

# DOES GOD EXIST?

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

**4th Quarter 2018  
Volume 45 Number 4**

**THE  
EVIDENCE  
OF A  
CREATOR**

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# ***THE EVIDENCE OF A CREATOR***

One of my daily morning rituals is to go to my computer and click on [apod.nasa.gov](http://apod.nasa.gov). APOD stands for Astronomy Picture of the Day. On that website, NASA features a picture taken from a space vehicle, a telescope on Earth or in space, or some system which allows us to see more of and learn about the cosmos. The pictures are amazing. Often they use different frequencies of light that our eyes cannot see to bring out the processes and products of the design of space.

So, sitting in my office, I can see things which bring to mind the words of “wisdom” recorded in Proverbs 8:

Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice? At the highest point along the way, where the paths meet, she takes her stand; beside the gate leading into the city, at the entrance, she cries aloud: “To you, O people, I call out; I raise my voice to all mankind. You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, set your hearts on it. Listen, for I have trustworthy things to say; ...” (verses 1–6) “The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was formed long ages ago, at the very beginning, when the world came to be” (verses 22–23).

It is easy to look at the wonderful pictures from outer space and miss the wisdom that those pictures convey. The website features comments about the pictures made by professional astronomers from around the world. It is hard to wrap one’s mind around the vastness

of space. While we see places where stars are being formed, we do not see the incredible number of design features required for those things to be possible. Consider some of these features:

## VALUES OF FORCE CONSTANTS

In every basic physics class, students are introduced to the forces that are present in the creation. The equations that describe these forces are well known and can be verified in the lab. Gravity, for example, is described by the equation  $F = G (m_1 m_2 / x^2)$ . You can fill two large sandbags with sand and hang them next to each other, and they will be drawn together.  $M_1$  would be the mass of one sandbag and  $m_2$  would be the mass of the other sandbag.  $X$  is the distance between the sandbags. When you measure these quantities, you find that the equation works only if the value of  $G$  is  $6.67 \times 10^{-11}$ . That constant has to be precisely what it is or what we see in space could not exist.

By measuring the mass of the earth and the Moon and knowing the distance between them, we can calculate the force of gravity pulling the two bodies toward each other. If the value of  $G$  were less than  $6.67 \times 10^{-11}$  the Moon could not have the orbit that it does or it would fly off into outer space. If the value of  $G$  were more than  $6.67 \times 10^{-11}$ , the Moon would crash into the earth. The universe that we observe depends on the gravitational constant being what it is.



This is just one of a large number of force constants critical to the existence of what we see through our telescopes. The electrical forces present in the cosmos are calculated by a law known as Coulomb's Law:  $F = K (q_1 q_2 / X^2)$ . The force between an electron and a proton can be calculated if you know their charges and how far apart they are.  $K$  is a constant and its value is  $9 \times 10^9$ . An electron and a proton have a huge force between them which is vastly greater than the gravitational pull between them. The strength of this force allows the electron to travel at incredible speeds around the nucleus of the atom without centrifugal force causing the electron to be thrown away from the atom or pulled into the nucleus.

There is a similar equation and constant for the magnetic force involved in atomic structure. Electrons are little magnets, so their magnetic values have to be carefully chosen, or chemical reactions would be impossible.

The nuclear coupling force also has to be carefully designed to allow a stable atom to exist. The nucleus of an atom is filled with protons which repel each other, and neutrons. The nuclear constants allow this seemingly impossible arrangement to work. All of these forces are just what a single, stable atom requires. If you were to assume that some chance process took place to produce energy that would turn into mass, all of these force constants would have to be in place.

## THE SHAPE, NATURE, AND GEOMETRY OF SPACE ITSELF

No matter what approach a person is making to the question of creation, ultimately the creation process has to invoke changes from dimensions outside of our familiar three-dimensional space. This is difficult for us to visualize because we live in an  $X$ ,  $Y$ , and  $Z$  geometry. Even understanding the nature of time stretches our mental capacities. When science advances proposals like string theory, the equations that describe the cause of the cosmos involve other dimensions. In string theory, the equations indicate 11 possible dimensions.

The shape of space is critical to the existence of stable galaxies within the creation. If space had a spherical shape with a small radius, galaxies would be destabilized by gravitational interactions. If space were hyperbolic or parabolic with a small radius, any interactions between galaxies could not exist. Many of the pictures on the NASA website are of galaxies interacting



and producing new stars as they do so. The curvature of space and its geometry allow for expansion and the continual production of heavier elements. Even black holes are tools of that production.

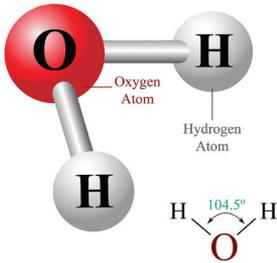
How far apart galaxies are and how far stars are from each other are critical factors for stable planets to exist. The fine structure constant which describes how stars and galaxies can exist is determined by Planck's constant, the velocity of light, and electron charge. Each of those constants must be precisely what it is for matter to exist.

Our understanding of how things we see in outer space are produced is still in its infancy, but it is evident that the size and pattern of galaxy existence are dependent on many things being exactly as they are.

## THE DESIGN OF THE ELECTRON ORBITS

Electrons do not just orbit the nucleus of an atom in circular orbits. We now know that there are orbitals which describe how electrons travel. These orbitals are identified by the letters *s*, *p*, *d*, and *f*. *S* orbitals have two electrons and generally travel in a circular pattern. *P* orbitals have six electrons. They travel in dumb-bell shaped orbits or figure eights around the nucleus. Each *p* orbital is at right angles to the other two. *D* orbitals generally have 10 electrons that travel in an intricate pattern using all three dimensions of *X*, *Y*, and *Z*. *F* orbitals have 14 electrons.

These orbital patterns are connected to the magnetic fields of the electrons which are in turn connected to the spin of the electrons on their axes. An example of how this works can be seen in the oxygen atom which has eight electrons. The atom is designed so that the first four electrons are in *s* orbitals with two in each orbital. The next four electrons are in a *p* orbital which can hold six electrons. That means that there are two empty orbital positions in the oxygen atom. These two orbitals can accept one electron each. So an oxygen atom can bond with



two other atoms to make a complete molecule. Water is  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  because two hydrogens fill in the missing electrons. That gives the water molecule a polar shape which allows the water molecule to dissolve other molecules.

Oxygen is a simple atom compared to carbon which has six electrons with two electrons in the *p* orbital. However, it is the presence of four spaces in the *p* orbital which allows carbon to produce so many compounds. Imagine the complexity of uranium with 92 electrons. It has taken the best minds of science literally centuries to understand how this design works and why it is superior to other geometries.

## THE DESIGN FEATURES REQUIRED FOR A PLANET TO SUPPORT ANY KIND OF “LIFE”

We put “life” in quotes because we are talking about the normal biological definition of life. Life is usually defined as “that which can breathe, move, respond to outside stimuli, and reproduce.” We are not talking about rock people or fire people or any of the other creations of science fiction.

The number of features that must exist has grown as we have looked at extra-solar planets. We now know that many planets have highly elliptical orbits. That arrangement produces extremes in temperature and radiation that would preclude any type of life.

We also know that a life-supporting planet would require many things. It would need to be orbiting a star that is stable over the long haul and has the radiation emissions that would allow photosynthesis or chemosynthesis. The planet would have to be the right distance from a star that is located at a stable place within the galaxy (not near any supernovae or black holes).

In addition to the nature of the parent star, the planet itself needs a plethora of variables that must be carefully chosen to support life. Its distance from the star is critical. The perfect area is called “the Goldilocks zone” because it is not too hot or too cold for critical gases and water to exist in the proper state of liquid, solid, or gas. The inclination of the orbit also controls how much energy from the star the planet absorbs. The eccentricity of the planet’s rotation controls the range of temperatures. The tilt of the planet on its axis controls the mixing of the gases in the atmosphere and the equalization of temperatures. The rotation rate controls the wind velocities and diurnal temperature differences.



In addition to those factors, having a moon of the right size and in the right place controls the water pattern on the planet which in turn controls climatic instabilities. The color of the surface of the planet controls its insolation (how much energy from its star the planet absorbs). Having massive oceans and dark colored land masses is critical for Earth to support life. The presence of a stable and strong magnetic field to shield the planet from charged particles coming from the parent star or charged cosmic rays is also critical as is the mass of the planet.

The planet’s mass is important. If its mass is too low, it will lose its atmosphere or at least certain critical elements and gaseous molecules. If the mass is too great, toxic gases will be retained, and the atmosphere will be too thin to burn up meteoroids and asteroids. The atmospheric composition is important because clouds depend on the right gases and having the right types of clouds is critical to controlling albedo. (Albedo is a measure of how much light something reflects compared to what it receives.) If the albedo is large, a runaway ice-age develops. If it is too small, global warming produces a runaway greenhouse effect.

The percentage of oxygen in the atmosphere is vital not only for respiration of living things, but to control fires of all kinds on the planet. The thickness of the crust of the planet is vital because it controls tectonic activity on the planet. Having a protective shield of planets between the home planet and outer space with those planets having the

right location and size is critical to avoiding bombardment by comets and other space debris. Having the proper ozone and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere controls the radiation levels on the surface of the



planet. Having the proper compounds in the crust controls whether soils can exist that allow the proper diversity and complexity of life.

If your head is spinning thinking of all these requirements for a life-supporting planet, let me remind you that this list is not exhaustive. It contains only the most obvious values that have to be chosen by “wisdom” to allow a planet to exist that can support life. Proverbs 8 goes on to list many of these variables. It is also important to realize that any theory of naturalism or evolution assumes them.

Evolution has nothing to do with creation. It only proposes changes that may have occurred in living things once they were already created. When the Bible speaks of wisdom and knowledge in creation, it deals with actual creation. The wisdom and knowledge of God are seen and “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge” (Psalm 19:1–2). “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 people are without excuse” (Romans 1:20).

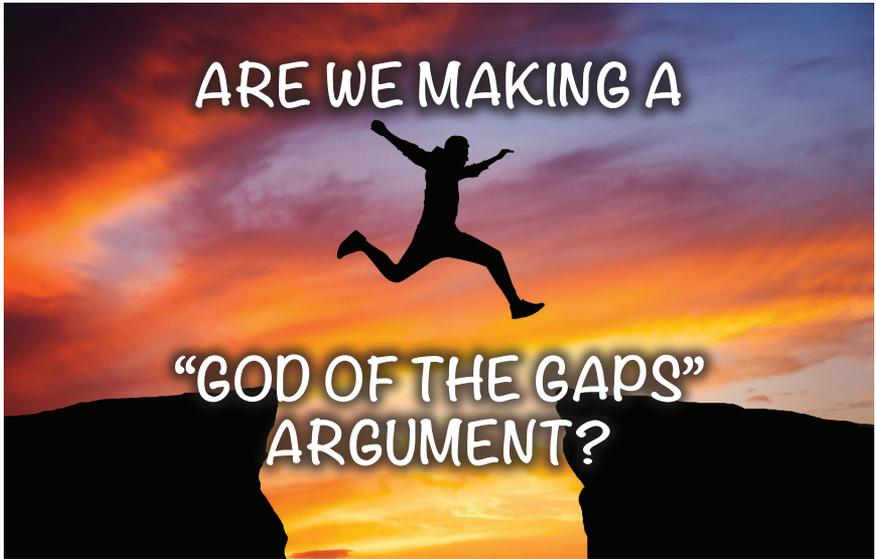


—John N. Clayton

Note: A chart titled “Evidence for Design in the Universe” is available upon request, can be accessed at <https://www.doesgodexist.org/Charts/EvidenceForDesignInTheUniverse.html>, or use this QR code.



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In the **Does God Exist?** ministry we try to help people who have loved ones who have lost their faith or who question their own faith. It is crucial for us to know what questions people are asking. It is also vital that we not present wrong or superficial arguments for the existence of God. We try very hard not to be guilty of any of these things. The primary way we do that is by listening to atheists and skeptics and trying to understand their arguments. I personally subscribe to about twenty periodicals produced by atheist or skeptic organizations, and carefully look at letters and e-mails that oppose what we are teaching. Hate mail is easy to discard, but thoughtful, critical responses to our message are beneficial to us.

One such argument comes from those who suggest that we are making a “god of the gaps” argument. That would be where we take a subject and look at all the reasons why it could not have come into existence by chance and say that since it could not happen by chance, God must have done it. That is using God to cover our ignorance by filling the gap in our understanding.

The “god of the gaps” criticism is valid. There is quite a bit of apologetic material on the Web, in books, and in periodicals that falls into that trap. Historically humans have leaned heavily on “god of the gaps” ideas to invent gods. When ancient people did not understand how volcanoes worked, they invented a god or goddess of the volcano. To this day, some refer to Pelee as the goddess that causes volcanoes. Others believed that Minerva was the goddess of weather, and Thor, the god of lightning.



What happens in “god of the gaps” arguments is that when scientific explanations make it clear what caused the volcano, the weather, or lightning, the god that was invented to explain the phenomena is no longer needed. Atheists have said “God is dead” because our knowledge now explains everything that previously was attributed to God.

Any use of design arguments has the potential to fail when our “designs” turn out to be natural products of chance. There are a variety of ways that we can avoid falling into the “god of gaps” trap, and we would like to suggest a few of them.

**1. “Occam’s razor (or Ockham’s razor)”** is a principle from philosophy. Suppose there exist two explanations for an occurrence. In this case, the simpler one is usually better. Another way of saying it is that the more assumptions you have to make, the more unlikely an explanation is” (*Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*).

Skeptics sometimes send me dissertations explaining how something that we have suggested is a product of design could have come into existence by chance. There are always massive numbers of assumptions involved in their explanations. A classic example of this can be found in a recent issue of a major scientific magazine:

“In the beginning, there was nothing but cold and dark between the atoms that became the solar system. No sun existed 4.6 billion years ago, only a gossamer cloud of remains from earlier stars, stocked with elements forged in previous cataclysms beyond our comprehension. And then something happened. Maybe a passing celestial nomad’s gravity nudged the cloud, or maybe a more distant star exploded, loosing a wind that ruffled the atoms, just as a breeze can push leaves into a pile.”

—*Scientific American*, June 2018

Suggestions like this are not a report of history, but they could be proposals that can lead to scientific investigations. At the very best, they are a guess as to how God may have molded what he had already created into what we see today. This leads us to the second reason that our arguments are not just “god of the gaps” arguments.

**2. Statistical analysis** eliminates “god of the gaps” claims. The fact that you can propose a model of how something could have happened does not mean that your model is in fact what took place. The next step in arguing that God is the creator is to ask what is statistically reasonable. The definition of Occam’s Razor points out that “the more assumptions you have to make, the more unlikely the explanation is.”

In the famous case of Darwin's finches, there were only one or two assumptions involved, but evolutionary explanations of specializations in living things always involve massive numbers of assumptions. As F. LaGard Smith pointed out in his book *Darwin's Secret Sex Problem* (reviewed in our 3rd quarter 2018 issue), to explain a major leap in evolutionary change from asexual to sexual reproduction the number of assumptions involved would be huge.

What is an acceptable probability? On a common sense level, it is not very high. Jumping out of an airplane with no parachute of any kind is the example we have used in our presentations. An American Parachute Club member at one time gave the odds as one in ten million for jumping out of a plane at 10,000 feet and surviving.

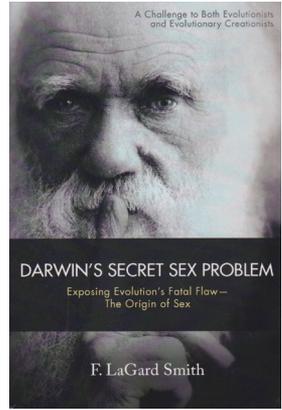


If I offered you a million dollars to do that, would you feel the odds are good enough?

The classic response to this suggestion is to say that in the matters we are discussing the element of time makes the parachute analogy meaningless. The usual response is, "If you have infinite time then anything can happen."

That is debatable, but more to the point is that we don't have infinite time for anything that involves the physical cosmos. If you are talking about the odds of an animal having a specific characteristic you only have the length of time that the species existed. If you are talking about a feature of humans, you only have the length of time that humans have existed.

Apologists have quoted biologists and Nobel Prize winners as giving odds of one chance in 10 to the 160th power for events leading to the formation of life. That translates into 10 to the 243rd power years, and no scientist suggests that the universe is that old. Accepting odds that are in this range of magnitude to avoid the simple concept that intelligence guided the processes is unreasonable. Yet we see today an indication of pure bias against what is a reasonable alternative to chance.



**3. Having two choices** as the answer to a cause is not a “god of the gaps” argument. Many arguments for the existence of God take a phenomenon and provide a base which says that there are two possible explanations. Either it was a product of mechanical processes which now or in the future, we will be able to explain by naturalistic processes, or it is the product of an intelligence that designed and/or directed the process. When we look at how sexual reproduction came into existence, either it is a natural evolutionary process that we can understand now or in the future, or an intelligence designed it.



The problem with the naturalistic explanation is that there are multiple parts which all must work and work together to allow reproduction to occur. In human reproduction, for example, you have to explain the evolutionary development of each part of the male and female organs that enable sexual reproduction to occur. If any one of them is not there, is not functioning well, or is not timed correctly, sexual reproduction

will not happen. Not only do the mechanical parts have to work together at the right time, but also the chemical agents and brain components that motivate bringing the egg and the sperm together. That is only after each of them has evolved to the point of being fertile.

As science examines the evidence, the complexity of the reproductive system has made it more and more difficult to fit into any evolutionary scenario, but that choice is one option. The other alternative is that all of this has been planned and intelligently designed. That would mean it has been designed not only to make the fertilization and implantation happen, but to give the joy, pleasure, and bond that sexual reproduction uniquely brings to humans. This is not an invention of a god to fill in gaps of understanding, but a choice as to what the evidence best supports.

**4. Multidisciplinary evidence** denies “god of the gaps” challenges. Many arguments for the existence of God have multiple lines of evidence to support the claim that God is the creator. As an example of this, we can examine the evidence that humans are not just animals driven by evolutionary forces in the environment. The evidence from anatomy shows that the human brain is not exceptional in size, orga-

nization, or function even though our ability to think and reason far exceeds that of any animal. The evidence from environmental science shows that modification of the environment is unique to humans. The evidence from philosophy shows that humans are often willing to die for something that does not promote their existence or the existence of their progeny. That is a uniquely human trait. The evidence from psychology shows many human actions that have no survival value such as creating art, practicing religion, feeling guilt or sympathy, or being able to be taught to think. Political science offers perspectives on human behavior that are unique to us and how we organize our society.



In many of those areas of study, there is great debate among researchers as to how these characteristics developed and why. Once again, the assumptions involved are enormous, but because the evidence comes from many disciplines, no singular cause can be ascribed to these characteristics.

**5. Religious experience** denies “god of the gaps” challenges. By “religious experience” we are referring to where our conclusion about the existence of God takes us. We can consider humans a special creation of God uniquely created in his image, or as animals entirely produced by chance processes and our environment. What difference does it make? It makes a world of difference. We express our spiritual makeup in a huge number of ways including worship experience, participation in humanitarian activities, prayer, and belief in an eternal purpose for our existence.

Thinking of ourselves as mechanically-driven animals results in animal responses based on “survival of the fittest.” Friedrich Nietzke wrote, “There is no reason why the stronger and smarter should



Top: © PIC4U; bottom: © monkeybusinessimages. Both images from BigStockPhoto.com.

continue to be constrained by a ‘value’ that is obviously not in their interest” (G.P. Grant, *English Speaking Justice*). Peter Singer, the Ira W. DeCamp Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University advocates terminating humans who have low potential for success. Singer says, “How good does life have to be to make it reasonable to bring a child into the world? ... We spend most of our lives with unfulfilled desires, and the occasional satisfactions that are all most of us can achieve are insufficient to outweigh these prolonged negative states. ... If we could see our lives objectively, we would see that they are not



something we should inflict on anyone” (*New York Times*, June 6, 2010).

There are definite results that come from one’s view of whether God exists. We do not invent a god to explain what we see in the creation. We look at the spiritual as a vital contributor to the understanding of our own purpose

for existing. Our religious belief determines our relationship to one another. Our belief system allows us to learn from the creation. What we see in the wisdom, planning, and love of God enables us to be good managers of what God has given us. “And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it” has a whole different message than “survival of the fittest.”

We do not need a “god of the gaps” argument. The bottom line is that our religious beliefs are not something we invented because we do not know why we exist. They are the reason for our existence.

—JNC



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# LESSONS FROM THE FIRE

Many of us will remember the summer of 2018 as the summer of fire. The **Does God Exist?** ministry was involved in August with a public lectureship in Chester, California. Chester is just east of Redding, California, which is on the edge of the worst of the wildfires that California experienced in 2018.

During the entire time that we were in California we were under a cloud of smoke from the fires. Travel was difficult because many state highways were closed and others were crowded with firefighting equipment. Right after the fire west of Redding was brought under control, we were allowed to drive through the area that experienced what was called a “fire tornado.”

The destructive fires in California were almost entirely human-caused. Over the years there has been no effort to thin the trees or to dispose of the biomass that has accumulated. Before humans came on the scene, small fires and other natural processes prevented the biomass from growing to a dangerous level. With no thinning of the trees, there are now more trees in the United States than have ever existed (according to Keith Crummer, an expert on forest management from the University of California at Berkeley).

When the fire started in the conifer woods area, it grew so big and so hot that winds of over



200 mph fanned the flames. The temperature rose to over 2000 degrees, and a swath over a mile wide tore through the area around highway 299 which we drove through when it reopened. We saw

power lines and cars melted by the heat. The soil was so baked that it was like flour. The land was sterile.

There are many lessons to learn from the fires. Some have to do with managing the resources that God has given us. Some have to do with how we respond to



what God has done and what God commands us to do.

## LESSON 1

God’s command for us to manage and care for what he created must be done carefully and intelligently. In Genesis 1:26–28 God told Adam and Eve to “rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” We read in Genesis 2:15 that “God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” We have the responsibility to take care of what God has given us, and super-fires are a consequence of not doing that well. Building houses in fragile environments is not doing what God has told us to do. When we are unwilling to apply the knowledge we have, we cannot expect God to protect us from the consequences of our stupidity and selfishness. Today we know that pollution causes cancer, but we continue to pollute. We know that volcanoes are going to erupt in tectonically active places, but we continue to build in areas we know will suffer from volcanic activity. We know about earthquake-prone areas like those along the fault systems in California, but we continue to build in those areas. We know the sea will rise, but we continue to build cities like New Orleans below sea level. How can we blame God for our recklessness?



## LESSON 2

Fire purifies and sterilizes. I was talking to a friend who lives in an area where the wildfires have taken a huge toll and where the ground is like flour. I was complaining about the weed problem I was having in my yard. He said to me, “Send me a bucket of weeds. Any kind of living plant is welcome here.”



In ancient times, fire was the primary tool of cleansing. The Amalekites were constant enemies of the Israelites, and of God. Secular history confirms that every vice of humans today was present among the Amalekites. Drugs, sexual perversions of all kinds, violence, eating of anything even if raw, and drinking of raw blood were all part of their lifestyle. The diseases caused by those abuses ran wild in that nation of people, and forensic tools of our day can verify many of those diseases. How do you rid a population of such consequences of lifestyle? The flour-like ground of wildfires in California is a testimony to how effective fire is as a cleansing agent. It is hard for us to stomach the commands of God to sterilize populations like the Amalekites rather than allow social interaction between them and Israel, but God had no choice.

Human rejection of God’s laws creates tragic situations even today. Fire purifies gold because gold has a low melting point and can be separated from all kinds of impurities. First Corinthians 3:13 tells us that every person’s work “will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work.” In the next life, fire will not be needed, because all impurity will have been burned up in this life.

## LESSON 3

Fire transforms. There are two different Hebrew words used in the Old Testament to describe burning. One is the Hebrew *saraph* which is used in cases such as lesson two above. Genesis 11:3 talks about burning brick. Deuteronomy uses this word when talking

about burning idols or groves of trees (see Deuteronomy 7:5, 25; 9:21; 12:3; 13:16).

The other Hebrew word used most commonly in reference to burning incense is *qatar* (see 2 Kings 12:3; 14:4; 15:4; 22:17; etc.). In Leviticus, the word *qatar* is used in the discussions of the priestly duties (see Leviticus 1:9, 13, 15, 17; and chapters 2–9).

In the New Testament, fire is used to convey the transforming nature of Jesus Christ (see Revelation 4:5; 8:8; 8:10; 19:20). The easiest way to understand how we become changed when becoming Christians is



to observe how fire changes everything it touches. In Acts 2:3–4 we see that the apostles were together and “saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.” These men were transformed just as the burnt offerings of the sacrifice were changed. Their lives would never be the same.

The California fires have changed everything in those places where they have been. People will live and build differently, and hopefully, new growth will happen where the old was before. In our lives, we need to burn up the bad stuff and make way for the new. When the bad has been burned up, there is room for new teaching and new understanding.

Romans 6:4 says it well, “We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”

—JNC



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# SCIENTISTS AND GOD

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

## GREGOR MENDEL (1822-1884)

Regarded as the Father of Modern Genetics.

“Jesus appeared to the disciples after the resurrection in various forms. He appeared to Mary Magdalene so that they might take him for a gardener. Very ingeniously this manifestation of Jesus is to our minds difficult to penetrate. (He appears) as a gardener. The gardener plants seedlings in prepared soil. The soil must exert a physical and chemical influence so the seed of the plant can grow. Yet this is not sufficient. The warmth and light of the sun must be added, together with rain, in order that growth may result. The seed of supernatural life, of sanctifying grace, cleanses from sin, so preparing the soul of man, and man must seek to preserve this life by his good works. He still needs the supernatural food, the body of the Lord, which received continually, develops and brings to the completion of the spiritual life. So natural and supernatural must unite to the realization of the holiness to the people.”



“Man must contribute his minimum work of toil and God gives the growth. Truly, the seed, the talent, the grace of God is there, and man has simply to work, take the seeds to bring them to the bankers so that we ‘may have life and abundantly.’”

Mendel also was a Augustinian friar, and the above was taken from an Easter sermon which he delivered. There have been many outstanding scientists who were leaders in their church or faith. That is true today, and it has been true throughout history.

Retrieved from [https://en.wikiquote.org/w/index.php?title=Gregor\\_Mendel&oldid=2326588](https://en.wikiquote.org/w/index.php?title=Gregor_Mendel&oldid=2326588) (accessed November 12, 2018)

# *Cynthia's Corner*

## SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE FOR GOD



This quarterly's theme is scientific evidence for God—a subject in which I have no expertise. However, I do know that whenever God's Word speaks on any topic of human knowledge, it has never been proven wrong. Genesis 1:1 says “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” God began the beginning. He created time, space, and matter/energy. So, whatever God chooses to tell us in his Word about his creation and our place in it, must be true and accurate. God has given us the intelligence to discover and verify the accuracy and truthfulness of the Bible, even if it takes us many centuries to do so!

An excellent example of this is that the Bible tells us the heavens are “stretched out” (Isaiah 42:5; 45:12; Jeremiah 10:12). Only recently has science recognized the accuracy of that statement. Science and the Bible are never in conflict and never can be because God created everything and he gave us the Bible.

As a non-scientific layperson, my faith in God and his Word is not based solely on scientific evidence. I can observe in the world around me the many evidences of intelligent design. When we analyze the complexity and order of God's creation, it is impossible to believe it happened by chance. Romans 1:19–20 says we can know there is a God through the things he has made. There is awesome beauty, diversity, complexity, and design in all that we see. Those things require an intelligent Designer/Creator.

But, there are other evidences for God that are not dependent on scientific knowledge and observations of nature. My faith in God, Jesus, and his Word is more personal than that. Reading the Bible is like seeing ourselves in a mirror, God's mirror. It not only shows an external image; but, it reveals our inner being, our innermost thoughts, feelings, and attitudes. It cuts to our heart, to our soul, to our true self (read Hebrews 4:12–13). The Bible reveals our nature, our sinful human nature so honestly and deeply that we cannot deny it or hide from it.

God made us and knows us better than we know ourselves, but, he does not leave us there. God loves us and wants to forgive and change us. His power living in us makes us better than we can be on our own. The example of a truly transformed life, from the inside out, is a powerful testimony to God's existence.

—Cynthia Clayton

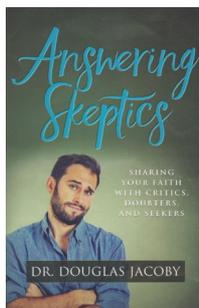


## BOOK REVIEWS

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

### Answering Skeptics

by Douglas Jacoby, Morgan James Publishing, © 2017,  
171 pages, \$15.99 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-1-68350-028-5



One of the most requested books of this ministry is *Frequently Asked Questions*. In dealing with atheists, agnostics, and skeptics, we get some questions over and over. This book is Douglas Jacoby's version of frequently asked questions. Jacoby is exceptionally strong in questions that come from a philosophical, theological, or world religion standpoint.

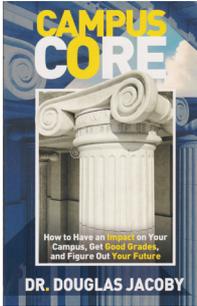
The book is divided into eight parts which are: Roadblocks to Faith, Scripture, Morality, God, Science, Suffering, Jesus and Miracles, and World Religions. Most of the topics are presented in direct quotes that we hear from atheists and skeptics followed by an answer to the challenge. In cosmology, for example, Jacoby uses the heading "The world is eternal, so there is no need for a creator." Jacoby shows from scientific evidence that the world is not eternal. That is covered in less than two pages. "Men wrote the Bible, so it's just the word of man — not the word of God" is another statement we hear a lot. This challenge is answered in one paragraph. The answers are very brief, quite elementary in most cases, and thus easy to understand. The book will leave you wanting more depth and more complete answers, but Jacoby is covering massive amounts of ground, and that demands brevity.

Part 8 deals with world religions, and especially Islam. Jacoby speaks many times in foreign countries and has had debates with Muslim clerics. This is an excellent brief discussion of Islam and how to answer Muslims.

This book is for people who want a wide-ranging set of answers to the daily questions we face in a world that is stampeding toward secularism. We recommend it highly.

## Campus Core

by Douglas Jacoby, Illumination Publishers, © 2018,  
170 pages, \$14.99 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-1-941988-32-9



In this issue we feature two books by Douglas Jacoby. There has been a need for a very long time for a book to help young people understand what they are going to be up against in college. This book covers how to handle spiritual challenges, how to get good grades, what to expect in different courses, and how to finance college. It may be useful in helping young people decide whether to go to college.

Fifty years ago many of us went to college because it was that choice or work on the farm or in a factory, or be drafted for military service. That whole scenario has changed, and kids need help in facing the new demands of college. Dr. Jacoby holds advanced degrees from Duke, Harvard, and Drew universities, and his material is accurate and useful.

This book is divided into four sections and three appendixes. The first section deals with spiritual challenges and approaches, personal challenges such as roommates, and why go to college. It discusses dorms, clubs, meals, types of colleges, and being involved in evangelism.

The second section involves academic areas such as how to have a study strategy, how to read the large volumes of material, how to prepare papers, and how to take tests.

The third section is called “Engagement.” This is Jacoby’s summary of each of 42 subject areas, and he covers it in 54 pages, so obviously, the coverage is very general. Jacoby’s view of a subject like evolution might not agree with the views of many conservative Christian parents, but it is a useful section for kids who need to realize there are Christian answers to what they are going to hear in a state college classroom.

The last section of the book and the appendixes are dedicated to the church and Christian families. Campus ministers are addressed directly. Should a student plan to work full time for the church? Should the student go to graduate school or some other educational experience? How do we pay for college? Additional resources for college students including books and personal planning are presented. This is a unique book and useful for students planning to go to college and for their parents.

For documents and archives of this journal plus a speaking schedule and other links, go to:

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

# DANDY DESIGNS

## Walnut Sphinx Accordion Worm



One of the amazing things that we see in the natural world is that animals are designed so that they do not get wiped out by predators. A classic example is a caterpillar, which has no easy defense against birds who can find them even though camouflage is one of their primary defenses. The North American walnut sphinx moth caterpillar employs an unusual defense mechanism that gives it the nickname accordion worm.

This caterpillar is about two inches long and has air holes in its sides. It can compress its body to force air out through the holes. The accordion worm does this when threatened by a bird predator. The holes are spaced and designed so that the air passing through them sounds like the alarm calls of the particular bird species that threatens them. The whistle is not just a little squeak. The sound level is more than 80 decibels compared to a normal conversation which is around 50 to 60 decibels. When the caterpillar makes the sound, the birds that would eat the caterpillar scramble out of the area. Researchers from the University of Washington tell us that this is the first incidence of a deceptive alarm call between an insect and a bird.

God provides for all of life on our planet, and the complexity of keeping things in balance is remarkable. As we see the balance of nature becoming upset by human actions, we have to be impressed with what a delicate system of life the earth contains. Romans 1:18 tells us that we can know God exists through the things he has made. Proverbs 8:1–6, 22–31 reminds us that wisdom has been a part of God’s creative process from the beginning.

If the accordion worm could not survive, it would not become the beautiful North American walnut sphinx moth in the picture. More and more we realize how important it is to take care of what God has created for us.

Source: “News of the Wild” in *National Wildlife*, Summer 2018.

# Why Don't Roosters Go Deaf?

Roosters are loud! They can hit volumes as high as 140 decibels which is the level of sound on an aircraft carrier deck. For humans, a noise above 120 decibels, about the level of a chain saw, can cause permanent hearing damage. So you may wonder why roosters do not go deaf.



Belgian researchers writing in the journal *Zoology* have the answer. They examined the skull structure of the birds. The researchers found that they have a built-in defense against loud sounds in the form of a sound barrier.

When a rooster adjusts its head and neck to crow, small flaps of tissue close the ear canal. They effectively act as earplugs to dampen the noise significantly.

On top of that, the study reveals that roosters can regenerate the tiny hair cells deep within the ear that can become damaged by loud noises. Humans cannot do that, which is why deafness caused by loud sounds is permanent for us. For roosters, a degree of deafness would likely only be temporary if it happened at all.

“Micro-CT scans of a rooster and chicken head show that in roosters the auditory canal closes when the beak is opened,” the researchers wrote. “In hens the diameter of the auditory canal only narrows but does not close completely. A morphological difference between the sexes in shape of a bursa-like slit which occurs in the outer ear canal causes the outer ear canal to close in roosters but not in hens.”

So now you know why roosters do not go deaf. God’s design in every living thing on Earth shows wisdom and an exceptional understanding of the problems that each species faces. The more we learn about the creation, the more we understand the wisdom and creative nature of God. We can know there is a God through the things he has made (Romans 1:19–20).

Use the QR code to read the research article.



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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](http://www.DoesGodExist.today). You can use the QR codes with each of these articles to see the original posts for more details. 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 [DoesGodExist.today](http://DoesGodExist.today) and our Facebook page ([Facebook.com/evidence4god](https://www.facebook.com/evidence4god)).

**AMERICAN MARIJUANA ATTITUDE.** A recent study showed that most Americans view marijuana favorably thinking that it has significant benefits and few risks. Science does not support the new American marijuana attitude.



The journal *Annals of Internal Medicine* published the new study on July 23, 2018. The researchers conducted an online survey of more than 9,000 people from all over the United States. They found that 81 percent of U.S. adults believe that marijuana has at least one benefit. The most common

benefit mentioned was pain management. Other supposed benefits in people’s minds were the treatment of diseases and relief from anxiety, stress, and depression. At the same time, 91 percent of the respondents believe that marijuana has at least one risk. The most common risk mentioned was not medical problems, but legal. They also mentioned addiction and impaired memory. The bottom line is that the American public sees marijuana as having few health risks and significant health benefits.

In the meantime, the public is ignoring costs in healthcare, addiction treatment, traffic enforcement, and traffic deaths. Since

Washington state legalized recreational marijuana in 2012, the percentage of drivers involved in fatal crashes who had traces of marijuana in their blood has doubled. One of the problems involves trying to set a legal limit for marijuana because its effect on the body is very different from alcohol. Blood alcohol level reliably predicts impairment. The level of THC (the chemical in pot) in the blood is not the critical factor until it enters the tissue of the brain where it has its effect. The THC blood level may be lower when the brain is most affected.

Getting high on marijuana makes changes in the human brain and smoking the weed has many of the same health dangers as smoking tobacco. It seems clear that the American marijuana attitude is changing, but it is also clear that we need to step back and think more clearly before our thinking becomes blurred by pot.



### **MILITARY RELIGIOUS FREEDOM FOUNDATION?**

Atheists have made remarkable progress toward removing all vestiges of religion from all branches of the military services during the last ten years. A leading group in this effort call themselves the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF).

MRFF has a capable spokesman in Mickey Weinstein. He has said that the group wants to combat “gangs of fundamentalist Christian monsters who terrorize Americans.” Recently Weinstein fought to remove the Bibles that are placed on the tables commemorating the POWs and MIAs from recent conflicts. He argued that the Bible on the table “significantly disturbed at least 36 men and women at Warren Air Force Base.” The commander of the base, Col. Stacy Huser agreed and ordered that a generic “book of Faith” would replace the Bible. That book contains statements from five Department of Defense approved faith groups and a set of blank pages to represent the non-religious.

Since Christians provided the commemorative tables, it seems that groups not wanting to have a table with the Bible on it should have their own table with whatever book they wish to have or none at all. How can this group call itself the Military Religious Freedom Foundation?

The point is that the continued hostility to Christians in the military erodes morale and contributes to needless confrontations between people whose attention needs to be turned toward their common goal, not their differences. Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council wrote, “Just think: if our service men and women are traumatized by a Bible, how are they going to handle war?”



**DIGITAL TO BIOLOGICAL CONVERTER.** The speed of scientific advancement in genetics and the use of computers in biochemistry is astounding. Scientists mapped the human genome in 2001. In May 2018, Synthetic Genomics announced that they had created a working Digital to Biological Converter (DBC). The DBC turns digitized DNA code into synthetic biological material such as proteins. The process is called “Gibson Assembly” and can produce small pieces of DNA code called oligonucleotides and stitch the pieces together into DNA strands.

The exciting part of this new technology is that it could allow doctors to personalize medications to the individual needs of patients. Oncologists could create a medicine specifically targeted to the patient’s tumor. It has the potential to develop vaccines to fight an epidemic quickly. The prototype machine is too large and too inefficient to be practical, but Synthetic Genomics hopes to have it available to medical researchers in three to five years.

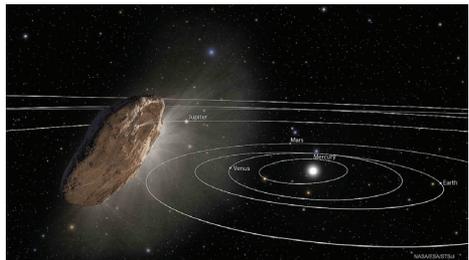
Many of the health problems we have today whether genetic or otherwise have been caused by what we have done to ourselves and our environment with various chemicals and carcinogens. Some might say that we are “playing God” by creating synthetic genetic material. But if we have a way to correct the damage that our ancestors and we have done and relieve pain and suffering, we should certainly do it. The complexity of the Digital to Biological Converter and the material that it produces tells us more of God’s wisdom in the original construction of life.



Source: *Wall Street Journal*, July 14, 2018, page B4.

**MYSTERIOUS SPACE VISITOR.** In October 2017, astronomer Robert Weryk using a telescope in Hawaii discovered an object careening through our solar system from somewhere in interstellar space. Astronomers assumed it was an asteroid from some other stellar system in our galaxy. UFO promoters saw it as a spaceship from some other star system that was spying on our planet. The name given to it is 'Oumuamua which is Hawaiian for “scout.”

The object was quite narrow and seem to be less irregular than most asteroids. Closer examination has shown that the surface of the object is a reddish color which is typical of some comets which have a crust covering an icy interior. Its size is approximately 800 by 100 feet (230 by 35 meters).



Studies of the trajectory of 'Oumuamua show it is tumbling and changing directions in a way that indicates a force other than the Sun's gravity working on it. Naturally, the UFO promoters were overjoyed saying that this proves that alien spacecraft are all around us, and we just happened to catch this one. The SETI Institute used its powerful Allen Telescope Array to examine the object but detected no radio signals indicating intelligence. The problem with the UFO idea is that the change of direction is much smaller than what rockets on a spacecraft would cause.

After much study, astronomers concluded that 'Oumuamua is a comet. When comets get near the Sun, they spew gases from their interior. This jetting of gas always has some effect on the trajectory of the comet. The amount of change in 'Oumuamua's trajectory is consistent with the effect of a comet's gas jets.



As we have emphasized before, the Bible does not say that Earth is the only place in the universe where God chose to create life. At present, however, there is no credible evidence that there is life elsewhere. The idea of alien visitation is pure speculation with no evidence to support it.

**NITROGEN MYSTERY SOLVED.** The mystery is how nitrogen gets into the soil. Plants need nitrogen, and they need it in the form of nitrates and other compounds essential to plant growth, but plants cannot absorb the nitrogen directly from the air. In high school, we learned about “nitrogen fixation” and were told about nitrogen-fixing bacteria and the role of lightning in transforming atmospheric nitrogen into forms that could be used by plants.

Plant scientists have known that this model was not complete. The nitrogen cycle clearly had some missing parts, and our knowledge of how nitrogen gets into the soil was obviously lacking. Scientists have now discovered that a significant portion of getting nitrogen to plants involves seeping through bedrock. Nitrogen becomes trapped in sedimentary rocks in the oceans. When tectonic activity lifts the sedimentary rocks, so they are at the surface of the earth, they begin to release their nitrogen to the soils above them. The complexity of Earth's various cycles to allow for plant growth and to provide for human needs is astounding. Even such a fundamental question as the nitrogen mystery is still revealing God's wisdom and planning in providing a life-supporting planet for us to live.



Source: *Scientific American*, July 2018, page 15.

**GROWING INTEREST IN ASTROLOGY.** While more and more Americans are denying faith in God, belief in astrology, witchcraft, and sorcery is growing. Astrology academies and Internet users of natal charts have produced thousands of podcasts, Facebook pages, YouTube channels, mobile apps, newsletters, and streaming videos. Data crunchers tell us that there are more than two million websites on astrology.



Richard Smoot speaking for the International Society for Astrological Research said, “So much is going on in people’s lives these days, so much pressure to act or react, and they simply want to sort things out.” Astrologers claim that people in crisis are drawn to astrology because they want guidance in matters of love, finance, and career. The astrology site Co-Star says “This generation is wrapping itself in the blanket of the zodiac to try and make sense of a world that seems to be coming apart at the seams.” There is a growing interest in astrology among millennials.

In today’s world, when people reject the Bible and its teachings they are left with no help in making critical decisions. In that void, they seek out unhealthy and destructive substitutes. There may be a growing interest in astrology as a place for people to find answers in life, but it is as harmful and misleading as ever.



Source: *Saturday Evening Post*, July/August 2018, page 16.

**CHINA FORCES ATHEISM.** Since coming to power in 2012, President Xi Jinping has launched a drive to subjugate both Islam and Christianity to government control and to limit their activity. China forces atheism by installing Chinese flags wherever there is a minaret or a cross and pressuring people to embrace the Atheist Communist Party. There has been a dramatic expansion of China’s surveillance apparatus using facial recognition and artificial intelligence to weed out religious leaders and to reward loyalty to the Atheist Communist Party.

It is going to be important for religious leaders and missionaries in China to use apologetic material like ours to combat the government propagandist machine. The volume of mail we are getting from Chinese students has dramatically increased. One student suggested that if we would learn Chinese, we could not handle all of the opportunities there would be to teach the gospel. As China forces atheism, we are working on that idea.



*As we finish the 50th year of the DOES GOD EXIST? ministry, we want to thank you for your support, encouragement, and prayers. We pray that 2018 has been a blessing to you and that there will be even greater things in 2019.*

*John and Cynthia Clayton  
Roland Earnst  
Linda Glover  
Karl Marcussen*

# *50th Anniversary*

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Signed—Karl H. Marcussen, Managing Editor, November 7, 2018

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

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