design to ensure the development of children.

Romans 1:19–20 tells us that we can know there is a God through the things he has made. “God’s invisible qualities—his divine nature and eternal power—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made.” We see evidence of God’s design in every living creature. Everything God created has purpose and design. The **Does God Exist?** ministry has a whole series of “Dandy Designs” books about this, and they just scratch the surface.

I am not a scientist, and I do not have the vast knowledge on this subject that others have, but I can look at the world I live in and marvel at the endless variety, complexity, and beauty of the living creatures in the air, on land, and in the sea. We live in a world of magnificent colors, shapes, and designs of all kinds and sizes. The natural world we live in is an awesome display of God’s creative processes and his love of beauty and design. As a layperson not trained in science, I can simply appreciate the wonder and beauty of our world. Intelligent design requires an intelligent designer. Chaos or happy coincidences did not create our world and the cosmos we observe.

I am now blessed to look at a grandchild and once again be amazed at the miracle of human life and the blessing of family. In the words of wisdom recorded in Proverbs 8:22–31, “The Lord possessed me [wisdom] at the beginning of his work ... I was filled with delight day after day rejoicing always in his presence, rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in mankind.”

—Cynthia Clayton

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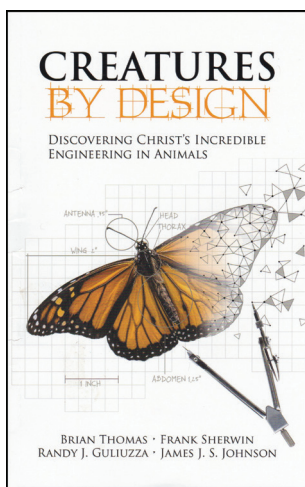


BOOK REVIEWS

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

Creatures By Design

by Brian Thomas, Frank Sherwin, Randy J. Guliuzza,
& James J. S. Johnson, Institute for Creation Research, © 2021,
\$2.99 paperback, 48 pages, ISBN-13: 978-1-946246-61-5



One of the largest producers of creationist materials is the Institute for Creation Research. Tragically, their operation is denominational in nature, promoting doctrine that is inconsistent with the teachings of the Bible. Because they come from a position of defending their denominational doctrine of dispensationalism, they frequently get into teachings that are not only biblically incorrect but lack scientific credibility.

We review this book because it is free of doctrine and deals with scientific evidence. The authors have taken 13 living things and described the incredible complexity of each of them. The material is scientifically accurate, has good four-color pictures, and

is well documented.

The life forms discussed are the monarch butterfly, the pangolin, flying frogs, snakes and lizards, bees, peppered moths, beetles, spider silk, octopuses, horseshoe crabs, polar bears, hummingbirds, bats, and dragonflies. The approach is similar to our “Dandy Designs” material and is helpful in showing design in the creation and the difficulties of evolutionary explanations. We recommend this little book.

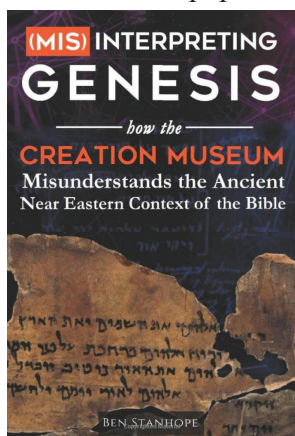
ADDRESS CHANGE? To remain on our mailing list, please give us both your old and new addresses with both zip codes at least six to eight weeks before the move, if at all possible. Thanks!



(Mis)interpreting Genesis

by Ben Stanhope, Scarab Press, © 2020,

\$15.51 paperback, 337 pages, ISBN-13: 978-0578823690



This is a book that will challenge any college graduate. The subtitle is “How the Creation Museum Misunderstands the Ancient Near Eastern Context of the Bible.” We review the book because it is a scholarly approach to the Bible with emphasis on understanding the theological problems with young-earth-denominational creationism. It is also an exhaustive treatment of the Hebrew words used in the Bible and the history of how various religious figures have interpreted those words. The bibliography for the book is 28 pages long, and the footnotes on the pages are sometimes longer than the

text. This book will challenge you.

Stanhope divides the book into three sections plus three appendices and an index of terms and phrases. Section 1 discusses extinct animals in the Bible—the leviathan, the behemoth, the unicorn, and the flying serpents of Isaiah. Each is covered with a chapter with direct quotes from the Creation Museum and an exposé of those words.

Section 2, titled “Reading Genesis like an Ancient Israelite,” is a detailed discussion of the Hebrew words in Genesis and how they relate to the days of creation, the cosmology of the Hebrews, animal death, and the grammar of the ancient Jewish writings. Stanhope shows that the creationist literature violates the Hebrew and the cosmology that was a part of ancient Israel’s understanding.

Section 3 is a theological discussion of how we interpret the Bible. While we can all understand the basic message, people who want a detailed defense of their denominational position need to devote time and energy to a scholarly approach to the original language.

Appendix A deals with artifacts and legends with numerous pictures and an exposé of materials from the Creation Museum. Appendix B deals with the misuse of flood accounts, including flood stories from Hawaii, Hindu records, and Chinese records. Finally, Appendix C discusses how world cultures deal with cosmology.

We recommend this book to preachers, college students, and people interested in apologetics. It is a handy reference source for a lot of information, but it is challenging and complex and cannot be read superficially.

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DANDY DESIGNS

BOWERBIRDS

Bowerbirds are a family of over 20 species of birds found in Australia and New Guinea. Their name comes from the fact that the males prepare bowers to attract females. The bowers are not for a dwelling but just for display. To these birds, the bowers are attractive works of art. Bowerbirds are perhaps the only creatures, other than humans, that create things that are beautiful beyond their function.

Satin bowerbirds are the most familiar to humans because they are not afraid to build their bowers next to human habitations. The male starts by removing leaves from bushes and branches that would shade his building site. Then he clears a one-meter area of debris before bring-



Male satin bowerbird building his bower



Female satin bowerbird

ing in his own decorative debris consisting of twigs and sticks. He tramples those items into the ground to build a platform for his bower. Then he gathers hundreds of twigs about a foot long and places them vertically in two rows with a space in the middle where he will stand. The largest opening usually faces the direction of the sunlight, which in Australia is north.

Next, the bird may use grasses to line the display floor. Then, he may paint the walls with crushed berries using a piece of bark for a paintbrush. Then he decorates the sunny northern side of the bower with any blue object he can find. It may be flowers, parrot feathers, or even blue plastic spoons. If a female comes by, the male will try to impress her by doing a song and dance routine inside his bower. If she is not impressed, she will just fly away.

A spotted bowerbird will use a wide range of decorations in his bower, including berries, nuts, leaves, pods, eggshells, insects, mush-

rooms, green slime, reptile skin, snail shells, spider egg cases, stones, bones, and various colors of glass and plastic. They seem to like snail shells and use them in their dance routines, during which they toss them high into the air. Unfortunately, their dance is so boisterous that they sometimes frighten the females.

Golden bowerbirds build the largest bowers with two towers that can be ten feet tall around two small trees linked together with a fallen branch. They decorate the connecting bridge with hanging lichens and



Great bowerbird building his bower

flowers. Vogelkop bowerbirds build a bower that resembles a tepee around a pole surrounded by flowers, seeds, and feathers. McGregor's bowerbird creates an elaborate structure resembling a Christmas tree

decorated with spider silk and hanging ornaments made of mushrooms, butterfly wings, moss, and lichens. He begins by plucking the leaves off a sapling about 4 feet tall. He then clears all detritus from a circular area around the tree and covers the clearing with a layer of moss.

Bower bird males spend weeks or months building their bowers in one location where they may be vulnerable to predators because of attracting attention to themselves. They are not following the principle of survival of the fittest. Instead, we see bowerbirds as dandy designers and another example of God's dandy designs in his living creatures.



Regent Bowerbird

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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)).

WATER AND CLIMATE: One of the factors that put planet Earth in the so-called “Goldilocks Zone” of our solar system is that it is the correct distance from the Sun for liquid water to exist. We know that life is not possible without liquid water, but we can easily overlook how water affects Earth’s climate.

Norway’s Lofoten Islands are 105 miles (169 km) north of the Arctic Circle, but they enjoy relatively mild temperatures. For example, the warmest temperature ever recorded at the Skrova lighthouse on one of the islands was 86.7°F (30.4°C), and the coldest was 4.8°F (-15.1°C). On the other hand, the city of Yakutsk, Siberia, holds the title of being the coldest city in the world. Some reports say the temperature has dropped to as low as -76°F (-60°C). The surprising thing is that Yakutsk is 280 miles (450 km) SOUTH of the Arctic Circle. That is 385 miles south of Skrova in the Lofoten Islands.

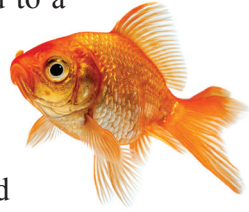
Water largely explains the difference. The North Atlantic Current and the Norwegian Current bring warmer water to the Lofoten Islands. By contrast, Yakutsk is landlocked and located in a valley surrounded by mountains. As a result, the cold air settles into the low area and keeps Yakutsk in the freezer.



The highest and lowest temperatures on Earth tend to be in the interior of continents because landmasses heat and cool much more quickly than large bodies of water. The precision design of water gives it the qualities that life requires, and it is abundant on this planet to supply our needs. We think water is strong evidence of God's design wisdom and care for his creation.



HOW FISH NAVIGATE: A biologist in Israel conducted an ingenious experiment to learn how fish navigate. She constructed a fish-operated vehicle for a goldfish to drive. The vehicle consisted of a square fish tank fastened to a chassis with four multidirectional wheels. A downward-facing camera was connected to a computer algorithm which prompted the wheels to move the vehicle in the direction the fish was swimming. The six goldfish in the experiment navigated around obstacles and avoided dead ends.



The researchers suggest that understanding how fish navigate in unfamiliar territory, such as the terrestrial world, may help humans navigate in unfamiliar environments such as the zero gravity of space. The natural world is filled with examples of God's design, and how fish navigate is one of many systems we are just beginning to understand and may use as models to shape the future.



CAMPUS CENSORSHIP: When we began giving lectures on university campuses in 1968, we could go onto virtually any campus, rent an auditorium or classroom, and give a presentation of evidence for the existence of God. We could prepare and distribute posters on the campus and advertise in the student newspaper. Volunteers could pass out brochures and invite students and faculty to attend. Our sessions always included a question/answer session. We did this on hundreds of university campuses, including major state and private schools, and they brought in sizeable audiences.

In the past ten years, we have seen a militant attempt by these schools and others to stop presentations like ours. An organization called the "Foundation for Individual Rights In Education" (FIRE) evaluated 481 colleges and universities on a scale with 100 meaning a totally free-speech campus. The colleges studied were all under 73 on that scale. That says a lot about censorship on American college campuses.

Jesus Christ challenged his listeners with questions. See, for example, Matthew 17:25; 18:12; 21:28; and



22:42. Censorship on American college campuses does not allow the free exchange of ideas, especially when someone tries to present a Christian view.

LIZARD LUNG DESIGN: Studying the design of lizard lungs may lead to innovations in developing artificial lungs for humans. Princeton University researchers studied the development of lungs in brown anole lizards and found that their lungs develop in a few days.

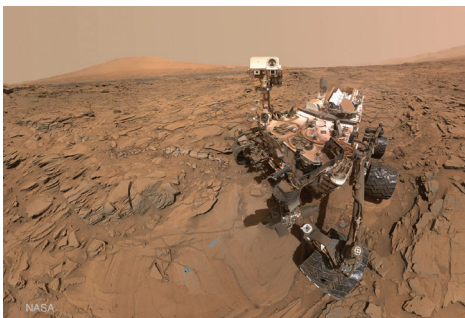
In the brown anole lizard, fluid fills the area that will become a lung and pushes against smooth muscle tissue until gaps develop in the muscle. Then, a membrane protrudes through the gaps so that a large surface area forms, and within two days, the surface area is ready for gas exchange. Researchers were able to build a working replica mimicking the lizard's natural process of lung development.



The Princeton researchers say that the process is a simple mechanical process that could be a model for “advanced biotechnology design.” The National Science Foundation says this discovery could lead to innovations in artificial lung design and development. We can improve the future of human health by studying living things, including God’s design of lizard lungs.



LIFE ON MARS: The media has sensationalized the finding of organic molecules from Mars. For many people, hearing that something is “organic” means it is related to life. For example, in 1996, scientists reported on their study of a meteorite identified as ALH84001 found twelve years before in Antarctica. Characteristics of the meteorite indicated that it had come from Mars, and analysis showed that it contained organic compounds. Media reports immediately claimed that this was evidence of life on Mars at some time in the past.



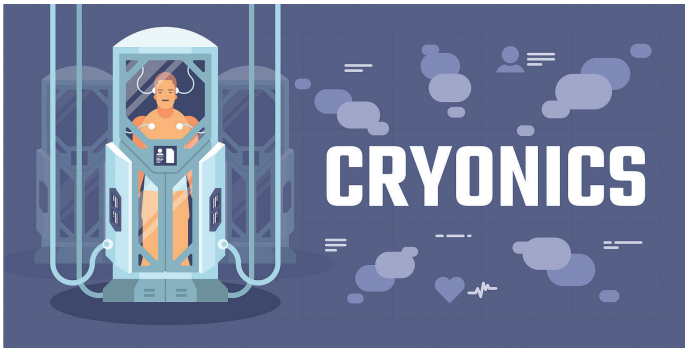
Research on ALH84001 reported in January 2022 shows the organic molecules probably came from the interaction of water and minerals and are not related to living organisms. Earlier research-

ers had made similar findings on a Martian meteorite that landed in Morocco in 2011. Neither of these meteorites gives evidence of life on Mars. Organic molecules can form by abiotic (non-life) chemical reactions when water is present, along with the minerals that make up organic materials. Many chemists are active believers in God because they see the wisdom and creative design built into chemistry, making life possible. There is strong evidence that the laws of chemistry were fine-tuned for life, especially human life.



CRYONIC ETERNAL LIFE: If you believe this life is all there is to your existence, the logical thing is to try to make this life eternal. One way to do that could be to have your body frozen when you die until science can find a way to make you live forever. Organizations such as the Cryonics Institute in Michigan are offering cryonic eternal life.

When you are declared dead, technicians will cool your body with ice water and keep the tissues oxygenated using CPR and an oxygen mask. Then, they fly the iced body to a laboratory and connect it to



a heart-lung bypass machine that circulates the blood. Next, they pump in a solution to act as an antifreeze to prevent cell tissues from

being destroyed by ice crystals. Finally, they cool the body to minus 320°F in a tank of liquid nitrogen.

The idea is that when medical science advances and finds a cure for whatever caused the person's death, they can revive the body, reverse the aging process, and give the person another shot at life. However, it is evident that the technology to make that possible is a very long way off and probably will never happen. How much greater would it be to accept the better eternal existence that God offers for free through Jesus Christ.



AGING CHURCHES: A child is born every eight seconds, and someone dies every 11 seconds in the United States. The average age of all people in this country is 38, but no mainline Christian

denomination has an average age that low. Data on major religious groups shows that those with an emphasis on the biblical concept of the family have a lower age than denominations that do not. For example, the United Methodist church has an average age of 58, the Episcopal church average is 57, Lutheran church is 56, and the Presbyterian church is 55. In contrast, Pentecostal church members have an average age of 47 and Churches of Christ average 48.



Examining statistics about the aging of churches and projecting those numbers into the future, we see that churches failing to adhere to the nuclear family concept of the Bible will eventually age out. We do not ask the age of people who use our websites, take our apologetic courses, or send us e-mails. However, it is evident from the questions we receive that most of them come from younger people looking for answers concerning science and faith. We do know that the age group with the largest share of likes on our Facebook page is 18–24. The second largest is 25–34. Together, those two groups make up almost half of the followers on our Facebook page (facebook.com/evidence4god). On the other hand, most of our negative e-mails come from older people who do not feel there is a need for what our ministry is doing.



ARCHAEOLOGY SUPPORT FOR THE BIBLE: Archaeologists have discovered an inscription containing the name “Jerubbaal” at Khirbet al-Rai near Lachish in the Judaeen Foothills. The inscription was in a grain silo dated to the 12th or early 11th century B.C. Judges 6:32 mentions Jerubbaal as a name given to Gideon. Earlier, in the same area, archaeologists found an inscription on the floor of a city believed to be the biblical Shaarayim dating to the early 10th century B.C. This inscription has the name “Eshbaal.” That was the name of Saul’s son who challenged David’s kingship in 1 Chronicles 8:33 and 2 Samuel 2–4. These inscriptions show that those names were in use at the very time of the biblical references.

Another interesting archaeological support for the Bible has to do with the Philistines. It is well-known that pork was taboo for the Israelites but a mainstay of the diets of the Philistines, Greeks, and Romans. Archaeological digs in Israelite cities do not show any bones of pigs, but digs involving other cultures contain massive numbers of pig bones. That fact adds importance to Jesus’ parable of the Prodigal Son, who, at his lowest point while in “a far country,” took a job feeding pigs.

Recent finds heavily challenge the skeptics who suggest that the Bible is only a bunch of ancient Jewish



myths and historically unreliable. On the contrary, the Bible is not only an expression of God’s will for humanity, but it is a record with historical integrity.

GROW YOUR FAITH: Faith is something that needs to be fed and nurtured. So what do you do to nurture and grow your faith, and what does Satan use to defeat your faith? In Luke 4, we read of Satan’s attempt to destroy the faith of Jesus. The temptations that did not work against Jesus are the same ones Satan uses on each of us. The first thing Satan did was tempt Christ with physical cravings. Jesus had not eaten for 40 days, and he was hungry. Satan knows when we have physical cravings, and he works to offer destructive things to meet those cravings—be it food or drink or sex or emotional needs.

The second thing Satan offered Christ is political power. Today, we are expected to embrace political positions that fly in the face of God’s commands. We see recreational drugs, prostitution, abortion, euthanasia, and immoral lifestyles asking for our support and endorsement.

The third temptation Satan presented is expecting God to interfere in the normal processes of life. Jesus responded to Satan’s challenge to violate the law of gravity and expect God to step in and prevent it from working.

Jesus responded to each of the temptations by quoting scripture. This third one was Deuteronomy 6:16, which says not to test God. Expecting God to violate the laws he created when we practice destructive behavior is not logical or reasonable.

Our daily articles on DoesGodExist.today and our video series available free on DoesGodExist.tv present positive evidence to build faith. You can also grow your faith by reading the Bible. We recommend Romans 1:19–20, Proverbs 8, Psalm 19:1, and Psalm 139:14–15. We have the tools to build our faith, and we urge you to use them!



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

This journal is a part of a program of service titled **Does God Exist?** The purpose of the program is to provide thinking, seeking people with scientific evidence that God does exist and that the Bible is his Word. It is our conviction that all men can logically and rationally believe in God. In addition to this bimonthly journal, the **Does God Exist?** program offers DVDs, 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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