

DOES GOOD *Exist?*



Dave Miller, Editor

DOES GOD *Exist?*

“Behold your God!”
(Isaiah 40:9)

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CHAPTER 1

WE CAN KNOW!

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

It may seem hard to believe, but there have actually been people in history who have questioned whether humans can come to knowledge about anything—including their own existence (e.g., Descartes). Of course, Aristotle dispelled such nonsense by proposing that such a person be led to the edge of a cliff and encouraged to jump off. His refusal to do so would suggest that he knows more than he admits.

The notion that we cannot know is a false notion since it is self-contradictory. The person who insists that we cannot know is unwittingly claiming to **know** that we cannot know. Any rational person recognizes that a great host of things may be known. Living life every day entails an absolute knowledge of a variety of truths necessary to function—from the necessity of breathing oxygen and consuming food to the reality of places we visit and people we meet.

The fact is that we are well capable of coming to a realization of whether the God of the Bible exists. Our minds possess the powers of rational thinking. We have the mental ability to examine evidence, weigh that evidence, and draw correct conclusions, thereby coming to knowledge. True, we cannot know everything. But we can know a great many things; and most certainly

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we can know such a critical concept as to whether we human beings are accountable to a higher Being.

CHRISTIANITY VS. CHRISTENDOM

A common misconception among atheists, humanists, and evolutionists is that those who reject atheistic evolution in order to hold to belief in the God of the Bible and a straightforward, literal reading of the biblical documents are guided by “blind faith.” Atheists are vociferous in their incessant accusatory tirade that Christians reject rationality in order to hold to their beliefs. Prominent atheist Richard Dawkins insisted: “Faith is the great cop-out, the great excuse to evade the need to think and evaluate evidence. Faith is belief in spite of, even perhaps because of, the lack of evidence.”¹ He further states: “The meme [a unit of cultural transmission or imitation—DM] for **blind faith** secures its own perpetuation by the simple unconscious expedient of **discouraging rational inquiry**.”² In his book *Letter to a Christian Nation*, atheist Sam Harris maintains: “It is time that we admitted that faith is nothing more than the license religious people give one another **to keep believing when reasons fail**.”³ Harris also declares:

The idea, therefore, that religious faith is somehow a sacred human convention—distinguished, as it is, both by the extravagance of its claims and by **the paucity of its evidence**—is really too great a monstrosity to be appreciated in all its glory. **Religious faith** represents so uncompromising a misuse of the power of our minds that it forms a kind of perverse, cultural singularity—a vanishing point **beyond which rational discourse proves impossible**.⁴

This is the problem with dogmatism, no matter how seemingly benign: it is unresponsive to reality. Dogmatism is a failure of cognition (as well as a commitment to such failure); it is the state of **being closed to new evidence** and new arguments. And this frame of mind is rightly despised in every area of culture,

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on every subject, except where it goes by the name of
“**religious faith**.”⁵

Atheists have long expressed these convictions. Many years ago, Richard Robinson articulated the same position quite emphatically when he accused Christians of abandoning rationality and evidence in exchange for intellectual dishonesty and ignorance of the truth.⁶

Many within the scientific community labor under the delusion that their “facts” and “evidence” are supportive of atheism and evolution and opposed to a normal, face-value understanding of the biblical text. They scoff at those who disagree with them, as if they alone have a corner on truth. The fact of the matter is that while **most of the religious world** deserves the epithets hurled by the “informed” academicians, those who espouse pure, New Testament Christianity do not. New Testament Christians embrace the **biblical** definition of faith based on knowledge, in contrast to the commonly conceived misunderstanding of faith that is promulgated by the vast majority of people in Christendom. Please consider the following passages that verify this fact.

TRUE CHRISTIANITY INSISTS ON KNOWING TRUTH

A simple reading of the New Testament demonstrates this conclusion. The faith spoken of in the Bible is a faith that is **preceded** by knowledge. One cannot possess **biblical** faith in God until he or she comes to the **knowledge** of God. Thus, faith is not accepting what one cannot prove or know. Faith cannot outrun knowledge—for it is dependent upon knowledge (Romans 10:17). Abraham was said to have had faith **only after** he came to the knowledge of God’s promises and was **fully persuaded** (Romans 4:20-21). His faith, therefore,

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was seen in his trust and submission to what he **knew** to be the will of God. Biblical faith is attained only after an examination of the evidence, coupled with correct reasoning about the evidence.

The God of the Bible is a God of truth. Throughout biblical history, He stressed the need for the acceptance of truth—in contrast with error and falsehood. Those who, in fact, fail to seek the truth are considered by God to be wicked (Jeremiah 5:1). The wise man urged: “Buy the truth, and sell it not” (Proverbs 23:23). Paul, himself an accomplished logician, exhorted people to **love** the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10). He stated the necessity of giving diligence to the task of handling the truth properly (2 Timothy 2:15). Jesus declared that only by knowing the truth is one made free (John 8:32). Luke ascribed nobility to those who were willing to search for and examine the evidence, rather than being content to simply take someone’s word for the truth (Acts 17:11). Peter admonished Christians to be prepared to give a defense (1 Peter 3:15), which stands in stark contrast to those who, when questioned about proof of God, or the credibility and comprehensibility of the Bible, triumphantly reply, “I don’t know—I accept it by faith!” They do not possess **biblical** faith.

Thus, the notion of “blind faith” is completely foreign to the Bible. People are called upon to have faith only after they receive adequate knowledge. In fact, the Bible demands that the thinker be rational in gathering information, examining the evidence, and reasoning properly about the evidence, thereby drawing only warranted conclusions. That, in fact, is the essentiality of what is known in philosophical circles as the basic Law of Rationality—that one should draw only such conclusions as are justified by the evidence.⁷ Paul

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articulated exactly this concept when he wrote: “Test all things; hold fast what is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). John echoed the same thought when he said to “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1)—referring to false prophets who sought to deceive people.

These passages show that the New Testament Christian is one who stands ready to examine the issues. God expects every individual to put to the test various doctrines and beliefs, and then to reach only such conclusions as are warranted by adequate evidence. Man must not rely upon papal authorities, church traditions, theologians, or the claims of evolutionary science. Rather, all people are obligated to rely upon the evidence: substantiated, properly studied written directives of God (2 Timothy 2:15; John 12:48; 2 Peter 3:16), as well as the correctly assessed features of the created order (Romans 1:19-20; Psalm 19:1-4; Acts 14:17). Biblical religion and evolutionary science clash only when (1) the majority of those within the scientific community abandon sound hermeneutics and accurate scientific methodology, and (2) when those who claim to be Christians misrepresent Bible teaching, both insisting upon drawing unwarranted, erroneous conclusions from the relevant evidence.

The Bible insists that evidence is abundantly available for those who will engage in unprejudiced, rational inquiry. The resurrection claim, for example, was substantiated by “many infallible proofs,” including verification through the observation of more than five hundred persons at once (Acts 1:3; 1 Corinthians 15:5-8). Many proofs were made available in order to pave the way for faith (John 20:30-31). Peter offered at least four lines of evidence to those gathered in Jerusalem before he concluded his argument with “therefore...” (Acts 2:14-36). The acquisition of knowledge through

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empirical evidence was undeniable, for Peter concluded, “as you yourselves also **know**” (Acts 2:22). John referred to the auditory, visual, and tactile evidences that provided further empirical verification (1 John 1:1-2). Christ offered “works” to corroborate His claims, so that even His enemies did not have to rely merely on His words—if they would but honestly reason to the only logical conclusion (John 10:24-25,38). Indeed, as the Author of Christianity and Truth, Jesus declared, “The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me” (John 10:25). His subsequent explicit declaration of His deity incited angry preparations to stone Him. He boldly challenged them: “If I do not do the works of My Father, **do not believe Me**; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him” (John 10:37-38).⁸

Since Jesus came to the planet to urge people to render obedient submission to Him (John 3:16; 8:24), it is difficult to envision Him telling people **not** to believe Him. But that is precisely what He did—highlighting how important it is to God that we do not have blind faith. He has provided the world with adequate evidence for people to distinguish truth from falsehood. We can **know** that God exists, that Jesus is His Son, and that the Bible is the Word of God. If the evidence did not exist to prove these matters, God would not expect anyone to believe; nor would He condemn anyone for failing to believe—since He is fair and just (Acts 10:34-35; Romans 2:11; Peter 3:9). But the evidence **does** exist. We **can** know. All accountable human beings are under obligation to investigate and find the truth (John 8:32; 6:45; 7:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:21). All who fail to do so are “**without excuse**” (Romans 1:20).

CONCLUSION

Those who embrace pure, New Testament Christianity, unfettered by the distortions of Christendom that has accumulated through the centuries, reject the notion of blind faith and insist that every individual is under divine obligation to seek the truth, to weigh the evidence, and to come to a correct knowledge of the truth. Agnosticism is inexcusable and self-contradictory—since the agnostic hypocritically insists that he can **know** that he cannot know. The truth is that the following tenets are knowable and provable: (1) we can **know** (not merely think, hope, or wish) that God exists;⁹ (2) we can **know** that the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God,¹⁰ and intended to be comprehended in much the same way that any written human communication is to be understood; (3) we can **know** that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;¹¹ (4) we can **know** that one day we will stand before God in judgment, and give account for whether we have studied the Bible, learned what to do to be saved, and obeyed those Scriptures; and (5) we can **know** that we **know** (1 John 2:3).

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Richard Dawkins (1992), Speech at the Edinburgh International Science Festival, April 15, http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Richard_Dawkins; “Quotes,” <http://richarddawkins.net/quotes>.
- ² Richard Dawkins (2006), *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 198, emp. added.
- ³ Sam Harris (2006), *Letter to a Christian Nation* (New York: Alfred Knopf), p. 67, emp. added.
- ⁴ Sam Harris (2004), *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason* (New York: W.W. Norton), p. 25, emp. added.
- ⁵ Sam Harris and Philip Ball (2009), “What Should Science Do? Sam Harris v. Philip Ball,” Project Reason, June 23, http://www.project-reason.org/archive/item/what_should_science_dosam_harris_v_philip_ball/P300/.

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- ⁶ Richard Robinson (1976), “Religion and Reason,” *Critiques of God*, ed. Peter A. Angeles (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus), pp. 115-124.
- ⁷ Lionel Ruby (1960), *Logic: An Introduction* (Chicago, IL: J.B. Lippincott), p. 131.
- ⁸ For an extensive analysis of the logical prowess of Jesus and the writers of the Bible, see Dave Miller (2011), “Is Christianity Logical?” *Reason & Revelation*, 31[6]:50-52,56-59, June, and 31[7]:62-64,68-71, July.
- ⁹ Cf. Thomas Warren and Antony Flew (1976), *The Warren-Flew Debate* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press); Thomas Warren and Wallace Matson (1978), *The Warren-Matson Debate* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press).
- ¹⁰ Cf. Kyle Butt (2007), *Behold! The Word of God* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press); Eric Lyons (2003), *The Anvil Rings I* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press); Eric Lyons (2005), *The Anvil Rings II* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press); Dave Miller (2015), “3 Good Reasons to Believe the Bible Has Not Been Corrupted,” *Reason & Revelation*, 35[8]:86-89,92.
- ¹¹ Eric Lyons and Kyle Butt (2006), *Behold! The Lamb of God* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press).

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASSICAL ARGUMENTS

Jeff Miller, Ph.D.

Famous skeptic and columnist for *Scientific American* Michael Shermer wrote concerning theists¹ that the “burden of proof” is on them “to provide extraordinary evidence for their extraordinary claim that a supernatural being of great power and intelligence performed a supernatural act in place of or contrary to natural law. **They have yet to do so.**”² Famous 19th century philosopher Herbert Spencer said concerning those who reject atheistic evolution “as not adequately supported by facts, seem quite to forget that **their own theory is supported by no facts at all.**”³ Are these claims true? Does theism rest on zero evidence?

As was discussed in the previous chapter, biblical Christianity does not endorse a blind faith. According to Scripture, evidence is abundantly available to know the truth that the God of the Bible exists (Romans 1:20), and gathering that evidence is mandated by God (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Theists have refuted atheistic evolution,⁴ which indirectly confirms the existence of God. But is there positive evidence for God?

THE NATURE OF THE EVIDENCE

Over the millennia, Christians have explored mounds of evidence, gathering proof that substantiates the existence of God. For the remainder of this book, we wish

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to provide you with a positive case for a god, and specifically **the** God of the Bible.

Can we empirically observe God? Can we see, taste, touch, hear, or smell Him? No, we cannot. Does that mean there is no positive evidence for His existence? On the contrary, even skeptics would advise against such a rationale. In an attempt to defend evolution against creationists, Shermer unwittingly acknowledged, “Creationists like to argue that evolution is not a science because no one was there to observe it and there are no experiments to run today to test it. **The inability to observe past events or set up controlled experiments is no obstacle to a sound science of cosmology, geology, or archaeology.**”⁵ Well known cosmologist at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, George Ellis, said concerning how scientists work, that there must sometimes be “extrapolation from the known [i.e., observable—JM] to the unknown, from the testable to the untestable.”⁶

What these gentlemen are referring to is evidence that is indirect, rather than direct. While the indirect evidence to which they point as proof of their theories can be refuted, the underlying principle that indirect evidence is a valid source of information is true. Indirect evidence is a source of information that can provide a positive case for an idea. In the same way forensic scientists can come to a crime scene and often determine who committed a crime, when and how it was committed, and oftentimes even the motive—all without having directly witnessed the crime—we can examine indirect evidence that points to the truth of God’s existence.

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In studying the created order over the centuries, humans have reasoned from the natural evidence and

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articulated many excellent philosophical arguments that point to the conclusion that there must be a God—arguments which, fight though the atheist might, still stand today as testaments to God’s existence. Blair Scott of American Atheists, in his debate with Kyle Butt, said concerning the classical arguments for the existence of God: “The theological arguments have not changed much” over the years.⁷ Although his comment was said in a scoffing manner, he actually was giving Christianity a compliment. The classical arguments have not had to change over the centuries because they have yet to be refuted by atheists, although some have been around for millennia. After all, if an argument is sound, it should not have to change.

Ironically, the famous British evolutionary cosmologist that coined the term “Big Bang,” Sir Frederick Hoyle, and his colleague Chandra Wickramasinghe, said one should be “suspicious of a theory” if more and more adjustments need to be made to it to keep it in harmony with the latest evidence.⁸ While this truth should be a red flag to those who espouse evolutionary theories, which are seemingly overhauled on a daily basis, theists for centuries have been able to rest comfortably on solid arguments which give a positive case for God’s existence. Let’s examine some of that evidence.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Specifically, intelligent design advocates and creationists.
- ² Michael Shermer (2007), *Why Darwin Matters: The Case Against Intelligent Design* (New York, NY: Henry Holt), Kindle edition, p. 50, emp. added.
- ³ Herbert Spencer (1916), *Essays Scientific, Political, and Speculative* (London: D. Appleton and Co.), 1:1, emp. added.
- ⁴ Thomas B. Warren and Antony G.N. Flew (1977), *The Warren-Flew Debate* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press); Kyle Butt (2010), *A Christians Guide to Refuting Modern Atheism* (Montgomery,

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AL: Apologetics Press); Jeff Miller (2013), *Science vs. Evolution* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press); Jeff Miller (2014), *Science vs. Evolution*, DVD, Apologetics Press.

- ⁵ Shermer, p. 13, emp. added.
- ⁶ George F.R. Ellis (2011), “Does the Multiverse Really Exist?” *Scientific American*, 305[2]:38-43, August, p. 43.
- ⁷ Kyle Butt and Blair Scott (2011), *The Butt/Scott Debate: Does God Exist?* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), DVD.
- ⁸ F. Hoyle and C. Wickramasinghe (1981), *Evolution from Space* (New York: Simon & Schuster), p. 135.

CHAPTER 3

THE INTUITIONAL ARGUMENT: WHY BELIEF IN GOD IS NATURAL TO MANKIND

Kyle Butt, M.Div.

On June 18, 2012, well-known and much-read atheistic blogger Leah Libresco put out a blog post titled: “This Is My Last Post for the Patheos Atheist Portal.”¹ In the post, Libresco explained that she was no longer writing for the atheist portal because she is no longer an atheist. During the months prior to the post, her mental struggles and rational investigations led her to the conclusion that God exists.²

What was the primary factor that forced Libresco to this theistic conclusion? She explained that morality was the key. Throughout her time as an atheist, she struggled to come to grips with how humans can adhere to a morality that seems objective if there is no God. As she searched for answers among atheistic thinkers and writers, she admitted that their answers were inadequate.

In an interview with a *CNN* news reporter, Libresco noted that her conversion from atheism to theism was “kinda the same thing with any scientific theory, almost, **that it had more explanatory power to explain something I was really sure of.** I’m really sure that morality is objective, human independent; something we uncover like archaeologists not something we build like architects.”³

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Libresco's intellectual honesty regarding morality is refreshing to see.⁴ Her conversion highlights an important aspect of the process of searching for truth: **explanatory value.** With an ever-increasing number of skeptics, unbelievers, atheists, and agnostics in the United States and around the globe, it is important for Christians to look for ways to teach them about God, and then Jesus Christ. One effective way to do that is to show that the concept of God maintains much more powerful explanatory value for the realities that we see around us than atheism offers. Thus, when approaching a reality upon which both theists and atheists agree, the question would be: "Which idea, theism or atheism, explains this particular phenomenon the best?" To frame it in a more positive way, "If there really is a God, what would we expect the world to look like?" Leah Libresco recognized the reality of objective morality and concluded that if atheism were true, there would be no objective morality; but if there is a God, then objective morality is exactly what we would expect to find (see Chapter 5).

That principle can be extended to a host of realities that are present in our world. The one that this chapter addresses is the fact that mankind has an inherent predisposition to recognize a supernatural, intelligent Creator. This chapter establishes the fact that this reality is generally recognized by both atheists and theists. It will then address which of these two ideas, atheism or theism, most adequately accounts for this fact. The purpose of such an endeavor is to reach the unbelieving community with powerful evidence that has the ability to bring them to a belief in God, and one step closer to a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

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HUMANITY'S "INTUITIVE THEISM"

It might surprise the reader that even atheists **overwhelmingly** admit that humans are predisposed to believe in an intelligent creator of some sort. Richard Dawkins, arguably the world's leading atheistic thinker, lecturer, and writer asked the question: "Why, if it is false, does every culture in the world have religion? True or false, religion is ubiquitous, so where does it come from?"⁵ His assertion that religion is false is inaccurate, but his statement highlights the fact—the reality—that religion is universal to mankind, and has been in every human culture ever studied. He went on to say a few pages later: "Though the details differ across the world, no known culture lacks some version of the time-consuming, wealth-consuming, hostility-provoking rituals, the anti-factual, counter-productive fantasies of religion."⁶ Humans are so deeply religious, Dawkins refers to their desire to recognize some type of creator as a "lust for gods."⁷ The late atheistic writer Christopher Hitchens wrote: "Sigmund Freud was quite correct to describe the religious impulse, in *The Future of an Illusion*, as essentially ineradicable until or unless the human species can conquer its fear of death and its tendency to wish-thinking. Neither contingency seems very probable."⁸

Renowned atheist Sam Harris was forced to admit the truth that the concept of God is an inherent human predisposition. He wrote: "Similarly, several experiments suggest that children are predisposed to assume design and intention behind natural events—leaving many psychologists and anthropologists to believe that children, left entirely to their own devices, would invent some conception of God."⁹

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The research to which Sam Harris refers is extensive. Paul Bloom and Deena Skolnick Weisberg have written an article, titled “Childhood Origins of Adult Resistance to Science,” which was published in *Science* magazine in May of 2007. They suggest that children tend to attribute purpose and design to virtually everything, a tendency the authors call “promiscuous teleology.”¹⁰ Bloom and Weisberg noted: “[W]hen asked about the origin of animals and people, children spontaneously tend to provide and prefer creationist explanations.”¹¹

In an article titled “Are Children ‘Intuitive Theists’?” Deborah Keleman documented research which led her to conclude that “the proposal that children might be intuitive theists becomes increasingly viable,” and “together, these research findings tentatively suggest that children’s explanatory approach may be accurately characterized as intuitive theism.”¹² In an extensive 49-page article in *Cognitive Psychology*, Margaret Evans wondered aloud: “Why is the human mind (at least the Western protestant mind) so susceptible to creationism and so comparatively resistant to naturalistic explanations for the origins of species?”¹³

In light of the current research, Bloom admitted: “There is by now a large body of research suggesting that humans are natural-born creationists. When we see nonrandom structure and design, we assume that it was created by an intelligent being.”¹⁴ He opined: “Evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins was right to complain, then, that it seems ‘as if the human brain were specifically designed to misunderstand Darwinism.’”¹⁵ Some atheists, like David Mills, writing for more popular audiences, assert that we “should recognize that all children are born atheists. There is no child born with a religious belief.”¹⁶ That assertion ignores the fact that

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humans are born with the predisposition to theistic conclusions. Overwhelmingly, the atheistic community recognizes the reality that humans are born with a “lust for gods,” a “promiscuous teleology,” and a penchant toward “intuitive theism.”

Theists likewise agree that humans have an inherent predisposition to conclude an intelligent creator exists. Theistic apologist Paul Copan describes mankind’s tendency toward creation as a “religious impulse” that is “deeply imbedded” in the universal human thought process.¹⁷ We could supply scores of similar statements from creationists that would underscore the obvious conclusion that, by and large, the creationist community agrees with the atheistic community that there is a universal, built-in, in-born, intuitive human tendency to believe in an intelligent creator. The question then arises, which understanding of origins, atheism or theism, best explains why humanity exhibits “intuitive theism”? One key to arriving at the answer to this question is to understand the problems this reality poses for atheistic, naturalistic explanations of the Universe.

THEISM AND RELIGION ARE “COSTLY” CONCEPTS

According to naturalistic, atheistic assumptions for the origin of the Universe and the evolutionary assumption for the origin of mankind, everything that exists must have a naturalistic cause. By that, it is understood that atheistic evolutionists must present a reason to explain why humans are “intuitive theists” that corresponds with their atheistic beliefs that the material Universe is all there is. The problem that the atheistic community runs into in this regard is that the ideas of religion and theism run counter to what one would expect to find if atheism and naturalistic evolution were

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true. According to evolution [by this we mean atheistic, naturalistic evolution in which no intelligent designer played any part], natural selection eliminates physical structures and mental states that are costly in terms of their survival value. For instance, if there developed in a certain sub-group of humans the intuitive idea that rabid Kodiak bears made good pets, that group would soon be killed by such bears, and whatever aspect of the brain that housed the belief would be eliminated from the human population as a whole.

To illustrate further, if a certain group of humans tended to spend lots of effort on religious ceremonies that had nothing to do with their physical survival, and another group did not “waste” their resources on anything but their physical survival, evolutionists would argue that natural selection would suggest that those “religious” people who “wasted” their resources would eventually lose out in the race for physical survival. And the “non-religious” group would be selected by nature to become more prevalent and replace the “wasteful” religious group. Yet, we see just the opposite.

Richard Dawkins acknowledged this problem facing atheistic ideas. He stated: “Religion is so wasteful, so extravagant; and Darwinian selection habitually targets and eliminates waste.”¹⁸ The late atheistic philosopher Daniel Dennett stated: “Whatever else religion is as a human phenomenon, it is a hugely costly endeavor, and evolutionary biology shows that nothing so costly just happens.”¹⁹ What do these atheistic writers mean when they say that religion is “wasteful” and “so costly”? Dennett expounded on the idea when he said that when people look at humanity all over the world,

what they see today is a population of over six billion people, almost all of whom devote a significant fraction of their time and energy to some sort of religious

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activity: rituals such as daily prayer (both public and private) or frequent attendance at ceremonies, but also costly sacrifices—not working on certain days no matter what looming crisis needs prompt attention...and abiding by a host of strenuously observed prohibitions and requirements.²⁰

Dawkins expanded his ideas of “wasteful” as well, when he said:

Religion can endanger the life of the pious individual, as well as the lives of others. Thousands of people have been tortured for their loyalty to a religion, persecuted by zealots for what is in many cases a scarcely distinguishable alternative faith.... Devout people have died for their gods and killed for them; whipped blood from their backs, sworn themselves to a lifetime of celibacy or to lonely silence, all in the service of religion. What is it all for? What is the benefit?²¹

In their discussions and writings, atheists have sometimes suggested that religion possibly has such overwhelming health benefits that it is “worth” the expense. They note such things as the results of some research to suggest that prayer can lower stress levels or blood pressure. Or they comment on the emotional benefits of fitting into a community, which religious rituals would foster and encourage. Virtually across the board, however, they have rejected the idea that religion is actually beneficial for the physical survival of mankind. They contend that such minor advantages as lower stress levels or lower blood pressure certainly cannot justify the massive expenditure of resources on religion. [NOTE: It is easy to see why they have rejected those explanations. If religion actually provides benefits that would be greater than any negative consequences, then it would be better for humanity to hang on to religious ideas regardless of their factuality or validity. Since most modern atheists are calling for the eradication of religion, they are forced to downplay its benefits and look for another answer that could compel people

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to want to eliminate religion. While we certainly are not supporting the idea that since religion is beneficial, that is why it “evolved,” it is plain to see why the current atheistic community has forsaken it.]

Sam Harris contended, “And even if tribes have occasionally been the vehicles of natural selection, and religion proved adaptive, it would remain an open question whether religion increases human fitness today.”²² The current atheistic consensus is that religion does not bestow upon humanity enough physical benefit to “increase human fitness.” How, then, do atheists respond to the two facts that (1) humans are intuitively theistic, and (2) such religious theism is extremely costly and does not bestow physical survival fitness on our species?

THE CURRENT ATHEISTIC ANSWER: RELIGION IS A VIRUS OR BY-PRODUCT

What naturalistic explanation can be given to account for the ubiquitous and extremely “costly” nature of religion? In their attempt to show that theism is unnecessary and ultimately harmful, the atheistic community has concocted the idea that theistic ideas are analogous to mind-viruses that infect a person, not for the benefit of the person, but for the benefit of the mind-virus. In other words, theism is a mind-virus that has been passed from human host to human host for its own survival, and not for the benefit of the human organisms it inhabits. Dawkins explained: “The fact that religion is ubiquitous probably means that it has worked to the benefit of something, but it may not be us or our genes. It may be to the benefit of only the religious ideas themselves, to the extent that they behave in a some-what gene-like way, as replicators.”²³

Dawkins has expounded upon this idea and used the term “memes” to describe ideas that he asserts behave

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in ways similar to genes. He contends that theism is a “meme” that acts as a mental virus, infecting people and forcing them to replicate the meme by teaching others about it and expending vast resources on it. Along these lines, Dan Dennett has suggested that “the common cold is universal to all human peoples in much the same way as religion is, yet we would not want to suggest that colds benefit us.”²⁴ Dennett, using the meme idea, asserted: “The meme theory accounts for this. According to this theory, the ultimate beneficiaries of religious adaptations are the memes themselves....”²⁵

Atheist Darrell Ray wrote an entire book, *The God Virus: How Religion Infects Our Lives and Culture*, based on this idea. He opened by saying:

It was not until Richard Dawkins’ idea of “viruses of the mind” that we gained a ready-made way to examine religion as closely as we look at the epidemiology of the flu virus. This book will show how religions of all kinds fit in the natural world, how they function in our minds and culture and how similar they are to the germs, parasites and viruses that inhabit our bodies.²⁶

To build his case for the “religion-as-a-virus” idea, he mentions numerous things that he perceives as validating evidence of his assertion. He wrote: “Once a person has converted to a religion, it is difficult to have a rational conversation about the irrational aspects of his religion. It is as though something invaded the person and took over a part of his personality.”²⁷ He went on to discuss the situation in which a friend lost his father to cancer. Before the loss, the friend was “non-religious.” But after the father’s death, the friend “got a severe case of religion that changed his personality dramatically.” Ray says “there was no way to have a conversation with him on any subject without religion creeping in.”²⁸ He further asserted that “stress can activate the chicken pox virus in adults, leading to the condition known as shingles.

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Similarly, stress tends to reactivate the god virus in many people.”²⁹

Other alleged symptoms of the “god virus” include the idea that “religion always functions to ensure its own survival,” just as a virus does.³⁰ To undergird this assertion, Ray said: “Go into any Christian bookstore, and you will find books about living in a secular world, living with a spouse who is not saved or how to convert friends and relatives. The god virus is always concerned with protecting and expanding its territory—that is what these books are all about.”³¹ Ray has taken Dawkins’ meme/mental virus idea to its logical conclusion.

THE SIMPLEST RESPONSE TO THE GOD VIRUS IDEA

One very simple idea clearly manifests the flaws of the God virus concept. If thoughts or ideas were self-sustaining, self-replicating “memes” that were simply out for their own survival, that would mean that the idea of atheism would fall under the same condemnation as a “selfish meme” ensuring its own survival to the potential detriment of its host. By what criteria could anyone discern between “real” ideas and those dastardly memes infecting the brain? If someone did propose a set of criteria, who is to say that such criteria are not, themselves, a menacing meme that is infecting the mind of the person trying to weed out memes? And how would we know that the concept of a meme is not merely a meme in and of itself infecting the minds of atheists who present the idea? The reader can see how quickly such a discussion would digress into intellectual chaos. Furthermore, how could people be held responsible for anything they think or do? “My memes made me do it!” would become the mantra for all kinds of malicious crimes. And while atheists have attempted

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to provide answers to such problems, if memes really do exist as individual entities, who is to say that such “answers” are more than memes?

In fact, when analyzing the writings of those who present the “meme/virus” idea, the reader can quickly ascertain the flaw in their reasoning. For instance, Ray said that when the religious virus took over his friend after his father’s death, the friend mentioned religion in virtually every conversation. But the same could be said for any number of individuals who have become outspoken atheists, who insist on inserting their unbelief in virtually every conversation they have.

Ray stated: “In viral terms, it means that people are so deeply infected that they are immune to influence and generally ignore any evidence that contradicts their beliefs.”³² Yet it can be shown that the available scientific evidence contradicts major tenets of atheistic evolution, a fact that is generally ignored by the atheistic community.³³ In addition, we mentioned that Ray said: “Go into any Christian bookstore, and you will find books about living in a secular world, living with a spouse who is not saved or how to convert friends and relatives. The god virus is always concerned with protecting and expanding its territory—that is what these books are all about.” What, pray tell, are the books, tracts, DVDs, and pamphlets about atheism designed to do? Are they not written for the very purpose of protecting and expanding the “territory” of atheism?

Listen to the atheists themselves as they describe their “religious” efforts. Prolific atheistic writer and debater, Dan Barker, likened his teaching about atheism to “evangelism,” and he stated: “Representing the Freedom From Religion Foundation, I get to engage in similar atheist ‘missionizing’ all across the American

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continent...” At one point he said, “Atheist ‘evangelism’ doesn’t just happen in front of an audience.”³⁴

Notice the irony in the fact that the first chapter of Dawkins’ book *The God Delusion* is titled “A Deeply Religious Non-Believer.” In that chapter, he quotes Carl Sagan’s writings from a book titled *A Pale Blue Dot*. Sagan wrote: “A religion, old or new, that stressed the magnificence of the Universe as revealed by modern science might be able to draw forth reserves of reverence and awe hardly tapped by the conventional faiths.” Dawkins then stated: “All Sagan’s books touch the nerve-endings of transcendent wonder that religion has monopolized in past centuries. My own books have the same aspiration. Consequently I hear myself often described as a deeply religious man.”³⁵ Additionally, Ray rails on “religion” as a destructive meme/virus, and yet throughout his book, he capitalizes the terms atheist and atheism consistently. One example is when he states: “In fact, the only thing you can get some Atheists to agree upon is that there is no god.”³⁶ Is it not the “religious” concept “that there is no god” that could easily be put forth as the meme that has infected so many minds to the detriment of the host human and in spite of a vast amount of evidence to the contrary? Such is the double-edged sword of the meme/virus concept. If it cuts at all (which it does not), then it cuts both ways.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD PROVIDES THE LOGICAL ANSWER

Up to this point we have established that both atheists and theists admit that humans are “intuitive theists.” That is, the belief in an intelligent Creator comes naturally to humans. This idea poses a serious problem for the atheist, because the concepts of God and/or religion are extremely “costly” to the human species. Thus, in

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an attempt to explain why theism is so prevalent, they liken it to a mental virus that is out for its own survival and not for the benefit of the “host organism.” This explanation, and others like it, fail since arguments used to dismiss the validity of theism and religion would be equally effective to demote **all** concepts—including atheism—to “by-products” and “memes.” Thus, we are forced to conclude, as Paul Copan did: “Attempts by these New Atheists to explain away theology as a useful fiction, or worse, a harmful delusion fall short of telling us why the religious impulse is so deeply imbedded. If God exists, however, we have an excellent reason as to why religious fervor should exist.”³⁷

In other words, if there really is a God, Who is an intelligent, supernatural Creator Who loves mankind and desires that mankind should know the truth, what would we expect to see? We would expect to find humans “pre-programmed” for a belief in God. Of course, we would not expect all humans to come to the proper conclusion that God exists, since a loving God would equip humans with the capacity to choose what to believe and how they choose to behave.³⁸ We would, however, expect God to have so designed humans that to dismiss the concepts of creation and theism would be unnatural and would require some type of reverse programming. That an intelligent Designer exists is the answer which maintains the most powerful explanatory value. This argument for God’s existence is sometimes referred to as the Intuitive Argument for the Existence of God or the *Sensus Divinitatus* (the Sense of the Divine). It states that the natural human predisposition to believe in a Creator provides evidence of that Creator.

In fact, further reading into the atheistic literature makes known the fact that atheism is “unnatural” in the

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sense that it is not how the human mind is designed to perceive the world. Let us refer back to the Bloom and Weisberg article titled “Childhood Origins of Adult Resistance to Science.” It is important to understand their definition of the term “science.” Their research was done in order to show why many Americans reject atheistic evolution. Thus, the term “science” is equated with “atheistic evolution” in their writing. Understanding this to be the case, notice that they said: “The main reason why people resist certain scientific [read that atheistic evolutionary–KB] findings, then, is that many of these findings are unnatural and unintuitive.”³⁹ Keleman concurred when she wrote: “The implication is that children’s science failures may, in part, result from inherent conflicts between intuitive ideas and the basic tenets of contemporary scientific [atheistic evolutionary–KB] thought.”⁴⁰ In Dawkins’ discussion of the situation, he includes the fact that Bloom says that humans are “innately predisposed to be creationists.” Dawkins then comments that “natural selection ‘makes no intuitive sense.’” Thus, he concludes that children are “native teleologists, and many never grow out of it.”⁴¹

Notice the admission by these atheistic writers. They are forced **by the evidence** to admit that humans are naturally inclined to believe in an intelligent Designer. They are further forced **by the evidence** to conclude that the various tenets of atheistic evolution are counter-intuitive and unnatural. Yet, **in spite of the evidence**, they cling to the idea that somehow this situation can be reconciled with the belief that God does not exist. Notice that a presumption of atheism could never have predicted the situation that humans would be “intuitive theists.” Nor do the purported atheistic answers to the problem provide adequate explanatory value. **The simple and most powerfully supported conclu-**

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sion is that God exists, and that is why humans are “innately predisposed to be creationists.”

THE NEXT STEP

Once God’s existence is established using humanity’s “intuitive theism,” the next step would be to see how God expects His creatures to use this preprogrammed disposition. If we can establish that the Bible is God’s Word (and we can⁴²), then we can go to it to determine the proper human response. First, we can see that God expects everyone to use this predisposition to accurately assess the evidence He has provided to come to the conclusion that He exists. Romans 1:18-21 bears this out:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who **suppress the truth** in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God **is manifest in them**, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are **without excuse**, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Notice that the biblical text makes it clear that these men “suppress the truth” even though “what may be known of God is **manifest in them**.” Furthermore, unbelievers will be “without excuse” because they are equipped with the evidence and the inherent predisposition and ability to arrive at the proper conclusion.

In his sermon on Mars Hill to the Athenians, the apostle Paul explained that the Creator “has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the Earth...so that they should **seek the Lord**, in the hope that they might **grope for Him and find Him**, though He is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:26-27). Paul’s statement corresponds perfectly with the idea

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that God has so designed humans that they naturally “grope” for Him. This would also fit perfectly with the fact that “many psychologists and anthropologists [are led] to believe that children, left entirely to their own devices, would invent some conception of God.”⁴³ Humans, from birth, are “groping” for God.

Notice, then, the divine program for salvation. First, a person gropes for a Creator. That person is able to find the Creator Who designed humans and instilled within them the ability to know Him. Their knowledge of this Creator should lead them to the conclusion that humans are His offspring and not the product of a naturalistic, chance processes (Acts 17:29). This truth was sufficiently verified by the life and death of Jesus Christ, Who will ultimately judge all mankind based on the plenteous evidence God has supplied and their inherent ability to assess that evidence correctly (Acts 17:31).

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Dan Merica (2012), “Atheist Becomes Catholic,” <http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2012/06/22/prominent-atheist-blogger-converts-to-catholicism/>.
- ² Leah Libresco (2012), “This is My Last Post for the Patheos Atheist Portal,” <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/unequallyyoked/2012/06/this-is-my-last-post-for-the-patheos-atheist-portal.html>.
- ³ Merica, emp. added.
- ⁴ For an examination of Catholicism to which Libresco converted, see Moises Pinedo (2008), *What the Bible Says About the Catholic Church* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), http://apologeticspress.org/pdfs/e-books_pdf/wtbsatcc.pdf.
- ⁵ Richard Dawkins (2006), *The God Delusion* (New York: Houghton Mifflin), p. 159.
- ⁶ Ibid., p. 166.
- ⁷ Ibid., p. 169.
- ⁸ Christopher Hitchens (2007), *God is not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (New York: Twelve), p. 247.

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- ⁹ Sam Harris (2010), *The Moral Landscape: How Science Can Determine Human Values* (New York: Free Press), p. 151.
- ¹⁰ Paul Bloom and Deena Skoinick Weisberg (2007), “Childhood Origins of Adult Resistance to Science,” *Science*, 316[5827]: 996.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Deborah Keleman (2004), “Are Children ‘Intuitive Theists’? Reasoning About Purpose and Design in Nature,” *Psychological Science*, 15[5]:299.
- ¹³ Margaret Evans (2001), “Cognitive and Contextual Factors in the Emergence of Diverse Belief Systems: Creation versus Evolution,” *Cognitive Psychology*, 42:252.
- ¹⁴ Paul Bloom (2009), “In Science We Trust: Beliefs About the Natural World that are Present in Infancy Influence People’s Response to Evolutionary Theory,” *Natural History Magazine*, 118[4]:16-19.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ David Mills (2006), *Atheist Universe: The Thinking Person’s Answer to Christian Fundamentalism* (Berkeley, CA: Ulysses Press), p. 29.
- ¹⁷ Paul Copan (2011), *Is God a Moral Monster?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), p. 30.
- ¹⁸ Dawkins, p. 163.
- ¹⁹ Daniel Dennet (2006), *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (New York: Viking), p. 69.
- ²⁰ Ibid, p. 75.
- ²¹ Dawkins, pp. 164-165.
- ²² Harris, p. 151.
- ²³ Dawkins, p. 165. NOTE: How could an “idea” have a mind that could act to preserve itself? An idea is not alive.
- ²⁴ Dennett, p. 165.
- ²⁵ Ibid., p. 186.
- ²⁶ Darrel Ray (2009), *The God Virus: How Religion Infects Our Lives and Culture* (Bonner Springs, KS: IPC Press), p. 13.
- ²⁷ Ibid., p. 20.
- ²⁸ Ibid., p. 19.
- ²⁹ Ibid., p. 25.
- ³⁰ Ibid., p. 36.

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- ³¹ Ibid., p. 176.
- ³² Ibid., p. 39.
- ³³ Jeff Miller (2017), *Science vs. Evolution* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), second edition.
- ³⁴ Dan Barker (2008), *godless* (Berkeley, CA: Ulysses Press), p. 325.
- ³⁵ Dawkins, p. 12.
- ³⁶ Ray, pp. 51-52.
- ³⁷ Copan, p. 30.
- ³⁸ See the discussion of “epistemic distance” in Thomas B. Warren (1972), *Have Atheists Proved There Is No God?* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press), p. 69.
- ³⁹ Bloom and Weisberg, p. 996.
- ⁴⁰ Keleman, p. 299.
- ⁴¹ Dawkins, pp. 180-181.
- ⁴² Kyle Butt (2007), *Behold the Word of God: Exploring the Evidence of the Inspiration of the Bible* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press).
- ⁴³ Harris, p. 151.

CHAPTER 4

THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Jeff Miller, Ph.D.

The famous philosopher from the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas, is generally given credit for articulating what is known as the Cosmological Argument for the existence of God, although the Bible described the essence of the argument hundreds of years before he was on the scene (e.g., Hebrews 3:4). In Job 38, as God responded to Job, He asks Job about the creation of the Earth and the Universe—where did it come from? Who created it (vs. 5)? Who laid the foundation and “cornerstone” for the Earth (vs. 6)? “Who determined its measurements” (vs. 5)? The Cosmological Argument essentially says that the cosmos is here and had to come from somewhere. It could not have created itself. Nothing comes from nothing in nature, as verified by the First Law of Thermodynamics.¹

The rational person will only draw conclusions that are supported by the evidence.² The evidence from the natural realm indicates that every material effect must have an adequate antecedent (or simultaneous³) cause. The mass of a paper clip is not going to provide sufficient gravitational pull to cause a tidal wave. There must be an adequate cause for the tidal wave, like a massive, offshore, underwater earthquake.⁴ Leaning against a mountain will certainly not cause it to topple over.

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Jumping up and down on the ground will not cause an earthquake. If a chair is not placed in an empty room, the room will remain chairless. If matter was not made and placed in the Universe, we would not exist. There must be an adequate antecedent or simultaneous cause for every material effect. If this Law of Cause and Effect seems intuitive to you, then you understand why the Cosmological Argument is powerful, logical, positive evidence for the existence of God.

CAUSALITY AND HISTORY

The Law of Cause and Effect, or Law/Principle of Causality, has been investigated and recognized for millennia. From at least the time of Plato⁵ and Aristotle⁶ in the fourth century B.C., philosophers have pondered causality. In 1781, the renowned German philosopher Immanuel Kant wrote concerning the Principle of Causality in his *Critique of Pure Reason* that “everything that happens presupposes a previous condition, which it follows with absolute certainty, in conformity with a rule.... **All changes** take place according to **the law of the connection of Cause and Effect.**”⁷ In the 19th century, German medical scientist and Father of Cellular Pathology, Rudolf Virchow, argued that “[e]verywhere there is mechanistic process only, with the **unbreakable necessity of cause and effect.**”⁸ Fast forwarding another century, our increased understanding of the world still did not cause the law to be discredited. In 1934, W.T. Stace, professor of philosophy at Princeton University, in *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy*, wrote:

Every student of logic knows that this is **the ultimate canon of the sciences**, the foundation of them all. If we did not believe the truth of causation, namely, everything which has a beginning has a cause, and that in the same circumstances the same things invariably happen, all the sciences would at once crumble

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to dust. In **every scientific investigation** this truth is assumed.⁹

The truth of causality is so substantiated that it is taken for granted in scientific investigation. It is “assumed.”

This principle is not some idea that can simply be brushed aside without consideration. If the Law of Causality were not in effect, science could not proceed—it would “crumble to dust” since, by its very nature, it involves gathering evidence and testing hypotheses in order to find **regularities** in nature. The goal of scientific experimentation is to determine what will happen (i.e., what will be the **effect**) if one does certain things (i.e., initiates certain **causes**). If there were no relationship between cause and effect, then nothing could be taken for granted. One day gravity may be in effect, and the next day it may not, and there would be no point in studying it, since it might be different tomorrow. There would be no such thing as a “scientific law,” since there would be no such thing as a “regularity,” which is fundamental to the definition of a law of science.¹⁰

Moving farther into the 20th century, the Law of Cause and Effect still had not been repealed. In 1949, Albert Einstein, in *The World as I See It*, under the heading “The Religiousness of Science,” wrote, “But the scientist is possessed by the sense of **universal causation**.”¹¹ In *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, renowned American philosopher and professor Richard Taylor wrote, “Nevertheless, it is **hardly disputable** that the idea of causation is not only indispensable in the common affairs of life but in **all** applied sciences as well.”¹²

Even today, when scientific exploration has brought us to unprecedented heights of knowledge, the age old Law of Causality cannot be denied. Today’s dictionaries define “causality” as:

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- “the principle that nothing can happen without being caused.”¹³
- “the principle that everything has a cause.”¹⁴

The National Academy of Science’s guidebook, *Teaching about Evolution and the Nature of Science*, says, “One goal of science is to understand nature. ‘Understanding’ in science means relating one natural phenomenon to another and recognizing **the causes and effects of phenomena**.... Progress in science consists of the development of better explanations for the **causes** of natural phenomena.”¹⁵ Notice that, according to the National Academy of Science (NAS), there can be no progress in science without causality. The NAS, though entirely naturalistic in its approach to science, recognizes causality to be fundamental to the nature of science. It is not, and cannot rationally be, denied—except when necessary in order to prop up a deficient worldview. Its ramifications have been argued for years, but after the dust settles, the Law of Cause and Effect still stands unscathed, having weathered the trials thrust upon it for thousands of years.

THE LAW OF CAUSALITY— A PROBLEM FOR ATHEISM

The Law of Causality is fundamental to science, and yet it stands in the way of the bulk of today’s “scientific” community due to their flawed definition of “science.” In an interview in 1994, the late, famous evolutionary astronomer Robert Jastrow, founder and former director of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies at NASA, said:

As Einstein said, scientists live by their faith in causation, and the chain of cause and effect. Every effect has a cause that can be discovered by rational arguments. And this has been a very successful program, if you will, for unraveling the history of the universe. **But it just fails at the beginning**.... So time, really, going backward, comes to a halt at that point. Beyond that,

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that curtain can never be lifted... **And that is really a blow at the very fundamental premise that motivates all scientists.**¹⁶

The scientific community today, by and large, incorrectly defines “science” in such a way that anything supernatural cannot be considered “scientific,” and therefore science “fails” in certain areas. Only natural phenomena are deemed worthy of being categorized “science.” According to the definition, if something cannot be empirically observed and tested, it is not “scientific.” [NOTE: The naturalistic community contradicts itself on this matter, since several fundamental planks of evolutionary theory are unnatural—they have never been observed and all scientific investigation has proven them to be impossible (e.g., spontaneous generation of life and the laws of science, macroevolution, etc.)¹⁷] One result of this flawed definition is highlighted by Jastrow, himself, in the above quote. Contrary to Jastrow’s statement, the laws of science, by definition, do not “fail.” They have no known exceptions. So, it would be unscientific to claim, without conclusive evidence in support of the claim, that a law has failed.

This leaves atheistic evolutionists in a quandary when trying to explain how the effect of the infinitely complex Universe could have come about “unscientifically”—without a **natural** cause. Four decades ago, Jastrow wrote:

The Universe, and everything that has happened in it since the beginning of time, are a grand effect without a known cause. An effect without a known cause? That is not the world of science; it is a world of witchcraft, of wild events and the whims of demons, a medieval world that science has tried to banish. As scientists, what are we to make of this picture? I do not know.¹⁸

When Jastrow says that there is no “known cause” for everything in the Universe, he is referring to the fact that

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there is no known **natural** cause. If atheism were true, if the material realm is all that exists, if naturalistic science can shed light on the matter of origins, there must be a natural explanation of what caused the Universe. Scientists and philosophers recognize that there must be a cause that would be sufficient to bring about matter and the Universe—and yet no natural cause is known. The *McGraw-Hill Dictionary of Scientific and Technical Terms* says that “causality,” in physics, is “the principle that an event cannot precede its cause.”¹⁹ However, the atheist must concede that in order for his claim to be valid, the effect of the Universe did not precede its cause—rather, it actually came about **without it!** Such a viewpoint is hardly in keeping with science.

THE LAW OF CAUSALITY— A FRIEND TO CREATIONISTS

Instead of flippantly disregarding the truth of the Law of Causality because it contradicts naturalistic theories, why not recognize that the highly respected, exception-less Law of Causality is not the problem? Why not recognize the fact that naturalistic theories, such as the Theory of Evolution and the Big Bang Theory, are simply not in harmony with science on a fundamental level? Why not consider an option that does not contradict the Law? If one were to follow the evidence wherever it leads, rather than defining God out of science, one is led to the unavoidable conclusion that there must be Someone **super-natural** that caused the Universe to be. If every material (i.e., **natural**) effect must have a cause, and a natural cause would contradict the available evidence (see Endnote 1), then the ultimate Cause of the Universe must be supernatural.

Every material effect must have an adequate antecedent or simultaneous cause. Notice that creationists

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have absolutely no problem with the truth articulated by this God-ordained law from antiquity. In Hebrews 3:4, the Bible says that “every house is built by someone, but He who built **all things** is God.” A house must have a cause—namely, a builder. It will not build itself. Scientifically speaking, according to the Law of Cause and Effect, there had to be a Cause for the Universe. And that is the essence of the Cosmological Argument for the existence of God.

The only book on the planet which contains characteristics that prove its production to be above human capability is the Bible.²⁰ The God of the Bible is its author (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and in the very first verse of the inspired material He gave to humans, He articulated with authority and clarity that He is the Cause Who brought about the Universe and all that is in it. “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the Earth” (Genesis 1:1).

Emile Borel was a famous French mathematician for whom the Borel lunar crater was named.²¹ He once said concerning the amazing human brain that is able to author works of literature, “Now the complexity of that brain must therefore have been even richer than the particular work to which it gave birth.”²² The effect of the brain’s existence, like a work of literature, must have an adequate cause. In the same way, we know that the infinite Mind behind the creation of this infinitely complex Universe had to be, and was, more than adequate for the task of bringing it all into existence (Revelation 19:6).

UNCAUSED CAUSE?

“But if everything had to have a beginning, why does the same concept not apply to God? Doesn’t God need a cause, too? Who caused God?” First, notice that this

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statement is based on a misunderstanding of what the Law of Cause and Effect claims concerning the Universe. The law states that every **material effect** must have an adequate antecedent or simultaneous cause. A law of science is determined through the observation of nature—not **super-nature**. Since they have not observed the supernatural realm, scientists cannot apply the scientific Law of Causality to it. The laws of nature do not apply to non-material entities. The God of the Bible is a spiritual Being (John 4:24) and therefore is not governed by physical law. In the words of skeptic Michael Shermer, executive director of the Skeptics Society and columnist for *Scientific American*:

If God is a being in space and time, it means that He is restrained by the laws of nature and the contingencies of chance, just like all other beings of this world. An omniscient and omnipotent God must be **above** such constraints, not subject to nature and chance. God as creator of heaven and earth and all things invisible would need necessarily to be **outside** such created objects.²³

Recall also what Professor W.T. Stace wrote in *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy* concerning causality. “[E]verything **which has a beginning** has a cause.”²⁴ God, according to the Bible, had no beginning. Psalm 90:2 says concerning God, “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even **from everlasting to everlasting**, You are God.” The Bible describes God as a Being Who has always been and always will be—“from everlasting to everlasting.” He, therefore, had no beginning. Recall Hebrews 3:4 again, which indicates that God is not constrained by the Law of Cause and Effect, as are houses, but rather, presides as the Chief Builder—the Uncaused Causer—the Being Who initially set all effects into motion (John 1:3).

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Again, philosophers recognize that, logically, there must be an initial cause of the Universe. [NOTE: Those who attempt to sidestep the need for a Cause and argue the eternity of the physical Universe are in direct contradiction to the Law of Causality (since the Universe is a physical effect that demands a cause), as well as the Second Law of Thermodynamics, which implies that nothing physical lasts forever.²⁵] Aristotle, in *Physics*, discussed the logical line of reasoning that leads to the conclusion that the initial cause of motion must be something that is not, itself, in motion—an unmoved mover.²⁶ Aquinas built on Aristotle’s reasoning and said:

Now whatever is in motion is put in motion by another. . . . For motion is nothing else than the reduction of something from potentiality to actuality. . . . It is therefore impossible that in the same respect and in the same way a thing should be both mover and moved, i.e., that it should move itself. If that by which it is put in motion be itself put in motion, then this also must needs be put in motion by another, and that by another again. But this cannot go on to infinity, because then there would be no first mover, and, consequently no other mover. . . . **Therefore it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause, to which everyone gives the name of God.**²⁷

God, not being a physical, finite being, but an eternal, spiritual being (by definition), would not be subject to the condition of requiring a beginning. Therefore, the law does not apply to Him. Concerning the Law of Causality, Kant said that “everything **which is contingent** has a cause, which, if itself contingent, must also have a cause; and so on, till the series of subordinated causes must end with an **absolutely necessary cause**, without which it would not possess completeness.”²⁸ An uncaused Cause is necessary. Only God sufficiently fills that void.

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Consider: in the same way that dimensional space—length, width, and height—are part of the physical Universe, time, itself, is as well. In the same way that space had to have a cause, time itself had to as well: time had a beginning. That means that its Creator logically could not have a beginning. A “beginning” implies a specific timeframe that has begun. Without time in existence, there could be no such thing as a “beginning.” So the Cause of the Universe could not have a beginning since He created time itself. In essence, there was no such thing as a “beginning” until the uncaused Cause began something. [NOTE: If time was not created, then it exists apart from God and even God is subject to it. The Bible affirms, however, that universal time itself was created along with the Universe when it uses the phrase “in the beginning” in Genesis 1:1.]

Consider further: if we were to grant that the laws of science apply to the supernatural realm, then if there ever were a time in history when absolutely nothing existed—not even God—then nothing would continue to exist today, since nothing comes from nothing (in keeping with common sense and the First Law of Thermodynamics²⁹). However, we **know** something exists (e.g., the Universe)—which means **something had to exist eternally**, or we would eventually get to a point in past time when nothing existed, which we have already noted cannot be. That something that existed forever could not be physical or material, since such things do not last forever (cf. the Second Law of Thermodynamics³⁰). It follows that the eternal something must be non-physical or non-material. It must be **mind** rather than **matter**. Logically, there must be a Mind that has existed forever. That Mind, according to the Bible, is God. He, being spirit, is not subject to the Second Law of Thermodynamics and can exist forever—the uncre-

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ated Creator. While usable energy in the Universe is inevitably expended, according to the Second Law, moving the Universe ever closer to a state of completed deterioration and unusable energy, God's power is "eternal" (Romans 1:20).

Of old You laid the foundation of the Earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, **but You will endure**; yes, they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will change them, and they will be changed. **But You are the same, and Your years will have no end** (Psalm 102:25-27).

The Universe exists. It cannot be eternal according to the Second Law of Thermodynamics. It could not create itself according to the First Law of Thermodynamics. Its existence requires an adequate, supernatural Cause. The Bible calls Him Jehovah.

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CHAPTER 5

THE MORAL ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Eric Lyons, M.Min.

Several years ago, some of the world’s leading atheistic evolutionary scientists gathered in La Jolla, California for the first “Beyond Belief” symposium,¹ which the science magazine *New Scientist* called “an ‘atheist love fest.’”² The conference was held to discuss science, religion, and God, and specifically whether science should “do away with religion.”³ *New Scientist* writer Michael Brooks summarized the overall attitude of the attendees in the following words: “science can take on religion and win.”⁴ The participants were ready to roll up their sleeves and “get on with it.”⁵ They were ready to put science “**In Place of God**,” as Brooks titled his article.

Fast-forward to the “Beyond Belief II” symposium (2008), where some of the participants apparently approached the idea of a Supernatural Being much more cautiously. Even *New Scientist*, who covered the conference for a second year in a row, chose a drastically different article title the second time around—from “In Place of God” to the more sober, “**God’s Place** in a Rational World.”⁶ Author Michael Reilly gave some insight into the meeting by recording what one attendee, Edward Slingerland of the University of British Columbia (and

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founder of the Centre for the Study of Human Evolution, Cognition and Culture), openly acknowledged:

“Religion is not going away,” he announced. Even those of us who fancy ourselves rationalists and scientists, he said, **rely on moral values—a set of distinctly unscientific beliefs.**

Where, for instance, does our conviction that human rights are universal come from? “Humans’ rights to me are as mysterious as the holy trinity.... You can’t do a CT scan to show where humans’ rights are, you can’t cut someone open and show us their human rights.... It’s not an empirical thing, it’s just something we strongly believe. It’s a purely metaphysical entity.”⁷

Although some at the conference had the naïve belief that “[g]iven time and persistence, science will conquer **all** of nature’s mysteries,”⁸ it is encouraging to know that at least one person alluded to one of the greatest proofs for God’s existence—the moral argument.

OBJECTIVE MORALITY

Why do most rational people believe in objective morality? That is, why do people generally think that some actions are “right” and some actions are “wrong,” regardless of people’s subjective opinions? Why do most people believe that it is “evil” or “wicked” (1) for someone to walk into a random house, shoot everyone in it, and steal everything in sight? (2) for a man to beat and rape a kind, innocent woman? (3) for an adult to torture an innocent child simply for the fun of it? or (4) for parents to have children for the sole purpose of abusing them sexually every day of their lives? Because, as evolutionist Edward Slingerland noted, humans have metaphysical rights—rights that are “a reality beyond what is perceptible to the senses”⁹—and “rely on moral values.” The fact is, most people, even many atheists, have admitted that real, objective good and evil exist.

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Antony Flew

During the last half of the 20th century, the late Dr. Antony Flew, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Reading in Reading, England, was considered one of the world's most respected atheistic philosophers.¹⁰ From 1955-2000, he lectured, debated, and wrote extensively on matters pertaining to atheism. Some of his works include, but in no way are limited to, *God and Philosophy* (1966), *Evolutionary Ethics* (1967), *Darwinian Evolution* (1984), *The Presumption of Atheism* (1976), and *Atheistic Humanism* (1993). In September 1976, Dr. Flew debated Dr. Thomas B. Warren, Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Christian Apologetics at Harding Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, Tennessee. At the beginning of this four-night debate on the existence of God, in harmony with the agreed upon rules of the debate, Warren asked Flew several questions in writing, including the following: "True/False. In murdering six million Jewish men, women, and children the Nazis were guilty of real (objective) moral wrong." Flew answered "True." He acknowledged the existence of "real (objective) moral wrong."¹¹

Wallace Matson

In 1978, Dr. Warren met Dr. Wallace Matson, Professor of Philosophy at the University of California in Berkeley, California, in a public debate on the existence of God in Tampa, Florida. Once again, per the agreed-upon guidelines, the disputants were allowed to ask up to 10 questions prior to the debate. Once more, Warren asked: "True/False. In murdering six million Jewish men, women, and children the Nazis were guilty of real (objective) moral wrong." Like Flew, Matson answered "True:" "real (objective) moral wrong" exists.¹² Matson even acknowledged in the affirmative (i.e., "true") that

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“[i]f you had been a soldier during World War II and if the Nazis (1) had captured you and (2) had given you the choice of either joining them in their efforts to exterminate the Jews or being murdered, you would have had the objective moral obligation to die rather than to join them in the murder of Jewish men, women, and children.”¹³ Do not miss the point: Matson not only said that the Nazis were guilty of objective moral wrong, he even indicated that a person would have the “objective moral obligation **to die**” rather than join up with the murderous Nazi regime.

As Easy as 2+2

Although objective morality may be outside the realm of the scientific method, every rational person can know that some things are innately good, while other things are innately evil. Antony Flew and Wallace Matson, two of the leading atheistic philosophers of the 20th century, forthrightly acknowledged the existence of objective morality. Though at times atheist Michael Ruse has seemed opposed to the idea of moral objectivity,¹⁴ even he admitted in his book *Darwinism Defended* that “[t]he man who says that it is morally acceptable to rape little children, is just as **mistaken** as the man who says that $2 + 2 = 5$.”¹⁵ Indeed, one of the many reasons that “religion (i.e., God–EL) is not going away,” to use Edward Slingerland’s words, is because moral values are a metaphysical reality (cf. Romans 2:14-15). Philosophers Francis Beckwith and Gregory Kousser said it well: “**Those who deny obvious moral rules**—who say that murder and rape are morally benign, that cruelty is not a vice, and that cowardice is a virtue—do not merely have a different moral point of view; **they have something wrong with them.**”¹⁶

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The moral argument for the existence of God has been stated in a variety of ways through the centuries. One way in which the basic argument has been worded is as follows:¹⁷

Premise 1: If God does not exist, then objective moral values do not exist.

Premise 2: Objective moral values exist.

Conclusion: God exists.

Thomas B. Warren worded the argument in a positive, more detailed manner in his debates with atheist Antony Flew¹⁸ and Wallace Matson.¹⁹

1. If the moral code and/or actions of any individual or society can properly be subjects of criticism (as to real moral wrong), then there must be some objective standard (some “higher law which transcends the provincial and transient”) which is other than the particular moral code and which has an obligatory character which can be recognized.

2. The moral code and/or actions of any individual or society can properly be subjects of criticism (as to real moral wrong).

3. Therefore, there must be some objective standard (some “higher law which transcends the provincial and transient”) which is other than the particular moral code and which has an obligatory character which can be recognized.

The “society” that Warren used as a case study in his debates was Adolf Hitler’s Nazi regime. In the 1930s and 40s, Nazi Germany committed state-sponsored genocide of so-called “inferior races.” Of the approximately nine million Jews who lived in Europe at the beginning of the 1930s, some six million of them were exterminated. The Nazis murdered approximately one million Jewish children, two million Jewish women, and three million Jewish men. The Nazis herded them into railway cars like cattle, shipping them to concentration

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camps. Sometimes the floors of the railway cars were layered with quicklime, which would burn the feet of the prisoners, including the children. The Jews were starved, gassed, and experimented on like animals. Hitler slaughtered another three million Poles, Soviets, gypsies, and people with disabilities.²⁰

So were the Nazis guilty of “real (objective) moral wrong”? According to atheist Antony Flew, they were.²¹ Atheist Wallace Matson agreed.²² Whether theist or atheist, most rational people admit that some things really are atrocious. People do not merely feel like rape and child abuse may be wrong; they **are** wrong—innately wrong. Just as two plus two can really be known to be four, every rational human can know that some things are objectively good, while other things are objectively evil. However, reason demands that objective good and evil can only exist if there is some real, objective point of reference. If something (e.g., rape) “can properly be the subject of criticism (as to real moral wrong) **then there must be** some objective standard (some “higher law which transcends the provincial and transient”) which is other than the particular moral code and which has an obligatory character which can be recognized.”²³

DOES ATHEISM PROVIDE A LEGITIMATE OBJECTIVE STANDARD FOR MORALITY?

Recognition by atheists of anything being morally wrong begs the question: How can an atheist logically call something atrocious, deplorable, evil, or wicked? According to atheism, man is nothing but matter in motion. Humankind allegedly evolved from rocks and slime over billions of years. But who ever speaks of “wrong rocks,” “moral minerals,” “corrupt chemicals,” or “sinful slime”? People do not talk about morally depraved donkeys, evil elephants, or immoral monkeys.

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Pigs are not punished for being immoral when they eat their young. Komodo dragons are not corrupt because 10% of their diet consists of younger Komodo dragons. **Killer** whales are not guilty of murder. Black widows are not exterminated simply because the female often kills the male after copulation. Male animals are not tried for rape if they appear to forcibly copulate with females.²⁴ Dogs are not deprived for stealing the bone of another dog.

The fact that humans even contemplate morality testifies to the huge chasm between man and animals. Atheistic evolutionists have admitted that morals arise only in humans. According to Antony Flew, man is a moral being, yet “value did not exist before the first human being.”²⁵ Flew believed that morals came into existence only after **man** evolved, not beforehand, when allegedly only nonhumans existed on Earth. Though George Gaylord Simpson, one of the most recognized atheistic evolutionists of the 20th century, believed that “man is the result of a purposeless and materialistic process that did not have him in mind,” he confessed that “[g]ood and evil, right and wrong, **concepts irrelevant in nature except from the human viewpoint**, become **real** and pressing features of the whole cosmos as viewed morally because **morals arise only in man**.”²⁶ Atheists admit that people (i.e., even “atheists”) have “their own **innate** sense of morality.”²⁷ No rational person makes such admissions about animals. As evolutionist Edward Slingerland stated, “**Humans**,” not animals, “rely on moral values.”²⁸

Atheistic evolution cannot logically explain morals. Real, objective moral right or wrong cannot exist if humans are the offspring of animals. Young people (who are not allowed to act like animals at school) are

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frequently “reminded” in public school textbooks that they are the offspring of animals. According to one Earth science textbook, “Humans probably evolved from bacteria that lived more than 4 billion years ago.”²⁹

In 1994, millions of public high school students in America were introduced to a new biology textbook by Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. What sort of amazing things did they learn? For one, they were informed, “**You are an animal** and share a common heritage with earthworms.”³⁰ Allegedly, man not only **descended** from fish and four-footed beasts, we **are** beasts. Charles Darwin declared in chapter two of his book *The Descent of Man*: “My object in this chapter is solely to show that **there is no fundamental difference between man and the higher mammals in their mental faculties.**”³¹ More recently, evolutionary environmentalist David Suzuki was interviewed by Jo Marchant of *New Scientist* magazine. Suzuki proclaimed: “[W]e must acknowledge that **we are animals....** We like to think of ourselves as elevated above other creatures. But the human body evolved” from animals.³² One has to look no further than Marchant’s title to know his view of humanity. Allegedly, “**We Should Act Like the Animals We Are.**” The fact is, as Thomas B. Warren concluded in his debate with Antony Flew, “[T]he basic implication of the atheistic system does not allow objective moral right or objective moral wrong.”³³

ATHEISM: CONTRADICTORY AT BEST, HIDEOUS AT WORST

Atheists cannot logically condemn the Nazis for objective moral evil, while simultaneously saying that we arose from rocks and rodents. They cannot reasonably rebuke a child molester for being immoral, while at the same time believing that we evolved from slime.

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Reason demands that objective good and evil can only exist if there is some real, objective reference point. As Warren stated: “[T]here must be some objective standard (some “higher law which transcends the provincial and transient”) which is other than the particular moral code and which has an obligatory character which can be recognized.”³⁴

Atheists find themselves in a conundrum: (1) They must admit to **objective** morality (which ultimately means that a moral lawgiver, i.e., God, Who is above and beyond the provincial and the transient, exists); or, (2) They must contend that **everything** is relative—that no action on Earth could ever be objectively good or evil. Rather, everything is situational.

Relatively few atheists seem to have had the courage (or audacity) to say forthrightly that atheism implies that objective good and evil do **not** exist. However, a few have. Some of the leading atheists and agnostics in the world, in fact, understand that if there is no God, then there can be no ultimate, binding standard of morality for humanity. Charles Darwin understood perfectly the moral implications of atheism, which is one reason he gave for being “content to remain an Agnostic.”³⁵ In his autobiography, he wrote: “A man who has no assured and ever present belief in the existence of a personal God or of a future existence with retribution and reward, **can have for his rule of life**, as far as I can see, **only to follow those impulses and instincts which are the strongest or which seem to him the best ones.**”³⁶

If a person has the urge to suffocate innocent children, like a snake may suffocate its victims (including people), then, if there is no God, there is no objective moral law against suffocating children. If a person impulsively drowns a kind, elderly person, similar to a crocodile

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drowning its prey, then, if atheism is true, this action could neither be regarded as objectively good or evil.

According to famous atheist Richard Dawkins, “[L]ife has no higher purpose than to perpetuate the survival of DNA.”³⁷

So long as DNA is passed on, **it does not matter who or what gets hurt in the process**. Genes don’t care about suffering, because they don’t care about anything.... DNA neither cares nor knows. DNA just is. And we dance to its music.... This universe that we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, **no evil and no good**, nothing but pitiless indifference.³⁸

Although Dawkins could never prove that life’s sole purpose is to perpetuate DNA, he is right about one thing: if there is no God, then there is no good and no evil, only “pitiless indifference.” “It does not matter” to atheistic evolution “who or what gets hurt.”

Like Darwin and Dawkins, atheistic evolutionary biologist William Provine implicitly acknowledged the truthfulness of the first premise of the moral argument as stated by philosophers Craig and Cowan (“If God does not exist, then objective moral values do not exist”). In 1988, Provine penned an article for *The Scientist* titled, “Scientists, Face It! Science and Religion are Incompatible.”³⁹ Although **true** science and Christianity live in perfect harmony with each other, Provine, in so far as he was referring to **evolutionary** science and its implications, was exactly right: evolutionary science and religion are incompatible. According to Provine,

No purposive principles exist in nature. Organic evolution has occurred by various combinations of **random** genetic drift, natural selection, Mendelian heredity, and many other **purposeless** mechanisms. Humans are complex organic machines that die completely with no survival of soul or psyche. Humans and other animals make choices frequently, but these are determined by the interaction of heredity and environment and

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are not the result of free will. **No inherent moral or ethical laws exist, nor are there absolute guiding principles for human society. The universe cares nothing for us and we have no ultimate meaning in life.**⁴⁰

Provine went on in the article to accuse evolutionists who fail to take their theory to its logical conclusion of suffering from the “trying to have one’s cake and eat it too” syndrome. He supposed that they may be acting out of fear or wishful thinking, or may just be intellectually dishonest. Why? Because they do not boldly admit what he does: Atheistic evolution is true. Therefore, “No inherent moral or ethical laws exist.”

Atheistic philosopher Jean Paul Sartre summarized atheism well in a lecture he gave in 1946 titled “Existentialism is a Humanism.” Sartre stated, “**Everything** is indeed permitted if God does not exist... [H]e cannot find anything to depend upon either within or outside himself.”⁴¹ “If God does not exist,” Sartre recognized that we have no “values or commands that could legitimise our behaviour. Thus we have neither behind us, nor before us in a luminous realm of values, any means of justification or excuse.”⁴²

Though few they may be, atheists such as Provine, Sartre, and others refuse to walk down the road of contradiction. That is, rather than deny the premise: “If God does not exist, then objective moral values do not exist,” they acknowledge it: “[e]verything is indeed permitted if God does not exist.”⁴³ Yet, if atheists refuse to admit that real moral objectivity exists, then they are forced to admit that, for example, when the Jews were starved, gassed, and experimented on “like the animals” they reportedly were,⁴⁴ the Nazis did nothing inherently wrong. They were, to borrow from Provine, merely complex organic, meaningless mechanisms that chose

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to follow the orders of the Fuhrer. Or, to apply Dawkins' reasoning, how could Hitler be guilty of wrong doing if he was simply trying to perpetuate the survival of the "best" DNA possible? "[I]t does not matter who or what gets hurt in the process," right? "So long as DNA is passed on."⁴⁵ Should we not just react with "pitiless indifference" since atheism implies that objective good and evil do not exist?⁴⁶

What about most of humanity's condemnation of rape as an objective moral evil? Is it really an inherently evil act? Although evolutionist Randy Thornhill, co-author of the book *A Natural History of Rape*, "would like to see rape eradicated from human life,"⁴⁷ he touted in a 2001 speech he delivered in Vancouver that rape is actually "evolutionary, biological and natural... Our male ancestors became ancestors in part because they conditionally used rape."⁴⁸ According to Thornhill and Palmer, "Evolutionary theory applies to rape, as it does to other areas of human affairs, on both logical and evidentiary grounds. There is no legitimate scientific reason not to apply evolutionary or ultimate hypotheses to rape.... Human rape **arises from men's evolved machinery** for obtaining a high number of mates in an environment where females choose mates."⁴⁹ If God does not exist, and if man evolved from lower life forms, in part because they "conditionally used rape," then even rape cannot be called an objective moral evil. In fact, that is exactly what atheist Dan Barker admitted.

In his 2005 debate with Peter Payne on *Does Ethics Require God?*, Barker stated: "All actions are situational. **There is not an action that is right or wrong.** I can think of an exception in any case."⁵⁰ Four years later, Kyle Butt asked Barker in their debate on the existence of God, "When would rape be acceptable?"⁵¹ Although

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Barker tried to make his response as palatable as possible, he ultimately admitted that rape would be permissible if, for example, it meant saving humanity from certain destruction.⁵² Barker went on to admit (and even disturbingly joke) that it would be acceptable to rape two, two thousand, or even two million women, if, say, it resulted in saving six billion people from hypothetical alien invaders.⁵³ Do not miss the point. Dan Barker admitted that rape would be acceptable given certain circumstances. One obvious question is: **who gets to decide the circumstances that warrant the rape of innocent women?** Who is Barker to say that a man would be wrong to rape a woman for revenge, say, because she crashed into his new car? Or, who is Barker to say that it would be wrong to rape a woman for stealing \$1,000 from him, etc? The fact is, once Barker (or any atheist) alleges that (1) God does not exist, and (2) therefore, “[n]o inherent moral or ethical laws exist”⁵⁴ (a logical deduction if God does not exist), then no one can logically be criticized for anything. As Sartre put it: “Everything is indeed permitted if God does not exist.” Rape, child abuse, multiple murder, pedophilia, bestiality, etc. cannot be condemned as objective evil, if God does not exist.

What happens when atheistic evolutionists take their godless philosophy to its logical conclusion, at least theoretically? They unveil the true, hideous nature of atheism. Consider, for example, the comments evolutionary ecologist Eric Pianka made in 2006 in Beaumont, Texas where he was recognized as the Distinguished Texas Scientist of the Year. According to Forrest M. Mimms III, Chairman of the Environmental Science Section of the Texas Academy of Science, Pianka condemned “the idea that humankind occupies a privileged position in the Universe” and “hammered his point home by

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exclaiming, ‘We’re no better than bacteria!’”⁵⁵ Pianka followed up this comment by expressing his concerns “about how human overpopulation is ruining the Earth.” According to Mims,

Professor Pianka said the Earth as we know it will not survive without drastic measures. Then, and without presenting any data to justify this number, he asserted that the only feasible solution to saving the Earth is to reduce the population to 10 percent of the present number.... His favorite candidate for eliminating 90 percent of the world’s population is airborne Ebola (*Ebola Reston*), because it is both highly lethal and it kills in days, instead of years.⁵⁶

Although most people (a good 90% anyway) find Pianka’s suggestion appalling, if atheism is true, and humanity really “evolved from bacteria,”⁵⁷ there would be nothing inherently wrong for a man to attempt to murder billions of people, especially if he is doing it for what he deems to be a “good” reason (i.e., to save the only planet in the Universe on which we know for sure life exists). There again, an objectively “good” reason can only exist if God does.

CONCLUSION

The moral argument for God’s existence exposes atheism as the self-contradictory, atrocious philosophy that it is. Atheists must either reject the truthfulness of the moral argument’s first premise (“If God does not exist, then objective moral values do not exist”) and illogically accept the indefensible idea that objective morality somehow arose from rocks and reptiles, or (2) they must reject the argument’s second premise (“Objective moral values exist”), and accept the insane, utterly repulsive idea that genocide, rape, murder, theft, child abuse, etc. can **never once** be condemned as objectively “wrong.” According to atheism, individuals who commit such actions are merely doing what their DNA led them

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to do. They are simply following through with their raw impulses and instincts, which allegedly evolved from our animal ancestors. What's more, if atheism is true, individuals could never logically be punished for such immoral actions, since "no inherent moral or ethical laws exist."⁵⁸

For those who refuse to have God in their knowledge (Romans 1:28), life will forever be filled with the self-contradictory, unreasonable, inhumane lies of atheistic evolution. Indeed, "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Psalm 14:1a). When atheists actually follow through with their godless philosophy and let it complete its journey of indifference, they peel back the phony, charming façade of atheism and reveal it for what the psalmist said that it actually is: corrupt and abominable, where no one does good (Psalm 14:1b). On the other hand, when theists follow the evidence to the Creator (cf. Psalm 19:1-4), they discover a benevolent God Who **is** good (Psalm 100:5; Mark 10:18) and Who demands that His obedient followers "do good to all" (Galatians 6:10).

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- ⁹ “Metaphysical” (2011), *Merriam-Webster*, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/metaphysical>.
- ¹⁰ In 2007, Flew actually renounced atheism and co-authored a book titled, *There is a God: How the World’s Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind*.
- ¹¹ Thomas B. Warren and Antony G.N. Flew (1977), *Warren-Flew Debate* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press), p. 248.
- ¹² Thomas B. Warren and Wallace I. Matson (1978), *The Warren-Matson Debate* (Jonesboro, AR: National Christian Press), p. 353.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, underline in orig.
- ¹⁴ Michael Ruse (1989), *The Darwinian Paradigm* (London: Routledge), p. 268, <https://goo.gl/2qp6a7>.
- ¹⁵ Michael Ruse (1982), *Darwinism Defended: A Guide to the Evolution Controversies* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley), p. 275, emp. added.
- ¹⁶ Francis Beckwith and Gregory Koukl (1998), *Relativism: Feet Firmly Planted in Mid-Air* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), p. 59, emp. added, <https://goo.gl/xtmZir>.
- ¹⁷ See William Lane Craig (no date), “Moral Argument,” *Reasonable Faith*, http://www.reasonablefaith.org/documents/podcast_docs/defenders_2/Existence_of_God_Moral-Argument.pdf. See also William Lane Craig and Michael Tooley (1994), “Dr. Craig’s Opening Statement,” *A Classic Debate on the Existence of God*, <http://www.leaderu.com/offices/billcraig/docs/craig-tooley1.html>. See also Steven Cowan (2005), “The Question of Moral Values,” *The Big Argument: Does God Exist?*, ed. John Ashton and Michael Westcott (Green Forest, AR: Master Books), p. 166.
- ¹⁸ Warren and Flew, p. 173.
- ¹⁹ Warren and Matson, p. 285.
- ²⁰ For more information, see “Holocaust” (2011), *Encyclopedia.com*, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Holocaust.aspx#1>.
- ²¹ Warren and Flew, p. 248.
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- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 284, emp. added.
- ²⁴ Cf. Randy Thornhill (2001), “A Natural History of Rape,” Lecture delivered at Simon Fraser University, http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/jhamlin/3925/Readings/Thornhill_on_rape.pdf.
- ²⁵ Warren and Flew, p. 248.

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- ²⁶ George Gaylord Simpson (1951), *The Meaning of Evolution* (New York: Mentor), p. 179, emp. added.
- ²⁷ “Do Atheists Have Morals?” (no date), <http://www.askanatheist.org/morals.html>.
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- ³⁷ Richard Dawkins (1995), “God’s Utility Function,” *Scientific American*, 273[5]:80, November.
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- ³⁹ William Provine (1988), “Scientists, Face It! Science and Religion are Incompatible,” *The Scientist*, 2[16]:10, September 5, <http://classic.the-scientist.com/article/display/8667/>.
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- ⁴¹ Jean-Paul Sartre (1989), “Existentialism is Humanism,” in *Existentialism from Dostoyevsky to Sartre*, ed. Walter Kaufman, trans. Philip Mairet (Meridian Publishing Company), <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/sartre/works/exist/sartre.htm>, emp. added.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁴ Cf. Marchant.
- ⁴⁵ Dawkins, p. 85.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

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- ⁴⁷ Randy Thornhill and Craig T. Palmer (2000), *A Natural History of Rape* (Cambridge: MIT Press), p. xi.
- ⁴⁸ Randy Thornhill (2001), “A Natural History of Rape,” Lecture delivered at Simon Fraser University, http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/jhamlin/3925/Readings/Thornhill_on_rape.pdf.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 55,190.
- ⁵⁰ Dan Barker and Peter Payne (2005), *Does Ethics Require God?* http://www.ffrf.org/about/bybarker/ethics_debate.php., emp. added.
- ⁵¹ Kyle Butt and Dan Barker (2009), *Butt/Barker Debate: Does the God of the Bible Exist?*(Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), p. 33.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34. One wonders how Barker can logically say that no actions are right or wrong, but then claim that situation ethics is right? Such a claim is a self-defeating statement. “Nothing is right.” But situation ethics is right!? Furthermore, on what basis does Barker think it is “right” to save humanity? His entire answer ultimately contradicts his already contradictory contentions.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 34. Alien invaders are not really all that imaginary in the world of atheism. After all, since life supposedly evolved on Earth, according to atheistic evolutionists it had to have also evolved in one form or another on some other distant planets in the Universe.
- ⁵⁴ Provine.
- ⁵⁵ Forrest Mims (2006), “Meeting Doctor Doom,” *The Ecologic Powerhouse*, <http://www.freedom.org/board/articles/mims-506.html>.
- ⁵⁶ For more information, see Kyle Butt (2008), “The Bitter Fruit of Atheism—Part 1,” *Reason & Revelation*, 28[7]:49-55, July, <http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&issue=603>.
- ⁵⁷ *Earth Science*, p. 356.
- ⁵⁸ Provine.

CHAPTER 6

THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (PART 1): ATHEIST ADMISSIONS

Jeff Miller, Ph.D.

Atheistic philosopher Paul Ricci summed up the Teleological Argument for the existence of God when he said, “[I]t’s true that everything designed has a designer. . . . ‘Everything designed has a designer’ is an analytically true statement.”¹ There are an infinite number of examples of design that present themselves to us when we study the natural realm—a problem for Ricci and his atheistic colleagues, to be sure. In the following two chapters, we will examine but a few examples of design. Before embarking on that journey, consider that it is one thing for theists to provide positive evidences for the existence of design in the Universe, but it makes the job much simpler for theists when naturalists themselves **admit** evidences for design. Here are five ways in which scientists openly acknowledge design in nature.

#1: “WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHO WROTE THE LAWS OF SCIENCE.”

Famous atheist, theoretical physicist, and cosmologist of Cambridge University, Stephen Hawking, clearly highly reveres the laws of science. In 2011, he hosted a show on *Discovery Channel* titled, “Curiosity: Did God Create the Universe?” In that show, he said,

[T]he Universe is a machine governed by principles or laws—laws that can be understood by the human mind.

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I believe that the discovery of these laws has been humankind's greatest achievement.... But what's really important is that these physical laws, as well as being **unchangeable**, are universal. They apply not just to the flight of the ball, but to the motion of a planet and everything else in the Universe. Unlike laws made by humans, the laws of nature **cannot ever be broken**. That's why they are so powerful.²

Hawking, in obvious awe, acknowledged that the laws of nature exist, are unbreakable (i.e., without exception), and apply to the entire Universe—not just to the Earth. But that admission by the evolutionary community presents a major problem for atheism. Humanist Martin Gardner explains:

Imagine that physicists finally discover all the basic waves and their particles, and all the basic laws, and unite everything in one equation. We can then ask, "Why that equation?" It is fashionable now to conjecture that the big bang was caused by a random quantum fluctuation in a vacuum devoid of space and time. But of course such a vacuum is a far cry from nothing. **There had to be quantum laws to fluctuate. And why are there quantum laws?...There is no escape from the superultimate questions: Why is there something rather than nothing, and why is the something structured the way it is?**³

Even if Big Bang cosmology were correct (and it is not), you still can't have a law without a law writer.

In "Curiosity: Did God Create the Universe?" Hawking boldly claimed that everything in the Universe can be accounted for through science without the need of God. This is untrue, as we have discussed elsewhere,⁴ but notice that Hawking does not even believe that assertion himself. He said, "Did God create the quantum laws that allowed the Big Bang to occur? In a nutshell, did we need a god to set it all up so that the Big Bang could bang?"⁵ He provided no answer to that crucial question—not even an attempt. And he is not alone. No atheist can provide a reasonable answer to that question.

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The eminent atheistic, theoretical physicist, cosmologist, and astrobiologist of Arizona State University, Paul Davies, noted Hawking's sidestep of that question in the "round table discussion" on the *Discovery Channel* following "Curiosity," titled, "The Creation Question: a Curiosity Conversation." Concerning Hawking, Davies said,

In the show, Stephen Hawking gets very, very close to saying, "Well, where did the laws of physics come from? That's where we might find some sort of God." And then he backs away and doesn't return to the subject.... **You need to know where those laws come from. That's where the mystery lies—the laws.**⁶

Over and over in the scientific literature, Davies highlights this gaping chasm in the naturalist model, regularly highlighting the necessity of a universal law writer. Writing in *New Scientist*, Davies asked, "How did stupid atoms spontaneously write their own software...?"⁷ In a more extensive discourse on the subject in *The New York Times*, Davies said,

[W]here do these laws come from? And why do they have the form that they do? When I was a student, the laws of physics were regarded as completely off limits. The job of the scientist, we were told, is to discover the laws and apply them, not inquire into their provenance. The laws were treated as "given"—imprinted on the universe like a maker's mark at the moment of cosmic birth—and fixed forevermore.... Over the years I have often asked my physicist colleagues why the laws of physics are what they are. The answers vary from "that's not a scientific question" to "**nobody knows.**" The favorite reply is, "There is no reason they are what they are—they just are." The idea that the laws exist reasonlessly is deeply **anti-rational**. After all, the very essence of a scientific explanation of some phenomenon is that the world is ordered logically and that there are reasons things are as they are. If one traces these reasons all the way down to the bedrock of reality—the laws of physics—only to find that reason then deserts us, **it makes a mockery of science.** Can the mighty edifice of physical order we perceive in the world about us ultimately be rooted in **reasonless**

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absurdity? If so, then nature is a fiendishly clever bit of trickery: meaninglessness and absurdity somehow masquerading as **ingenious order and rationality**.... Clearly, then, both religion and science are **founded on faith**—namely, on belief in the existence of something outside the universe, like an unexplained God or an unexplained set of physical laws.⁸

In conclusion, Davies highlighted the fact that naturalists have a **blind** faith when assuming that the laws of science could create themselves free from an “external agency”: “[U]ntil science comes up with a testable theory of the laws of the universe, its claim to be free of faith is manifestly bogus.”⁹ Bottom line: there must be a rational origin of the laws of science. In 2016, Davies reiterated, “The ballyhoo about a universe popping out of the vacuum is a **complete red herring**. It just dodges the real issue, which is the **prior existence of the laws of physics**.”¹⁰ In an article titled “Taking Science on Faith,” Davies responded to the assertion that the existence of a multiverse could account for the origin of the laws of science, saying,

The multiverse theory is increasingly popular, but it doesn’t so much explain the laws of physics as **dodge the whole issue**. There has to be a physical mechanism to make all those universes and bestow bylaws on them. This process will require its own laws, or meta-laws. **Where do they come from?** The problem has simply been shifted up a level from the laws of the universe to the meta-laws of the multiverse.¹¹

Astrophysicist and science writer for *New Scientist*, Marcus Chown, wrote:

If the universe owes its origins to quantum theory, then quantum theory must have existed before the universe. So the next question is surely: **where did the laws of quantum theory come from?** “We do not know,” admits [cosmologist Alex-JM] Vilenkin. “I consider that an entirely different question.” When it comes to the beginning of the universe, in many ways we’re still at the beginning.¹²

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University of Oxford physicist David Deutsch said, “Even if the answer to why there is something rather than nothing were because of how quantum field theory works, the question would become why are the laws of quantum field theory as they are.”¹³ Cosmologist and Professor of Physics at California Institute of Technology Sean Carroll, writing in *Scientific American*, discussed the question of the origin of the Second Law of Thermodynamics: “[E]xplaining why low-entropy states evolve into high-entropy states [i.e., the Second Law of Thermodynamics–JM] is different from explaining **why entropy is increasing in our universe...** [T]he real challenge is not to explain why the entropy of the universe will be higher tomorrow than it is today but to explain **why the entropy was lower yesterday and even lower the day before that.**”¹⁴ In other words, why is there such a thing as a law of nature, like the “Second Law of Thermodynamics”?

Theoretical physicist, faculty member at the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics, and adjunct Professor of Physics at the University of Waterloo, Lee Smolin, admitted, “Cosmology has new questions to answer. Not just what are the laws, but why are these laws the laws?”¹⁵ In a 2014 interview with *Scientific American*, cosmologist George F.R. Ellis of the University of Cape Town, co-author with Stephen Hawking of the book *The Large Scale Structure of Space-Time*, gave a stinging response to theoretical physicist Lawrence Krauss of Arizona State University. Krauss argues in his book, *A Universe from Nothing*, that physics has ultimately answered the question of why there is something rather than nothing. Among other criticisms, Ellis said,

And above all Krauss does not address **why the laws of physics exist**, why they have the form they have, or in what kind of manifestation they existed before the

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universe existed (which he must believe if he believes they brought the universe into existence). **Who or what** dreamt up symmetry principles, Lagrangians, specific symmetry groups, gauge theories, and so on? **He does not begin to answer these questions.**¹⁶

Quantum physicist Michael Brooks agreed with Ellis in his criticisms of Krauss' book. Writing in *New Scientist*, he said, “[T]he laws of physics can’t be conjured from nothing.... Krauss contends that the multiverse makes the question of what determined our laws of nature ‘less significant.’ Truthfully, **it just puts the question beyond science**—for now, at least.”¹⁷

In his book, *The Grand Design*, Hawking tried to submit a way that the Universe could have created itself from nothing without God and still be in keeping with the laws of nature—an impossible concept, to be sure. He said, “Because there is a law like gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing.”¹⁸ Of course, even if such were possible, he does not explain where the law of gravity came from. Professor of mathematics and Fellow in Mathematics and the Philosophy of Science at Oxford University John Lennox concurred. He took Hawking to task over his assertion that the laws of physics alone can explain the existence of the Universe, saying,

Hawking’s argument appears to me even more illogical when he says the existence of gravity means the creation of the universe was inevitable. **But how did gravity exist in the first place? Who put it there? And what was the creative force behind its birth?** Similarly, when Hawking argues, in support of his theory of spontaneous creation, that it was only necessary for “the blue touch paper” to be lit to “set the universe going,” the question must be: where did this blue touch paper come from? And who lit it, if not God?¹⁹

Simply put, a more rational statement from Hawking would have been, “Because there is a law like gravity,

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the Universe must have been created by God.” Bottom line: the existence of the laws of science is evidence of a cosmic Designer—even atheists tacitly admit it.

#2: “WE NEED TO KNOW WHO CREATED LIFE.”

In *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed*, well-known British evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins, Oxford University’s Professor for Public Understanding of Science from 1995 to 2008, said concerning the possibility of intelligent design:

It could be that at some earlier time, somewhere in the Universe, a civilization evolved by, probably, some kind of Darwinian means, to a very, very high level of technology, and designed a form of life that they seeded onto, perhaps, this planet. Now that is a possibility, and an intriguing possibility. And I suppose it’s possible that you might find evidence for that, **if you look at the details of our chemistry, molecular biology, you might find a signature of some kind of designer.** And that designer could well be a higher intelligence from elsewhere in the Universe.²⁰

So, according to Dawkins, when we look at our chemistry—our molecular biology—(1) there could be evidence of design there, and (2) that design would imply the existence of a designer—a direct admission of the validity of the Teleological Argument. Granted, Dawkins does not directly endorse God as that Designer. Instead, he irrationally postulates the existence of aliens.

Ultimately, since there is no evidence for the existence of aliens, there can hardly be any evidence for their establishing life on Earth. Such an idea, therefore, can hardly be in harmony with the evolutionist’s own beliefs about the importance of direct observation and experiment in science. Such a theory does nothing but tacitly admit (1) the truth of the Law of Biogenesis—in nature, life comes only from life (in this case, again,

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aliens); and (2) the necessity of a creator/designer in the equation.

Notice, however, that since aliens are beings of nature, they too must be governed by the laws of nature. Recall Hawking's claim: the laws of physics "are **universal**. They apply not just to the flight of the ball, but to the motion of a planet and **everything else in the Universe**."²¹ Evolutionary physicist Victor Stenger submitted his belief that the "basic laws" of science "hold true in the most distant observed galaxy and in the cosmic microwave background, implying that these laws have been valid for over thirteen billion years."²² In the interview with Stein, Dawkins went on to say concerning the supposed alien creators, "But that higher intelligence would, itself, had to have come about by some ultimately explicable process. **It couldn't have just jumped into existence spontaneously**."²³ So, the alien creators, as Dawkins himself admits, have been strapped with the laws of nature as well. Thus, the problem of abiogenesis is merely shifted to the alien's abode, where the question of the origin of life must still be answered.

Bottom line: life is evidence of design, and by implication, an intelligent designer. Believing that aliens are life's designer is an admission of that truth. Writing in *New Scientist*, Dawkins admitted, "The more statistically improbable a thing is, the less we can believe that it just happened by blind chance. Superficially the **obvious alternative** to chance is an intelligent Designer."²⁴ Sadly, the atheist simply cannot bring himself to accept the clear cut "obvious alternative" that is staring him in the face.

#3: "WE HAVE TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO EXPLAIN ALL OF THIS DESIGN IN NATURE."

George Ellis and Professor of Physics and Astronomy at Johns Hopkins University, Joseph Silk, wrote in 2014

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in *Nature*: “This year, debates in physics circles took a worrying turn. **Faced with difficulties in applying fundamental theories to the observed Universe**, some researchers called for a change in how theoretical physics is done.”²⁵ Ironically, the “difficulties” theoretical physicists have encountered have become considerable enough that, apparently, going beyond nature is necessary. According to cosmologist Bernard Carr of Queen Mary University in London, a supernatural option of some sort is demanded. He warned cosmologists to accept the inevitable implications of the evidence: “If you don’t want God, you’d better have a multiverse.”²⁶ The multiverse has, therefore, been latched onto by many naturalists to try to explain away the “difficulties” facing physicists without resorting to God, even though, among other issues with it, there is absolutely no evidence for its existence.²⁷ Lee Smolin said, “We had to invent the multiverse,”²⁸ and according to Lawson Parker, writing in *National Geographic*, it arose from our “imagination.”²⁹ The use of our imagination to determine where we came from certainly sounds like today’s “science” is moving ever further into the realm of fiction.

Regardless, notice that according to many physicists, something beyond the current definition of science is needed to explain certain things—i.e., the existence of the unobservable, supernatural realm is demanded by the evidence. Recall how Davies put it: “Clearly, then, both religion and science are founded on **faith**—namely, on **belief in the existence of something outside the universe**, like an unexplained God or an unexplained set of physical laws, maybe even a huge ensemble of unseen universes, too.”³⁰

Besides the existence of the laws of physics, what kind of “difficulties” are physicists encountering that are

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forcing them to conclude that something outside of the Universe exists, and therefore, that they need to “invent” the multiverse to avoid God? Many have articulated well the problem. Read on to see a great lesson by naturalists on the need for a supernatural Designer for the Universe. According to Tim Folger, writing in *Discover* magazine, “The idea that the universe was **made just for us**—known as the **anthropic principle**—debuted in 1973.”³¹ Since then, the mountain of evidence supporting the principle has drastically grown in elevation. Consider, for example:

- In a 2011 article, under the heading “Seven Questionable Arguments” for the multiverse, Ellis discussed argument number four: “A remarkable fact about our universe is that physical constants have just the right values needed to allow for complex structures, including living things.... I agree that the multiverse is a possible valid explanation for [fine tuning examples—JM]...; arguably, it is the only scientifically based option we have right now. But we have no hope of testing it observationally.”³² [Notice that the multiverse is “the only scientifically based option,” and yet “we have no hope of testing it observationally.” Doesn’t that make it an “**unscientifically based option**” based on naturalistic thinking?]
- By 2014, Ellis and Silk went even further:

The multiverse is motivated by a puzzle: why fundamental constants of nature, such as the fine-structure constant that characterizes the strength of electromagnetic interactions between particles and the cosmological constant associated with the acceleration of the expansion of the Universe, have values that lie in the small range that allows life to exist.... Some physicists consider that the multiverse has no challenger as an explanation of **many otherwise bizarre coincidences**. The low value of the cosmological constant—known to be 120 factors of 10 smaller than the value predicted by quantum field theory—is difficult to explain, for instance.³³

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- John Rennie, the editor for *Scientific American*, noted, “The basic laws of physics work equally well forward or backward in time, yet we perceive time to move in one direction only—toward the future. Why?”³⁴ Carroll, along the same lines, noted that “[i]f the observable universe were all that existed, it would be nearly impossible to account for the arrow of time in a natural way.”³⁵
- According to Smolin,

Everything we know suggests that the universe is **unusual**. It is flatter, smoother, larger and emptier than a “typical” universe predicted by the known laws of physics. If we reached into a hat filled with pieces of paper, each with the specifications of a possible universe written on it, it is exceedingly unlikely that we would get a universe anything like ours in one pick—or even a billion. **The challenge that cosmologists face is to make sense of this specialness.** One approach to this question is inflation—the hypothesis that the early universe went through a phase of exponentially fast expansion. At first, inflation seemed to do the trick. A simple version of the idea gave correct predictions for the spectrum of fluctuations in the cosmic microwave background. But a closer look shows that **we have just moved the problem further back in time.** To make inflation happen at all requires us to **fine-tune the initial conditions** of the universe.³⁶
- Folger quotes Linde in *Discover* magazine:

“We have a lot of really, really **strange coincidences**, and all of these coincidences are such that they make life possible,” Linde says. Physicists don’t like coincidences. They like even less the notion that life is somehow central to the universe, and yet recent discoveries are forcing them to confront that very idea.... Call it a fluke, a mystery, a **miracle**. Or call it **the biggest problem in physics**. Short of invoking **a benevolent creator**, many physicists see only one possible explanation: Our universe may be but one of perhaps infinitely many universes in an inconceivably vast multiverse.... Advocates

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argue that, like it or not, the multiverse may well be the only viable **non-religious** explanation for what is often called the “fine-tuning problem”—the baffling observation that the laws of the universe **seem custom-tailored to favor the emergence of life**.... [Andrei Linde:] “And if we double the mass of the electron, life as we know it will disappear. If we change the strength of the interaction between protons and electrons, life will disappear. Why are there three space dimensions and one time dimension? If we had four space dimensions and one time dimension, then planetary systems would be unstable and our version of life would be impossible. If we had two space dimensions and one time dimension, we would not exist,” he says.... [I]f there is no multiverse, where does that leave physicists? “If there is only one universe,” Carr says, “you might have to have a fine-tuner. If you don’t want God, you’d better have a multiverse.”³⁷

- Stuart Clark and Richard Webb, writing in *New Scientist*, said,

We can’t explain the numbers that rule the universe...the different strengths of weak, strong and electromagnetic forces, for example, or the masses of the particles it introduces.... Were any of them to have even marginally different values, the universe would look very different. The Higgs boson’s mass, for example, is just about the smallest it can be without the universe’s matter becoming unstable. **Similar “fine-tuning” problems bedevil cosmology**.... Why is the carbon atom structured so precisely as to allow enough carbon for life to exist in the universe?³⁸

- Greene, commenting on Professor of Theoretical Physics at Stanford University Leonard Susskind’s thinking about the multiverse, said,

Susskind was suggesting that string theory augments this grand cosmological unfolding by adorning each of the universes in the multiverse with a different shape for the extra dimensions. With or without string theory, the multiverse is a highly controversial schema, and **deservedly so**. It not only recasts the landscape of reality,

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but shifts the scientific goal posts. Questions once deemed profoundly puzzling—**why do nature’s numbers, from particle masses to force strengths to the energy suffusing space, have the particular values they do?**—would be answered with a shrug.... **Most physicists, string theorists among them, agree that the multiverse is an option of last resort....** Looking back, I’m gratified at how far we’ve come but disappointed that **a connection to experiment continues to elude us.**³⁹

- Mary-Jane Rubenstein, writing in *New Scientist*, said, Here’s the dilemma: if the universe began with a quantum particle blipping into existence, inflating godlessly into space-time and a whole zoo of materials, then **why is it so well suited for life?** For medieval philosophers, the purported perfection of the universe was the key to proving the existence of God. The universe is so fit for intelligent life that **it must be the product of a powerful, benevolent external deity.** Or, as popular theology might put it today: all this can’t be an accident. Modern physics has also wrestled with this “fine-tuning problem,” and supplies its own answer. If only one universe exists, then it is strange to find it so hospitable to life, when nearly any other value for the gravitational or cosmological constants would have produced nothing at all. But if there is a “multiverse” of many universes, all with different constants, the problem vanishes: we’re here because we happen to be in one of the universes that works. No miracles, no plan, no creator.⁴⁰

Notice: Physicists cannot help but acknowledge the truth of the Teleological Argument for the existence of God. The Universe seems to have been perfectly designed—with detailed fine-tuning—just for us. Design demands a designer. Resorting to belief in the multiverse is a concession by naturalists that we have been right all along: there exists an “unseen realm.” But rather than concede God, naturalists invent the evidence-less,

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imaginary multiverse. Ironically all the while, the multiverse is itself a supernatural option—albeit one without any rules concerning how we should behave, making it attractive to many, although once again, without any evidence to support it.⁴¹

#4: “WE NEED TO MIMIC ALL OF THE DESIGN WE SEE IN NATURE.”

One area of scientific study where scientists are, many times unconsciously but forcefully, admitting the presence of design in the Universe, is in the field of biomimetics, or biomimicry—as well as the related field known as bio-inspired design. Biomimicry is an attempt to engineer something—design something—using the natural world as the blue print. Engineers are becoming more and more aware of the fact that the world around us is already filled with fully functional, superior designs in comparison to what the engineering community has been able to develop to date.

The Web page for George Washington University’s Center for Biomimetics and Bioinspired Engineering admits, “[D]espite our seeming prowess in these component technologies, **we find it hard to outperform Nature in this arena**; Nature’s solutions are smarter, more energy-efficient, agile, adaptable, fault-tolerant, environmentally friendly and multifunctional. Thus, there is much that we as engineers can learn from Nature as we develop the next generation machines and technologies.”⁴²

It would be difficult to better summarize the decisive evidence for design that is clearly evident to professional designers (engineers) when they look at the natural realm. This same mindset about nature’s design, however, is becoming widespread in the engineering community. So consequently, biomimicry is becoming

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a major engineering pursuit. The field of biomimicry is growing by leaps and bounds, with research centers being established all over the world, with their express purpose being to mimic the design of nature.

Some engineers are going even further. Realizing that nature's designs are so impressive that many times we simply cannot mimic them, they are attempting instead to control nature to use it as they wish, rather than mimic it.⁴³ Animals, for instance, possess amazing detection, tracking, and maneuvering capabilities which are far beyond the knowledge of today's engineering minds, and likely will be for many decades, if not forever. An insect neurobiologist, John Hildebrand, from the University of Arizona in Tucson, admitted, "There's a long history of trying to develop microrobots that could be sent out as autonomous devices, but I think many engineers have realised [sic] that they can't improve on Mother Nature."⁴⁴ Of course, "Mother Nature" is not capable of designing anything, since "she" is mindless—but notice that the desire to personify nature and give it design abilities is telling. While mindless nature has no ability to design anything, the Chief Engineer, the God of the Bible, on the other hand, can be counted on to have the best possible engineering designs. Who, after all, could out-design the Grand Designer? In spite of the deterioration of the world and the entrance of disease and mutations into the created order, after several millennia, His designs still stand out as the best—unsurpassed by human wisdom.

Do not miss the implication of practicing biomimicry and autonomous biological control. They are a tacit concession by the scientific community that nature exhibits design! Engineers are the designers of the scientific community. When we engage in biomimicry, we are,

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whether consciously or not, endorsing the concept that there is design in nature. It would be totally senseless to try to design something useful by mimicking something that is thought to be the product of millions of random accidents. For the highly educated, brilliant designers of the scientific community to copy nature, proves that nature must be much more than the product of random chance and accidents.⁴⁵

#5: “EVOLUTIONARY DESIGN”?

A casual perusal of nearly any article by atheistic scientists when they are discussing the complexity of various species reveals that even they cannot help but intuitively acknowledge a designer. Such writings are riddled with Freudian slips as they liberally use the term “design,” apparently without the naturalistic writers facing the implications of that term. Phrases like, “This feature of the salamander is **designed** to do this,” are common place. Is it not true that the moment one acknowledges the existence of design, he is admitting the existence of a designer at some point in the past—just as acknowledging a poem implies the existence of a poet? We simply cannot escape the evidence for design in nature and the reasoning ability that God has put within us that compels us to acknowledge His existence and ensure that those who wish to find Him will (Acts 17:26-28).

Some atheists have apparently noticed the tendency of naturalists to use such terminology. So, rather than try to rectify atheistic terminology, they embrace it and simply try to redefine the word “design.” Kenneth Miller is an evolutionary biologist at Brown University and co-author of the popular Prentice Hall high school biology textbook that is used extensively in the United States. In his 2008 book, *Only a Theory: Evolution and the Battle for America’s Soul*, he admits that structural

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and molecular biologists, as they study the natural order, routinely mention the presence of design in their explorations. He, himself, admits that the human body shows evidence of design, pointing out examples like the design of the ball and socket joints of the human hips and shoulders and the “s” curve of the human spine that allows us to walk upright. In spite of such admissions, he irrationally claims such admissions should not be considered to be self-defeating for naturalists. According to Miller, the evidence for design in nature should be embraced by naturalists. In an article published by Brown University, he said, “There is, indeed, a design to life—an evolutionary design.”⁴⁶ Merriam-Webster defines an oxymoron as “a combination of contradictory or incongruous words (such as *cruel kindness*).”⁴⁷ Another example: “evolutionary design.”

If there is a painting, there must have been a painter. If there is a fingerprint, there must have been a finger that made it. If there is a building, there must have been a builder. If there is an engine, there must have been an engineer. If there is a creation of some sort, there must have been a creator for it. And if there is design, there must have been a... If a person completes that sentence with any other word besides “designer,” is he not being the epitome of irrational? While we understand Miller’s dilemma as a naturalist and his desire to find a way to dismiss the incessant, forceful admissions of design by he and his colleagues, he must attempt to do so through some other avenue besides merely attempting to redefine the word “design” in such a way that it does not require intent and purpose—a mind.

The silliness of irrationally postulating that the clearly designed Universe could have designed itself through evolution has not been lost to many in the engineering

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community. Typically, in the first semester of engineering school, an introductory course presents broad concepts about engineering. Students may learn the basic differences in the engineering fields (e.g., civil, electrical, mechanical, chemical, structural, etc.). They may spend some time considering ethical dilemmas that engineers have often faced in their careers. First-year students also usually give consideration to the design process. Even in its basic form, the design process proves to be very complex, even before considering the specialized scientific knowledge required to design a given item.

Many steps are necessary in order to get a product to the public. Consider one introductory engineering textbook's template for the design process⁴⁸:

1. Problem symptom or expression; definition of product need; marketing information
2. Problem definition, including statement of desired outcome
3. Conceptual design and evaluation; feasibility study
4. Design analysis; codes/standards review; physical and analytical models
5. Synthesis of alternative solutions (back to design analysis for iterations)
6. Decision (selection of one alternative)
7. Prototype production; testing and evaluation (back to design analysis for more iterations)
8. Production drawings; instruction manuals
9. Material specification; process and equipment selection; safety review
10. Pilot production
11. Production
12. Inspection and quality assurance
13. Packaging; marketing and sales literature
14. Product

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The design process is unquestionably lengthy, technical, complex, and calculated. To claim that an efficient design could be developed without a designer is insulting to the engineering community. Where there is design—complexity, purpose, planning, intent—there is a designer.

Truly, the Universe is replete with evidences of design. So much so, that even atheists cannot help but concede that truth. It is noteworthy that leading naturalists are unwilling to suggest that the laws of nature could create themselves.

- **Physicists** know there must be a supernatural origin for those laws.

Similarly, more and more leading scientists are acknowledging that the existence of life is no accident either.

- **Biologists** know there must be an intelligence behind it.
- **Engineers** are so awed by the clear-cut evidences for design on the Earth that they have developed entire centers devoted to biomimicry—effectively plagiarizing the work of God when they fail to give Him due credit as the Chief Engineer.
- **Cosmologists** gush with incredulity when they see the perfection of the created order as well, knowing that the “fine-tuning”⁴⁹ that is evident in the Universe seems to have resulted in it being “custom tailored”⁵⁰ for humans.

But how can there be “fine-tuning” if no One exists to tune in the first place? How can the Universe be “custom tailored,” and yet there be no Tailor? If one is to be rational—drawing appropriate conclusions from the evidence—he must recognize that there are implications to realizing that the Universe is finely tuned and Tailor made. The following two chapters highlight but a sampling of the multitude of examples of undeniable

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design in nature—examples which demand the existence of a Universe Designer.

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CHAPTER 7

THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (PART 2): DECISIVE EVIDENCES OF DESIGN

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

Several years ago, astronomers from more than 30 research institutions in 15 countries worked together to select a site for a giant telescope that they hoped would read TV or radio signals from alien civilizations. Slated to cost one billion dollars, the Square Kilometer Array, or SKA, would be the world's most powerful radio telescope. Speaking at a conference of the International Society for Optical Engineering in Orlando, Florida, project astronomers said they hoped to find "immediate and direct evidence of life elsewhere in the Universe."¹

Despite this bold venture, the scientists admitted that "such a search would have distinct limitations, to be sure." "Distinct limitations"? Like what? For one, the scientists "aren't sure how to recognize such signals, if they do turn up. The hope is that the signals would consist of **organized patterns suggestive of intelligence**, and not attributable to any known celestial sources."² Wait a minute. Evolutionary scientists are renowned for their condescending ridicule of creationists because those who believe in God assert that evidence of intelligent design in the Universe is proof of an Intelligent Designer. No, the evolutionists counter, the Universe got here by accident through random chance, mindless trial and error, and the blind, mechanistic forces

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of nature. They maintain that life on Earth owes its ultimate origin to dead, non-purposive, unconscious, non-intelligent matter. Yet they were perfectly willing to squander one billion dollars on a telescope with the speculative idea that solid proof—hard evidence—for the existence of alien life would reside in undecipherable radio or TV signals that convey “organized patterns suggestive of intelligence.”³ Atheistic evolutionists want it both ways: organized patterns prove the existence of intelligent alien design and organized patterns do not prove the existence of an Intelligent Designer. Philosophers and logicians refer to such duplicitous posturing as irrational and “logical contradiction.” Apparently, evolutionists call it “science.” Nevertheless, the basic thrust of the teleological argument for the existence of God is self-evident.

THE UNIVERSE—A “WASTE OF SPACE”?

“The cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be.”⁴ So began Carl Sagan’s immensely popular book and PBS television series: *Cosmos*. A more atheistic, humanistic, materialistic declaration could not be spoken. Sagan (1934-1996), who was an astronomer at Cornell University who lived his entire life resistant to the possibility of God and an afterlife, maintained his unbelief—in the words of his third wife—“unflinching” to the end.⁵ She, herself, finds comfort after his passing “without resorting to the supernatural.”⁶

When people reject or avoid the implications of the design in the created order—i.e., that it is logically the result of a Supreme Creator—they have inevitably “exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator” (Romans 1:25). Skeptical of the survival of the Earth at the mercy of *Homo sapiens*, Sagan turned his attention to an almost

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obsessive dedication to finding answers and solutions from life forms beyond Earth. In his own words: “In a very real sense this search for extraterrestrial intelligence is a search for a cosmic context for mankind, a search for who we are, where we have come from, and what possibilities there are for our future—in a universe vaster both in extent and duration than our forefathers ever dreamed of.”⁷

Less than a year after his death, Hollywood released a movie on July 11, 1997 based on Sagan’s novel, *Contact*.⁸ The film’s central character, Dr. Eleanor Arroway (played by Jodie Foster), was surely the embodiment of the formative experiences, philosophical perspectives, and spiritual beliefs of Sagan himself. On three separate occasions in the film, a pseudo-intellectual remark, obviously designed to defend the naturalistic explanation of the existence of the Universe while ridiculing the Christian viewpoint, is offered up to viewers. As a child, “Ellie” asks her father if life exists out in the Universe, to which he responds: “**Well, if there wasn’t, it’d be an awful waste of space.**” As an adult, she converses with Palmer Joss (played by Matthew McConaughey), and, staring up at the starry Puerto Rican sky, expresses her confidence in the evolution of other life forms elsewhere in the Universe: “If just one in a million of those stars has planets, and if only one in a million of those has life, and if just one in a million of those has intelligent life, then there are millions of civilizations out there.”⁹ Ellie is pleasantly stunned when Joss repeats the same line that her father uttered to her when she was a child. Near the close of the film, Ellie speaks the line again to a group of school children when asked if life exists in space.

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This triple declaration was obviously intended to offer a “logical” proof that, rather than looking to some supernatural Being Who is transcendent of the Universe, humans had best recognize that the only life beyond planet Earth are those life forms that have evolved (like our own) on other planets in far off galaxies. The materialist is forced to follow Sagan’s presupposition: life **must** exist elsewhere in the Universe since there is no God. If there is a God Who created life only on Earth, then He was guilty of poor teleological design—creating a vast physical realm that serves absolutely no purpose—and thus producing a nearly infinite realm of “wasted space.”

But wait a minute! The Bible long ago anticipated the skepticism of the materialist astronomer. At the creation of the Universe, God said: “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth” (Genesis 1:14-15). The luminaries that God made included the stars: “God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night” (vss. 17-18). One very specific function of the stars that occupy space far beyond our solar system is illumination (cf. Psalm 136:9). They are “light-bearers.”¹⁰

Another very specific purpose of the vastness of space is seen in the multiple declarations regarding the infinitude of God and the evidence that points to His existence, His glory, His eternality, and His power. Paul affirmed very confidently that “since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without

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excuse” (Romans 1:20). It is absolutely **incredible**—and, according to Paul, **inexcusable**—for a rational human being to contemplate the magnitude of the Universe and the vastness of space, and then to reject **the only logical, plausible explanation** for it all: **God**. We simply have **no excuse** for rejecting God when we are surrounded by such an overwhelming display of wonders and marvels in the created order. Indeed, atheism, evolution, and humanism are simply more sophisticated forms of the polytheism that has plagued humanity for millennia. Moses warned the Israelites of this very thing: “[T]ake heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the Lord your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage” (Deuteronomy 4:19). Evolutionary astronomy assigns an inflated value to the vastness of space by postulating that it can provide mankind with an alternative explanation for the existence of life—an explanation that absents God. Any such postulation ultimately amounts to idolatry.

David, too, paid homage to the glory of the Creator, as evidenced by the eloquent symphony of the majestic Universe that is played perpetually—24 hours a day:

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices like a strong man to run its race. Its rising is from one end of heaven, and its circuit to the other end; and there is nothing hidden from its heat (Psalm 19:1-6; cf. 74:16-17; 136:7-8).

Separate and apart from the latest evidence that confirms the movement of the Sun through space,¹¹ these

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verses reaffirm the fact that the created Universe loudly announces the existence of the Universe-Maker. David also declared: “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, You have set Your glory above the heavens! ...When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him?” (Psalm 8:1,3). God “stretched out the heavens like a curtain” (Psalm 104:2). No wonder even a philosopher on the order of Immanuel Kant observed: “Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily we reflect on them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me.”¹²

A third biblical explanation for the creation of the vast Universe was hinted at by God Himself in the attitude-adjusting lecture He delivered to Job: “Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or loose the belt of Orion? Can you lead forth a constellation in its season? Or can you guide the Great Bear with its cubs? Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you fix their rule over the earth?” (Job 38:31-33). Notice the action terms that are used to refer to the movement of the constellations: bind, loose, lead forth, and guide. Observe also the “laws of the heavens” and their relationship to “ruling over the earth.”¹³ These verses imply that the heavenly bodies, and the laws that govern them, have been deliberately orchestrated, modulated, and regulated by the Creator to serve a purpose or purposes **far beyond our present understanding**. The text seems to hint that Earth’s status, with its living beings, is somehow affected by the phenomena of the cosmic bodies. Even as the comprehension of scientists has been lacking through the centuries on many features of the physical realm, only eventually to discover the meaning that lay behind

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observable phenomena, even so our present comprehension of space is woefully inadequate to justify passing judgment on the intentionality and teleology that lie behind many astronomical phenomena.

Evolutionists have far better arguments with which to attempt to prop up their atheistic stance (the “problem of evil” being the strongest, though refutable¹⁴). The “wasted space” argument is anemic, pitiful, and hardly worthy of rebuttal. However, since they brought it to our attention, the Christian is once again reminded of the unfathomable attributes of the great God Who stands above and beyond this vast physical realm. The immensity and vastness of the Universe only spurs the rational mind to marvel at the One whose own metaphysical transcendence surpasses the visible. In the words of the psalmist: “I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty, and on Your wondrous works. Men shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts, and I will declare Your greatness” (145:5-6). “He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name. Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite” (Psalm 147:4-5). Isaiah agreed: “Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things, who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might and the strength of His power” (40:26). Indeed, “the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: ‘You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for **You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created**’” (Revelation 4:10-11). The vast cosmos points directly and unmistakably to an awesome God.

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THE REVELATION OF GOD

You see, the infinite God of the Bible has revealed Himself to the human race by means of two forms of revelation: natural (or generic) and supernatural (or special). Special revelation consists of the Bible—the self-authenticating, supernatural book that God imparted to humanity by miraculously directing human writers to record His will (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).

Natural revelation consists of nature: the material realm, the created order. Since God created the heavens and the Earth, His “fingerprints” are all over it. Humans can easily recognize these fingerprints—if they are unbiased, honest, and willing to follow the evidence to its logical conclusion.

Sadly, legion are those who reject the obvious. Why? They are generally unwilling to accept the implications of the existence of God: the need to bring one’s fleshly appetites and actions into harmony with the will of the Creator. But that fact does not lessen the magnitude of the evidence and its availability. Indeed, the psalmist said there is no language where the evidence for God is unavailable (Psalm 19:1-2).

TELEOLOGY

The word “teleology” comes from the Greek term *teleios*, meaning “complete, perfect,” taken from *telos* which means “end,” “outcome, result.”¹⁵ The teleological argument maintains that one proof for God’s existence is the fact that the Universe exhibits **intentional** design, order, and purpose. The characteristics of design in the Universe demonstrate the existence of a Designer. In addition to the passages given above, the Bible also articulates this principle when the Hebrews writer stated this rationale succinctly in Hebrews 3:4—“For

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every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.” If houses with their sophisticated designs cannot just happen or evolve over millions of years, how could worlds? If a watch cannot occur by chance, neither can the systematic chronometers of the Universe. Their geometric precision is so superior to human invention that eclipses, planetary movements, and other astronomical phenomena can be predicted centuries in advance. The Universe is literally a finely tuned, organized machine. If we readily recognize that intelligent planning is behind all ordered design, how could nature’s intricate networks have no Planner? To observe the fantastic design in nature and then conclude there is no Supreme Designer is to behave irrationally. The evidence that surrounds us in the material Universe demands the conclusion that God exists.

DECISIVE EVIDENCE

Do cars just happen? Of course not. Their multiple systems are interactive and integrated with each other in order for the automobile to operate. A mind—no, multiple minds—lie behind the creation of a car. Yet, compared to the Universe, or compared to the human body, or even compared to the inner workings of one tree leaf, a car is a crude and primitive invention. If the creation of a car demands the existence of the remarkable human brain/mind, what must be required for the creation of the human brain/mind? Obviously, something or Someone far superior to the human mind would be needed for its creation. Logically, that someone must be the powerful, transcendent Creator: the God of the Bible.

The naturalistic explanation given by evolutionists for the existence of the created order cannot meet the dictates of logic that characterize the unencumbered, unprejudiced human mind. The more one investigates

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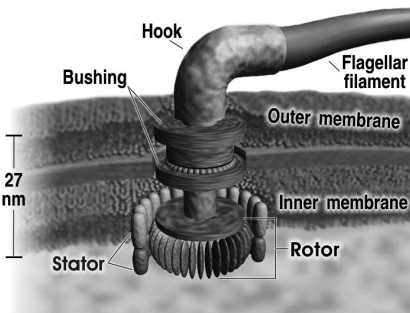
the intricacies and complexities of the natural realm, the more self-evident it is that a grand and great Designer is responsible for the existence of the Universe. In fact, the evidence is overwhelming and decisive.

The Human Body¹⁶

Take, for example, the human body, which possesses such complexity that it simply could not have evolved. Its amazing intricacies absolutely demand a mind—a higher intelligence—behind them. The development of the camera was based upon the human eye. Yet, for all we have accomplished with video and sophisticated photographic equipment, the living, full color optical system of the human eye is unsurpassed. What’s more, we possess a self-restoring, self-repairing healing system; a sensitive stereophonic auditory system; tireless muscular-connecting tissue systems; a well-engineered skeletal framework; a computerized memory-bank brain; a ventilation-insulation skin envelope which constitutes an efficient cooling system of 2000 pores per square inch of skin; and a cardiovascular system that constantly oxygenates our blood with every breath. The human body is absolute proof of God. Atheism cannot explain it. Evolution cannot logically account for it. Scientists have yet to fully understand it. Multiple lifetimes would be necessary even to begin to grasp the massive amount of evidence inherent in the human body.

The psalmist also stated, “I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well” (Psalm 139:14). Indeed, the human body itself is sufficient proof of the existence of the Divine Creator. Right now, your body is performing amazing feats of engineering, chemistry, and physics that no machine designed by man can duplicate. Great human minds have applied themselves

to the task of duplicating the various capabilities of the human body. Some incredible things have been accomplished in their efforts to copy God's Creation, but they simply cannot compare with the marvel of God's design.



The Flagellum¹⁷

Consider yet another among the millions of amazing proofs of the reality of the Creator. Bacteria, like salmonella, have as part of their anatomy several flagella filaments extending from their

cell body. These flagella are marvels of engineering—bio-nanomachines—that appear to possess the remarkable ability of self-assembly. The bacterium's flagellum assembly process begins with the formation of an MS ring in the cytoplasmic membrane. Then a switch complex called a "C" ring is assembled on its cytoplasmic side, followed by integration of the protein export apparatus inside the ring. The export apparatus sends out flagellar proteins from the cell body to the distal end of the flagellum to grow the structure.

Next, the "hook," working as an efficient universal joint, extends to the outside of the cell. Then two junction proteins, Hap¹ and Hap³, are attached, followed by the binding of the cap protein, Hap², to form a capping structure under which the assembly of flagellum molecules begins to grow the flagellar filament. Flagellum molecules are then inserted successively just below the cap, and the flagellar filament continues to grow. All of the flagellar axial proteins produced in the cell body are sent into the central channel of the flagellum and transported to and polymerized at its growing end. Fla-

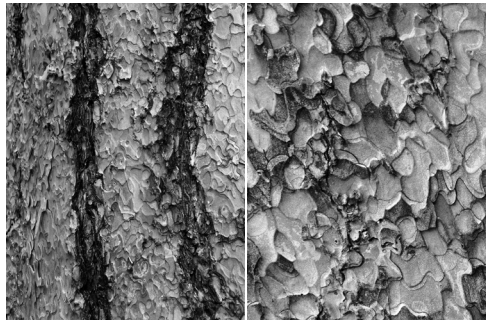
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gellum molecules, numbering 20 to 30,000, polymerize to construct a 10 to 15 micrometer long filament.

The flagellar motor is similar to manmade motors—since both were built on fundamental principles set in place by the Creator. The flagellum consists of rotor and stator units in the cell membrane, including switching unit, bushing, universal joint, and helical screw propeller. To generate thrust, the rotary motor is driven by protons flowing into the cell body. The motor then drives the rotation of the flagellum at around 300 Hz, at a power level of 10^{-16} W, with energy conversion efficiency close to 100%. The resulting speed is up to 20,000 rpms—faster than the speed of Formula 1 race car engines. This highly efficient, flagellar motor is far beyond the capabilities of manmade, artificial motors. It is so sophisticated, that to suggest that it evolved is the height of irrationality and blind prejudice. Indeed, the evidence is decisive: there is a God.

The Pine Tree¹⁸

Consider the pine tree. Some 120 species and subspecies of the pine tree exist worldwide. The Ponderosa pine tree (*pinus ponderosa*) is one of America's abundant tree species, covering approximately 27 mil-

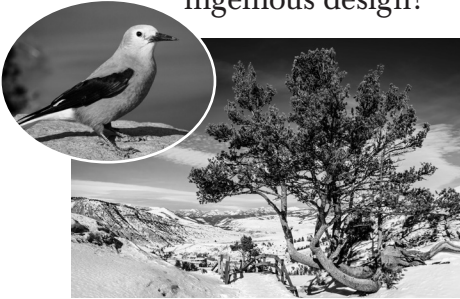


lion acres of land. A young Ponderosa pine has brownish-black bark that changes to a distinctive orange-brown color as the tree grows older. The bark is segmented into large, plate-like structures whose appearance has been likened to a jigsaw puzzle. This unusual design has a purpose. If the tree catches fire, these plates pop

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off as the bark burns. The tree, in effect, sheds its burning bark! This design, along with the great thickness of the bark, allows the tree to be very resistant to low intensity fires. Since design demands a designer, who is responsible for **this** intricate design?

Another species of pine tree is the Lodgepole Pine (*pinus contorta*), so named since Native Americans used Lodgepole pine for the “lodge poles” in their tepees. This amazing pine tree grows cones that are slightly smaller than a golf ball, are tan when fresh, but turn gray with age. These serotinous cones remain closed until the heat of a forest fire causes them to open. After the fire, the cones open and reseed the forest. The species literally regenerates itself—**even though the forest fire kills the tree itself**. Since such design demands a designer, who is responsible for **this** ingenious design?



Yet another species of pine tree is the Whitebark Pine (*pinus albicaulis*). This tree possesses a symbiotic relationship with a bird species known as the Clark's Nutcracker. The tree is dependent on this bird for reproduction, while the seed of the tree is a major source of food for the bird. This mutualistic relationship is further seen in the fact that Whitebark pinecones do not open and cast seed when they are ripe. The cones remain closed until the Nutcracker comes along, pries the cone open with its bill, and stores the seed within a pouch beneath its tongue. The bird then caches the seed to be used later as a food supply. Some of these seed caches are forgotten, or are

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not needed, thus enabling the tree to reproduce. Such amazing design—with no Mind behind it? Illogical!

Seed: The Dandelion, *Tipuana tipu*, and the *Alsomitra macrocarpa*¹⁹

When the Creator created the Universe in six literal days, He created seed on the third day:

Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that **yields seed**, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, **whose seed is in itself**, on the earth”; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that **yields seed** according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, **whose seed is in itself** according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the third day (Genesis 1:11-13).

He designed three main mechanisms for seed dispersal: (1) via animals (e.g., a bird eating a piece of fruit containing seed, and flying to another location where the seed passes out of its body), (2) drifting in ocean and fresh water, and (3) floating with the wind. Incredibly, each of these mechanisms point to the orchestration of a Mastermind.

Consider the ordinary dandelion. It possesses a magnificent crown of plumose hairs forming a symmetrical sphere. Upon closer investigation, this sphere is composed of numerous shafts, each equipped with



its own umbrella-like canopy of intricately branched hairs. At the base of each shaft is a single seed. Each individual shaft with its canopy and single seed closely resemble the same design as that utilized in parachutes.

As breezes blow across the surface of the dandelion, the canopy of hairs catch the wind which tugs at the shaft with its host of attached seed, gently pulling them free

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from the dandelion head. The parachute-like canopy of hairs then allows the entire assembly to drift with the wind. In fact, the canopy of hairs is precisely designed to achieve flight. The length of the shaft is just right to enable aerodynamic positioning of the canopy to enable it to come to a landing in another location. The attached seed can then take root and start the process all over again. The dandelion is absolute, undeniable proof of God.



Then there is the *Tipuana tipu* tree (also called Rosewood), originally from South America, but now planted as a shade tree throughout the world. This tree produces achenes—a type of fruit consisting of a dry, membranous

sheath that surrounds a seed. The *tipu* tree has a unique type of achene called a samara, which facilitates a specialized form of wind dispersal. It possesses a fan-shaped wing with a slight pitch (like a propeller or fan blade) which causes it to spin like the auto-rotation of helicopter blades when it falls. The spinning creates lift that slows descent, giving more opportunity to be carried a substantial distance from the tree by the wind, depending on wind velocity and distance above the ground. The decomposed seed spirals down to the ground to become established and perpetuate the species—an unmistakable example of flawless aerodynamic wing design.

Also known for its ingenious aerodynamic configuration is the seed of a tenacious tropical climbing vine identified as *Alsomitra macrocarpa*. Also called the *Javan cucumber*, it hangs from trees high in the rain forest

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canopy in the Sunda Islands of the Malay Archipelago and the Indonesian islands. Each football-sized fruit/gourd is densely packed with large numbers of winged “Stealth Bomber” seeds. A single seed is enveloped by two transparent, papery wings, about five inches across, angled slightly back from and extending either side of the seed. Upon ripening, the wings become dry and the long edge opposite the seed curls slightly upwards.



Credit: Wikipedia.org (scott.zona) 2011 license CC-by-sa-2.0

Each one becomes airborne when released through a hole at the bottom of the gourd and sails through the air, majestically spiraling downward in 20 foot circles. The carefully designed aerodynamic features of the seed are such that it can glide great distances from its point of origin—a classic example of mechanical dispersal in the forest. Moving through the air like a butterfly in flight, it gains height, stalls, dips, and accelerates, once again producing lift—a maneuver known as phugoid oscillation. The seed’s stability in pitch and roll inspired the early aviation pioneer Igo Etrich. Scientists studying this amazing plant describe its lift-to-drag ratio and the rate of descent in these terms: “flight was **so stable** that samples were seen to take their **optimal** trimmed angle of attack with a value between the maximum gliding ratio and the minimum rate of descent.”

Evolutionists are confident in their conviction that their explanations for such marvels demonstrate nature’s independent, autonomous existence to the exclusion of God. They literally “jump through hoops” and engage in “scientific ventriloquism” in their quest to achieve legitimacy for their atheistic bent. However, when all

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relevant evidence eventually comes to light, it fits “hand in glove” with the presence of the God of the Bible.

Wood²⁰

Prior to the invention of modern plastics, what would the Creator have humans to use for suitable containers? Wood, stone, or clay, and eventually metal, pretty much exhausted the possibilities. Yet, government agencies, like the USDA and the FDA, generally have advocated the use of plastic for cutting boards and other surfaces that sustain food contact, on the grounds that the micro-pores and knife cuts in wood provide hidden havens for deadly bacterial organisms. As one Extension Specialist from the Department of Human Nutrition stated: “for cleanability and control of microorganisms, plastic is the better choice.”

However, the best research available on the subject suggests otherwise. Dr. Dean Cliver, microbiologist formerly with the Food Safety Laboratory and World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Food Virology at the University of California-Davis, disputed the oft'-repeated claim regarding the superiority of plastic over wood. His research findings, conducted over a period of several years, consistently demonstrated the remarkable antibacterial properties of wood.

Dr. Cliver and his research associates tested five life-threatening bacteria (*Escherichia coli*, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Staphylococcus aureus*) on four plastic polymers and more than 10 species of hardwood, including hard maple, birch, beech, black cherry, basswood, butternut, and American black walnut. Within three minutes of inoculating **wooden** boards with cultures of the food-poisoning agents, 99.9% of the bacteria were “unrecoverable.” On the other hand, **none of the bacteria tested under**

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similar conditions on plastic died. In fact, leaving microbe populations on the two surfaces overnight resulted in microbial **growth** on the plastic boards, while no live bacteria were recovered from wood the next morning. Interestingly, bacteria are absorbed into the wood, but evidently do not multiply, and rarely if ever thrive again. In contrast, bacteria in knife scars in **plastic** boards remain viable (even after a hot-water-and-soap wash) and maintain their ability to surface later and contaminate foods. Treating wood cutting boards with oils and other finishes to make them more impermeable actually **retards** wood's bactericidal activity. Microbiologists remain mystified by their inability to isolate a mechanism or agent responsible for wood's antibacterial properties. Incredible, divine design.

Do these research findings bear any resemblance to Mosaic injunctions 3,500 years ago which required the destruction of pottery that had become contaminated—while **wood was simply to be rinsed** (Leviticus 6:28; 11:32-33; 15:12)? Dr. Cliver concluded: “I have no idea where the image of plastic's superiority came from; but I have spent 40 years promoting food safety, and I would go with plastic if the science supported it. I don't necessarily trust 'nature,' but I do trust laboratory research.” Kudos to Dr. Cliver's honesty. What about **trusting** nature's **God**?

SUMMARY

Founding Father Thomas Paine was among the small handful of Founders who rejected Christianity. Yet he was not an atheist. He believed that the created order proves God exists. In fact, he considered atheists to be “fools” for their rejection of the plain evidence of creation. In *Age of Reason*, he explained:

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Deism, then, teaches us, without the possibility of being deceived, all that is necessary or proper to be known. The creation is the Bible of the Deist. He there reads, in the handwriting of the Creator himself, the certainty of his existence and the immutability of his power, and all other Bibles and Testaments are to him forgeries. The probability that we may be called to account hereafter will, to a reflecting mind, have the influence of belief; for it is not our belief or disbelief that can make or unmake the fact. As this is the state we are in, and which it is proper we should be in, as free agents, **it is the fool only, and not the philosopher, or even the prudent man, that would live as if there were no God.**²¹

Don't be foolish. The evidence for the marvelous, creative handiwork of God is simply staggering. The only plausible, rational explanation for the existence of human beings on this planet is God. In the next chapter, we shall examine additional intricacies of the incredible teleological evidence that further attests to the living God.

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CHAPTER 8

THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (PART 3): ADDITIONAL DECISIVE EVIDENCES OF DESIGN

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

It is disturbing to contemplate the fact that 100 years ago, most Americans believed in the God of the Bible. The universal teaching of the public schools was Creation as depicted in the Bible. In stark contrast, we have lived to see an unbelievable transformation in which the universal teaching of the public schools is evolution, we have filled our university faculties with atheists, and we have banned God from the public square under the guise of “separation of church and state.” The impact on the thinking of children who are now adults has been catastrophic.

But on the Day of Judgment, there will be no excuses. Every accountable human being on the planet can **know** that God exists. The created order possesses characteristics that inherently demand the existence of a transcendent, supernatural Creator. As a matter of fact, the evidence that exists in the material order—the Universe/cosmos, the planet Earth, the animals, the plants, and the human body—communicate the clear message that all owe their origin to the divine Creator. This message is being continually communicated all over the planet regardless of geographical location, time of day, and language spoken (Psalm 19:1-3).

The Teleological Argument (Part 3)

In the previous chapter, we mentioned very briefly several marvelous, convincing evidences for the existence of God as seen in the remarkable human body and some of the features of the created order—phenomena inexplicable apart from Almighty God. We now turn to more of “the things that are made” (Romans 1:20) that also offer amazing proof of the great God of the Universe.

ADDITIONAL DECISIVE EVIDENCE FOR THE GOD OF THE BIBLE:

SYMBIOSIS AND MUTUALISM

One feature of the Earth that proves the existence of the God of the Bible involves symbiotic relationships. Although definitions and distinctions abound, generally speaking, symbiosis refers to a close, usually obligatory, association of two or more plants or animals of different species that depend on each other to survive. Each gains benefits from the other. These include both mutualistic and parasitic species. Obligate interactions exhibit considerable specificity and typically involve only a single species or genus.

For example, a large percentage of herbivores have mutualistic gut fauna that help them digest plant matter, which is more difficult to digest than animal prey. One species of butterfly employs complex chemical and acoustical signals to manipulate ants. Coral reefs are the result of mutualisms between coral organisms and various types of algae that live inside them. Most land plants and land ecosystems rely on mutualisms. Plants convert carbon from the air. Fungi help in extracting minerals from the soil. Many types of tropical and subtropical ants have complex relationships with certain tree species.

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Those plants and animals that both need each other to survive would have had to come into existence **close in time** to each other. They most certainly could **not** have been separated from each other by millions or billions of years of alleged evolutionary adjustments. They would have had to have been created by the Creator to function precisely the way they function. Such massive complexity, interdependency, and sophisticated diversity scream divine design.

The Human Mouth¹

Take, for example, the interior of the human mouth. Setting aside the incredible design necessary for the mouth to function, including teeth, gums, tongue, lips, muscles, nerves, cells, etc., all of which must work together from the beginning if the individual is even going to receive nourishment to survive, evolution simply cannot provide a credible explanation for the condition of the human mouth on a microscopic level.

Microbiologists estimate that over 700 distinct bacterial species are present in the mouth. How in the world could 700 separate creatures come together in one place to create a complex ecosystem of mixed organisms that co-exist with each other to perform marvelous feats of chemical engineering—from breaking down food particles and mopping up shed body cells, to competing with intruder organisms to protect us from infection? The complexity is inexplicable in terms of evolution. **This sophisticated arrangement had to have been created by God.**

The Nile Crocodile and the Egyptian Plover²

Another amazing proof that divine Creation is true and evolution is false is seen in the relationship sustained by the Egyptian Plover bird and the Nile crocodile.

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Africa's largest crocodilian, these primordial brutes can reach 20 feet in length and weigh up to 1,650 pounds. Their diet entails mainly fish, but they will attack almost anything: zebras, small hippos, birds, porcupines, and other crocs. They are ambush hunters—they wait for fish or land animals to come close, and then rush out to attack. They are vicious man-eaters: up to 200 people die each year in the jaws of a Nile croc.

Despite these facts regarding the deadly nature of the Nile crocodile, it is absolutely astounding to learn that the Egyptian Plover bird has a symbiotic relationship with this creature that entails entering the croc's mouth for the purpose of cleaning its teeth and gums. The croc will open its mouth and allow the bird to enter, sometimes keeping it open and sometimes closing it gently with the bird still inside. The bird then uses its beak to remove parasites, leeches, worms, and bits of food that infest the crocodile's mouth. The Plover enjoys a ready source of food, and the crocodile gets a valuable teeth cleaning to promote health and minimize disease. Such an arrangement could not have evolved. No crocodile could have gradually decided it was in its best interest to let a bird clean its mouth. Such sophisticated relationships among diverse creatures **prove** pre-planning and programming—intelligent design by the Master Designer and Creator.

The Emerald Wasp and the Cockroach³

Another astounding example of symbiosis that demonstrates the existence of God pertains to the Emerald Cockroach Wasp and the American cockroach. The latter insect is six times larger than the Emerald Wasp. Yet, the wasp enacts a brilliantly strategic sting into the central nervous system of the cockroach to cause temporary paralysis of the front legs. This temporary

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paralysis allows the wasp to deliver a second sting into a carefully chosen spot in the brain ganglia to control the escape reflex. The brain sting causes a dramatic behavioral change: the cockroach becomes passive and zombie-like. Its breathing slows, and it makes no attempt to escape. As a result of this sting, the roach will groom itself, become sluggish, and fail to show normal escape responses.

The wasp then leads the cockroach by its antennae, like a leash, to the wasp's burrow. The wasp does not have to drag the cockroach, since the roach willingly walks on its own legs. Inside the burrow, the wasp lays a white egg, about two millimeters long, on the roach's abdomen. It then exits and uses debris to barricade the defenseless roach inside the burrow (to keep other predators out). With its escape reflex disabled, the stung roach remains calm and complacent as the wasp's egg hatches after about three days. The hatched larva drills a hole into the leg of the cockroach to retrieve nutrition from the blood system of the roach for four to five days. Then the larva burrows into the abdomen of the cockroach, crawls inside, and over a period of eight days, consumes the roach's internal organs in an order which guarantees that the roach will stay alive, at least until the larva enters the pupal stage and forms a cocoon inside the roach's body. Six weeks from the first sting, a new adult wasp emerges from the hollowed out dead body of the roach.

The venom of the Emerald Wasp is carefully calibrated to shut down signals carried by a key neurotransmitter brain chemical called dopamine. The wasp delivers the sting with the precision of microscopic brain surgery. This remarkable skill could not have evolved. Nor was it learned. It was hardwired by the Creator

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into each wasp—making it a natural born neurosurgeon. The offspring of the wasp literally depend on the perfect execution of the mother’s sting. Too much venom, and the cockroach would immediately die, eliminating the wasp offspring’s fresh food source. Too little (or poorly aimed) venom, and the roach would escape. Millions of years of trial and error **cannot** be the source of this relationship. Failure of any one step in this complex process would prevent reproduction—and terminate the species. Can such design, complexity, order, purpose, and intelligence come out of mindless, evolutionary chaos? Absolutely not. The Emerald Wasp and the American cockroach were created by the Creator to function precisely as they do. “O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures” (Psalm 104:24). The Creation declares the reality of the Creator.

The Leafcutter Ant and Fungus⁴

Leafcutter ants nest in underground chambers in the Amazonian rain forest of Brazil. They regularly leave their nests to forage hundreds of feet into the forest. Most tropical plants are permeated by toxic chemicals to deter foragers. So, using specially designed “mouth cutters,” the ants cut out portions of the leaves they find, being careful not to ingest any of the poisonous chemicals. They then transport their cargo back to the nests and deliver it to smaller worker ants. These ants clean the leaves and chew them into pulpy mulch—again, being careful not to “swallow.” They then feed the mulch to another organism that the ants actually cultivate—a fungus. This fungus breaks down the toxins in the leaves while generating proteins and sugars. These proteins and sugars constitute the food that the ants eat. The ants need the fungus for food—and will die without the

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fungus. The fungus, on the other hand, cannot live without the ants, since they are dependent on the ant to bring the leaves. This is a mutual co-dependency that could not have evolved.

Incredibly, this particular fungus grows only in the underground chambers of the Leafcutter ant's nest. And the fungus will not consume all leaves, since some are toxic to the fungus. The Leafcutter ants are sensitive enough to adapt to the fungi's preferences and, hence, cease collecting those leaves. Scientists think that the ants can detect chemical signals from the fungus which communicate the preferences of the fungus.

What's more, researchers have identified an aggressive mold that threatens the fungus. When the researchers remove the ants from the nest, the mold destroys the fungus. Entomologists have discovered that the ants—especially the ones that tend the fungus—have a white, waxy coating on their body. The coating, which fights the mold for the fungus, has been identified as tangled mats of bacteria that produce many of the antibiotics that humans use for medicine. The ants are essentially **wearing** portable antimicrobials. Yet humans only discovered antibiotics within the last century. No wonder Solomon observed: “Go to the ant...consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest” (Proverbs 6:6-8).

The Yucca Moth and the Yucca⁵

About 50 species of yucca plant grace the planet. Incredibly, the yucca plant is completely unable to pollinate itself in order to grow more seeds and reproduce. It is wholly dependent on the genetically programmed yucca moth to facilitate reproduction and perpetuate the species.

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From their subterranean cocoons in Spring, male and female yucca moths crawl to the surface and fly to nearby yucca plants. Yucca plants are just opening their flowers. The female yucca moth collects pollen from the yucca flower and fashions it into a sticky ball, using a pair of long, curved “claws” (proboscis) protruding from her mouth area, to collect, form, compact, and carry the golden pollen ball. The yucca’s pollen is in a curved region of the plant. Only the yucca moth has the specially curved proboscis to gather the pollen from the plant’s male reproductive organs.

Having collected the pollen, she then flies to another plant where she inserts a moth egg into the ovary wall of the yucca plant, using her ovipositor—itsself a marvel of engineering design. Still carrying the pollen ball in her facial claws, she climbs to the top of the ovary. She presses the pollen into the stigma, fertilizing hundreds of immature seeds inside. When the moth larvae hatch, they feed on the seeds of the yucca. If they were to eat all the seeds, the yucca plants would stop reproducing, and both they and the moths would cease to exist. God designed the moth to calibrate the number of larvae growing inside each flower so that all the yucca seeds will not be consumed.

The life cycle of the yucca moth is timed so the adult moths emerge in early summer exactly when the yucca plants are in flower. The yucca moth and yucca plant were designed to function **together**. They had to have been created in close temporal proximity. No wonder evolutionary biologist Dr. Chris Smith conceded: “It is pretty mind-boggling to imagine how this arose. It’s very strange.”⁶ “Mind-boggling”? Absolutely. “Strange or inexplicable”? No—unless you ignore, reject, or dismiss the obvious.

The Black Wasp and the Aphid⁷

When plants in the southeastern United States are besieged by aphids—small sap-sucking, extremely destructive insect pests—they release a chemical mist that signals black wasps to come to their rescue. Upon arrival, wasps do not kill the aphids outright. With clinical precision, the wasps inject a single egg into each aphid’s body. Each wasp can inject eggs into 200 aphids. The aphid’s body then serves as the incubator for the offspring of its predator. As the ravenous wasp larvae grow, they literally eat the aphid alive from the inside out until they are ready to emerge and begin the process all over again.

Observe that this divinely designed means of controlling the aphid population is simply **one** marvelous system among others. The diversity and complexity of a variety of systems, all working in concert in the natural order, imply an overarching, overruling master plan to ensure the ongoing perpetuation of the created order. In addition to the black wasp, ants also participate in controlling aphids.

The Ant and the Aphid⁸

Aphids sustain another complicated relationship. They are equipped with special, syringe-like mouth parts to pierce plants and retrieve fluid from them. Some species of ants literally “cultivate” the aphids by “milking” them without harm to the insect. Ants stroke the aphids with their antennae, causing the aphids to secrete honeydew which the ants can then consume. The aphids, therefore, provide a ready food supply for the ants. In exchange, the aphids receive protection since the ants act as a team to fight off invaders and predators, like ladybugs.

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But this interrelationship goes even deeper. The sap which the aphids retrieve from plants is rich in carbohydrates, but lacks essential amino acids—which aphids cannot synthesize. Enter a third actor in this mutualistic drama: tiny endosymbiont bacteria (*Buchnera aphidicola*). These bacteria live in the aphid’s special cells called bacteriocytes. The amino acids are supplied by these bacteria. Neither the bacteria nor the aphid can exist without the other.

Amazing: the ant depends on the aphid for food; the aphid depends on the ant for protection; the aphid depends on internal bacteria for amino acids; the aphid provides the bacteria with energy, carbon, and shelter inside specialized cells. Symbiosis within symbiosis—decisive proof of divine design!

EVOLUTIONARY EXPLANATION?

Such remarkable examples of divine design could be multiplied endlessly. They absolutely point to God. But, of course, evolutionists attempt to offer an “explanation” for symbiosis among the wondrous organisms that grace our planet. It goes something like this:⁹ “Organisms that depend on each other for survival **co-evolved**, gradually becoming dependent on each other by means of minute changes over millions of years.” Such a claim is then liberally peppered with nullifying qualifications: “**Surprisingly little is known** about how mutualistic symbioses evolved and persist.” “Despite their ubiquity and importance, **we understand little** about how mutualistic symbioses form between previously free-living organisms.” “The evolutionary sequence of events in most lineages is **unknown**.” “Exactly how these associations evolve **remains unclear**.” “**Much remains to be learned** about the mechanisms that maintain mutualism as an evolutionarily stable interac-

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tion.” Rationally-thinking Christians have a responsibility before God to train themselves to recognize nonsensical gobbledygook when they hear it. The fact is that any alleged “transitions” or “minute changes”—when pinpointed and examined as moments in time—are seen to be unworkable, imaginary, impossible, and non-existent. Both organisms needed each other **from the beginning** of their existence. How did these creatures gain nourishment **before** becoming dependent? Each of these organisms possesses concise design variables that **prove** the inability of gradual mutation and natural selection as effectual causative agents.

Recall the debate conducted in 1976 on the campus of North Texas State University in Denton, Texas, when Thomas B. Warren debated Antony G.N. Flew—at the time, arguably the foremost atheistic philosopher in the world. Flew’s attempt to substantiate the credibility of evolution is seen in this statement: “[I]t is, it seems to me, a consequence of evolutionary theory that species shade off into one another.”¹⁰ “Shade off into one another”? Evolutionists attempt to cloud the mind by implying that all organisms came into existence as a result of very slow, almost imperceptible changes over time. But where on the planet are these alleged increments or “shades” from one species to another? We know chimps exist. We know humans exist. We know nothing of any alleged “shades.” **Nor does true science.**

Warren challenged Flew to face the fact that even if evolution theorizes numerous pre-human ancestors, there had to be a first human being to arrive on the scene. Where did he/she come from? The very first human being on the planet had to come into existence somehow. But how? Was this first human being a male or female? A baby or an adult? In reality, there are

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only two possibilities: (1) either a nonhuman had to **transform** into a human during its lifetime, or (2) a nonhuman had to **give birth** to a human. Philosophically and scientifically, these are the only two possibilities. Evolution is not only scientifically unfeasible; it is logical and philosophical nonsense! Indeed, evolution is false, and there is a God.

The smaller and deeper we go in examining God's creation, the more complex, sophisticated, and astounding the discoveries.¹¹ One would have to be prejudiced and deliberately determined to deny God to brush aside the overwhelming evidence of Him in His creation. "The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God"" (Psalm 14:1; 53:1). "Stand still and consider the wondrous works of God" (Job 37:14).

CONCLUSION

If you were to toss a stick of dynamite into a print shop, and do so every day for a million years, would a dictionary ever be the result? Can such design, complexity, order, purpose, and intelligence **ever** come out of mindless, evolutionary chaos? The answer is an unequivocal "**No!**" British evolutionist Sir Fred Hoyle has addressed specifically the many problems faced by those who defend the idea of a naturalistic origin of life on Earth. In fact, Dr. Hoyle described the atheistic concept that disorder gives rise to order in a rather picturesque manner when he observed that "the chance that higher forms have emerged in this way is comparable with the chance that a tornado sweeping through a junk-yard might assemble a Boeing 747 from the materials therein."¹² Dr. Hoyle, even went so far as to draw the following conclusion:

Once we see, however, that the probability of life originating at random is so utterly miniscule as to make the

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random concept absurd, it becomes sensible to think that the favourable properties of physics on which life depends, are in every respect deliberate.... It is therefore almost inevitable that our own measure of intelligence must reflect in a valid way the higher intelligences... even to the extreme idealized limit of **God**.¹³

Or as Dawkins conceded:

The more statistically improbable a thing is, the less we can believe that it just happened by blind chance. Superficially, **the obvious alternative to chance is an intelligent Designer**.¹⁴

Indeed, the interdependent, interconnected, interpenetrating features of God's creation are beyond the capability of man to trace out—let alone to “manage” or “assist.” Neither a pine tree nor a pinecone is sentient. They have no thinking capacity or consciousness. They possess no personhood, soul, or spirit. Pine trees did not get together and discuss the threat of forest fires to their future survival, and then decide to produce pinecones that would remain closed during a fire only to open afterwards. No crocodile convention was ever held in which crocs decided it was in their best health interests to refrain from chomping down on Plover birds while all other animals remained “fair game.” The standard explanations by evolutionists for such wonders of creation are incoherent, nonsensical, and just plain pitiful. Elihu reminded Job: “Behold, God is exalted in His power; Who is a teacher like Him? Who has appointed Him His way, and who has said, ‘You have done wrong’? Remember that you should exalt His work, of which men have sung. All men have seen it; man beholds from afar” (Job 36:22-25, NASB).

Indeed, the realm of nature literally shouts forth the reality of the all-powerful Maker Who alone accounts for the intelligent design of the created order. As the psalmist so eloquently affirmed: “The heavens declare

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the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.... There is no speech, nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world” (Psalm 19:1-4). Only a foolish person would conclude there is no God (Psalm 14:1).

The only plausible explanation for the Universe and the entire created order is “the great God who formed everything” (Proverbs 26:10). “O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions” (Psalm 104:24). We can know there is a God. The Creation declares the reality of the Creator. To repeat Paul’s declaration in Romans: “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are **clearly seen**, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that **they are without excuse**” (1:20).

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CHAPTER 9

THE AESTHETIC ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Jeff Miller, Ph.D.

The Aesthetic Argument for God's existence is sometimes considered to fall under the design argument for God's existence (the Teleological Argument). The argument highlights the fact that beauty exists and, more specifically, the ability to appreciate beauty exists. Atheism cannot adequately explain this appreciation in the diverse forms in which it is found, because that appreciation, by-in-large, has no evolutionary advantage. So, the argument says that the existence of beauty proves that a loving God must exist Who cares for His Creation and wishes to give us joy and pleasure.

Charles Darwin recognized the Aesthetic Argument as a threat to evolutionary theory. In the *Origin of Species*, he said, "Some authors believe that many structures have been created for the sake of beauty, to delight man or the Creator...or for the sake of mere variety.... Such doctrines, if true, would be absolutely fatal to my theory."¹ Why? Because naturalistic evolution cannot explain why something would become beautiful for the sole benefit of others. According to Darwin, "Natural selection cannot possibly produce any modification in any one species exclusively for the good of another species.... But natural selection can and does often produce structures for the direct **injury** of other species."² Evolu-

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tion is “survival of the fittest” and “the strong survive.” It is the selfish, bloody battle of the strong for survival. It is not about benefitting others. So if naturalistic evolution (i.e., atheism) is true, evolving a trait must have a selfish benefit—not for the benefit of others.

So Darwin conceded, “If it could be proved that any part of the structure of any one species had been formed for the exclusive good of another species, it would **annihilate my theory**, for such could not have been produced through natural selection.”³ In the same breath, however, he made a critical admission: “I fully admit that many structures are of no direct use to their possessors.”⁴ In other words, contrary to evolutionary predictions, “many structures” are possessed by creatures which are not useful at all to them! His response to the “problem” of beauty: to blindly conjecture that beautiful features must have just accidentally happened or perhaps were useful to a creature in some way at some point in the past, though not today.

Atheists today seem to acknowledge that Darwin’s response to the Aesthetic Argument was not satisfactory. They often respond to the beauty “problem” by claiming that beauty evolved accidentally in various creatures and then remained in those creatures because it helped them personally in getting mates—sexual selection. Those beautiful creatures would tend to reproduce more often, keeping the “beautiful” genes “alive.” Darwin, however, disagreed with this reasoning. He said, “The effects of sexual selection, when displayed in beauty to charm the females, can be called useful **only in rather a forced sense**... [M]any structures now have no direct relation to the habits of life of each species.”⁵ In other words, Darwin recognized that, while sexual selection might help explain some cases of beauty, it does not even

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nearly explain **all** of the examples of beauty we see in the animal kingdom. And that admission highlights the fact that atheists still have not adequately answered the Aesthetic Argument.

Besides that fact, consider: sexual selection attempts to explain why beautiful animals would tend to “stick around,” but should not the opposite also be true? Should not the “ugly” animals have died out since they were less “pleasing to the eyes”? Why isn’t the animal kingdom more beautiful, all around, after “millions of years” of tweaking? According to the fossil record, many “ugly” creatures have existed since they originally came onto the scene and have not changed—in many cases, over “millions of years,” according to the evolutionary timeline. They have not changed, and yet they have not died out, as evolution would predict they should. Bible believers can explain why “ugly” things would exist (e.g., the effects of sin, Genesis 3:18; on-going genetic entropy as a consequence of being banished from the Tree of Life, Genesis 3:22-24). But would not evolution predict much more beauty in the animal kingdom if sexual selection is the powerful, beauty-generating mechanism it is espoused to be?

Further, keep in mind that sexual selection cannot work until beauty exists in the first place. Darwin was not able to provide a mechanism through which an animal would “grow” a new trait that would make it beautiful. Random mutations, for example, cannot generate new genetic information—and **new genetic information is necessary to explain beauty where there once was no beauty**. In other words, even if his response to the Aesthetic Argument could explain why beauty exists in the animal kingdom, he did not explain how evolution could create beauty in the first place. He attempted to

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explain how beauty would be in harmony with “survival of the fittest,” but he did not explain the **arrival** of the fittest in the first place. Although we are now some 150 years removed from Darwin, evolutionists still have no answer to that pivotal question.⁶

Also notice that modern atheists only attempt to respond to one “finger” of the Aesthetic Argument—namely why **some** of the beautiful animals exist. Sexual selection does not adequately explain why an orchestra playing Johann Pachelbel’s Canon in D Major is so beautiful that it can create an emotional response; why certain things that are not inherently good for you (and are sometimes even bad for you) taste good or smell good; why some things feel good—again, even when they are not always beneficial to you; why looking at a sunrise, waterfall, or ocean can give us such pleasure. Such examples of beauty highlight a more fundamental component of the Aesthetic Argument. Atheists scramble to try to explain why various creatures are beautiful, but the underlying question is, why do we **perceive** something as beautiful in the first place? Even if a beautiful trait could accidentally evolve in one creature, another creature, simultaneously, must also evolve an **appreciation** of that beauty. Even if natural selection could adequately explain why something beautiful tends to survive, it does not explain why we would see that thing as beautiful in the first place. Though “beauty is in the eye of the beholder” and therefore everyone differs somewhat on what constitutes “beauty,” nevertheless, everyone possesses the inbuilt faculty—a capacity—that causes them to conceptualize the characteristic of beauty.

Why does beauty exist? Because an omnibenevolent God exists Who wants to give His children good things, as any decent parent would; Who wants humans to

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experience joy and pleasure. So, He has “made everything beautiful in its time” (Ecclesiastes 3:11)—things “pleasant for the eyes” (Ecclesiastes 11:7); people that have a “pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument” (Ezekiel 33:32); things which are “sweet to your taste” (Proverbs 24:13) and “give a good smell” (Song of Solomon 2:13); things that make a “joyful sound” (Psalm 89:15). “Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!” (Psalm 34:8).

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Charles Darwin (1998), *The Origin of Species* (New York: Gramercy), p. 146.
- ² Ibid., emp. added.
- ³ Ibid., emp. added.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Ibid., emp. added.
- ⁶ Jeff Miller (2017), *Science vs. Evolution* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), second edition.

CHAPTER 10

“BUT WHAT ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF PAIN AND SUFFERING?”

Kyle Butt, M.Div. and Dave Miller, Ph.D.

On February 12, 2009, in my [KB] debate with Dan Barker, he affirmed the proposition that the God of the Bible does not exist. Three minutes and 15 seconds into his opening speech, he stated that one reason he believes God does not exist is because “there are no good replies to the arguments against the existence of God, such as the problem of evil. All you have to do is walk into any children’s hospital and you know there is no God. Prayer doesn’t make any difference. Those people pray for their beloved children to live, and they die.”¹ Barker suggested that “the problem of evil” is one of the strongest positive arguments against the existence of God.

What, precisely, is the so-called “problem of evil”? Atheists like Barker note that the Bible depicts God as all-loving as well as all-powerful. This observation is certainly correct (e.g., 1 John 4:8; Genesis 17:1; Job 42:2; Matthew 19:26). Yet everyone admits that evil exists in the world. It is thought that for God to allow evil and suffering either implies that He is not all-loving, or if He is all-loving, He lacks the power to eliminate them. In either case, it is argued that the God of the Bible would not exist. To phrase the “problem of evil” more precisely, the atheist contends that the biblical theist

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cannot consistently affirm all three of the following propositions:

- God is omnipotent.
- God is perfect in goodness.
- Evil exists.

Again, the atheist insists that if God is omnipotent (as the Bible affirms), He is not perfect in goodness since He permits evil and suffering to run rampant in the world. If, on the other hand, He is perfect in goodness, He lacks omnipotence since His goodness would move Him to exercise His power to eliminate evil on the Earth. Since the Christian affirms all three of the propositions, the atheist claims that Christians are guilty of affirming a logical contradiction, making their position false. Supposedly, the “problem of evil” presents an insurmountable problem for the Christian theist.

In truth, however, the “problem of evil” is a problem for the atheist—not the Christian theist. First, atheistic philosophy cannot provide a definition of “evil.” There is no rational way that atheism can accurately label anything as “evil” or “good” (See Chapter 5). Recall that on February 12, 1998, William Provine, a professor in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the distinguished Cornell University, delivered the keynote address at the second annual Darwin Day. In an abstract of that speech on the Darwin Day Web site, Dr. Provine asserted: “Naturalistic evolution has clear consequences that Charles Darwin understood perfectly. 1) No gods worth having exist; 2) no life after death exists; 3) **no ultimate foundation for ethics exists**; 4) no ultimate meaning in life exists; and 5) human free will is nonexistent.”² Provine’s ensuing message centered on his fifth statement regarding human free will. Prior to delving into the “meat” of his message, however,

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he noted: “The first 4 implications are so obvious to modern naturalistic evolutionists that I will spend little time defending them.”³ If there is no foundation upon which to base any ethical conclusions, then how could an atheist label any action or occurrence as “evil,” “bad,” or “wrong”?

Frederick Nietzsche understood atheistic philosophy so well that he suggested that the bulk of humanity has misunderstood concepts such as “evil” and “good.” In his work *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche wrote: “We believe that severity, violence, slavery, danger in the street and in the heart, secrecy, stoicism, tempter’s art and devilry of every kind—that everything wicked, terrible, tyrannical, predatory, and serpentine in man, **serves as well for the elevation of the human species as its opposite.**”⁴ Nietzsche’s point simply was that what we might call morally “evil,” actually helps humans evolve higher thinking capacities, quicker reflexes, or greater problem-solving skills. Thus, if an “evil” occurrence helps humanity “evolve,” then there can be no legitimate grounds for labeling that occurrence as “evil.” In fact, according to atheistic evolution, anything that furthers the human species should be deemed as “good.”

As C.S. Lewis made his journey from atheism to theism, he realized that the “problem of evil” presented more of a problem for atheism than it did for theism. He stated:

My argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of *just* and *unjust*? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust...? Of course, I could have given up my idea of justice by saying it was nothing but a private idea of my own. But if I did that, then my argument against God collapsed too—for the argument depended on saying that the world was really unjust, not simply that it did not happen to please

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my private fancies. Thus in the very act of trying to prove that God did not exist—in other words, that the whole of reality was senseless—I found I was forced to assume that one part of reality—namely my idea of justice—was full of sense. Consequently, atheism turns out to be too simple.⁵

Theistic apologist, William Lane Craig, has summarized the issue quite well:

I think that evil, paradoxically, actually proves the existence of God. My argument would go like this: (1) If God does not exist then objective moral values do not exist. (2) Evil exists, (3) therefore objective moral values exist, that is to say, some things are really evil. Therefore, God exists. Thus, although evil and suffering at one level seem to call into question God's existence, on a deeper more fundamental level, they actually prove God's existence.⁶

Craig and Lewis are correct. If evil actually exists in the world, and some things are not the way they “should” be, then there must be a standard outside of the natural world that would give meaning to the terms “evil” and “good”—and the atheistic assumption proves false.

AN EMOTIONAL APPEAL

In addition to the fact that “evil” cannot even be discussed without reference to God, Barker rested the force of his statement on an emotional appeal. He said: “All you have to do is walk into any children’s hospital and you know there is no God.” Is it really the case that anyone who walks into a children’s hospital is immediately struck by the overwhelming force of atheism? No, it is not true. In fact, it is the farthest thing from the truth. Anticipating Barker’s tactics, I [KB] visited the children’s hospital in Columbia, South Carolina and met a lady who volunteered there. When asked why she volunteered, she pointed to a bullet hole in her skull. She said that it was a blessing she was still alive and she wanted to give something back since God had allowed

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her to live. When asked if many of the volunteers in the hospital were religious, she responded that many of them were from churches in the area, i.e., churches that believe in the God of the Bible.

According to Barker's "line of reasoning," the lady with whom we talked should not believe in a loving God, the volunteers that gave their time to the hospital should not believe in a loving God, we should no longer believe in a loving God (since we walked through the hospital), nor should any other person who has visited that facility. The falsity of such reasoning is apparent. Seeing the suffering in a children's hospital does not necessarily drive a person to atheism. Truth be told, most people who visit a children's hospital, and even have children who are patients there, believe in the God of the Bible. Barker's assertion does not stand up to rational criticism.

Furthermore, Barker's emotional appeal can easily be turned on its head: Walk through any children's hospital and observe the love, care, and concern that the parents, doctors, and volunteers show the children, and you know atheistic evolution cannot be true. After all, evolution is about the survival of the fittest, in which the strong struggle against the weak to survive in a never-ending contest to pass on their genes. If evolution were true, parents and doctors would not waste their valuable resources on children who will not (or should not) pass on their genes. Only theism can account for the selfless devotion and care that you see in children's hospitals.

SOME SUFFERING IS ACCEPTABLE

When the "problem of evil" is presented, it quickly becomes apparent that the term "evil" cannot be used in any meaningful way by an atheist. The tactic, therefore, is to swap the terms "suffering," "pain," or "harm" for

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the word “evil,” and contend that the world is filled with too much pain, harm, and suffering. Since it is evident that countless people suffer physical, emotional, and psychological harm, the atheist contends that, even though there is no real “evil,” a loving God would not allow such suffering.⁷

At first glance, it seems that the atheist is claiming that a loving, moral God would not allow His creatures, the objects of His love, to suffer **at all**. Again, the atheist reasons that humans are supposed to be the objects of God’s love, yet they suffer. Thus, God does not love or does not have the power to stop the suffering—and therefore does not exist.

The thoughtful observer soon sees the problem with this line of reasoning, which even the skeptic is forced to admit: it is morally right to allow some suffering in order to bring about greater good. On numerous occasions, Dan Barker and his fellow atheists have admitted the validity of this truth. During the cross-examination period of the *Butt/Barker Debate*, Barker stated:

You can’t get through life without some harm.... I think we all agree that it is wrong to stick a needle into a baby. That’s horrible. But, if that baby needs a life-saving injection, we will cause that harm, we will do that. The baby won’t understand it, but we will do that **because there is a greater good**. So, humanistic morality understands that within certain situations, there is harm, and there’s a trade off of values.⁸

In his debate with Peter Payne, Barker stated: “Often ethics involves creating harm. **Sometimes harm is good.**”⁹ In his book, *Maybe Right, Maybe Wrong: A Guide for Young Thinkers*, Barker wrote: “When possible, you should try to stop the pain of others. **If you have to hurt someone**, then hurt them as little as possible.... If you do have to hurt someone, then try to stop as soon as possible. A good person does not enjoy causing pain.”¹⁰

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It becomes evident that the atheist cannot argue against the concept of God based on the mere existence of suffering, because atheists are forced to admit that there can be morally justifiable reasons for suffering. Once again, the argument has been altered. No longer are we dealing with the “problem of evil,” since without the concept of God, the term “evil” means nothing. Furthermore, no longer are we dealing with a “problem of suffering,” since the atheist must admit that **some** suffering could be morally justifiable in order to produce a greater good. The atheist must add an additional term to qualify suffering: “pointless.”

POINTLESS OR UNNECESSARY SUFFERING

Since the skeptic knows that some suffering could be morally justified, he is forced to argue against the biblical concept of God by claiming that at least some of the suffering in this world is **pointless** or unnecessary. The skeptic then maintains that any being that allows pointless suffering cannot be loving or moral. In his book *The Miracle of Theism*, J.L. Mackie noted that if the theist could legitimately show that the suffering in the world is in some way useful, then the concept of the God of the Bible “is formally possible, and its principle involves no real abandonment of our ordinary view of the opposition between good and evil.”¹¹ In light of this fact, Mackie admitted: “[W]e can concede that the problem of evil does not, after all, show that the central doctrines of theism are logically inconsistent with one another.”¹² Did Mackie throw in the proverbial towel and admit that the “problem” of evil and suffering does not militate against God? On the contrary, he contended that even though some suffering or evil might be necessary or useful, there is far too much pointless evil (he terms it

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“unabsorbed evil”) in the world for the traditional God of the Bible to exist. He then concluded: “The problem, therefore, now recurs as the problem of **unabsorbed evils**, and we have as yet no way of reconciling their existence with that of a god of the traditional sort.”¹³ Notice how Mackie was forced to change the “problem of evil” to the “problem of **unabsorbed evil**.”

Dan Barker understands this alteration in the “problem of evil” and has used it himself. In a debate with Rubel Shelly, Dan used his standard argument that the suffering in a children’s hospital is enough to show God does not exist. Shelly responded with a lengthy rebuttal, bringing to light the idea that suffering in this world can be consistently reconciled with God’s **purposes** for mankind. In concluding his comments, Shelly stated: “The kind of world, apparently, that unbelief wants is a world where no wrong action could have bad effects or where we just couldn’t make wrong actions.”¹⁴ Barker responded to Shelly’s comments, saying:

I’m not asking for a world that’s free of pain.... No atheist is asking that the world be changed or requiring that if there is a God, He be able to change it. I’m not asking for a world that’s free of consequences. I think pain and consequences are important to a rational education.... What I am asking for is for human beings to strive as much as possible for a world that is free of **unnecessary harm**.¹⁵

Barker went on to describe a scenario in which a forest fire forces a baby fawn to flee its home. In the process, the fawn catches its leg in a snare and is consumed by the flames. Barker then stated that he believed no one’s soul or character was edified by the fawn’s suffering, thus it would be an example of unnecessary or useless suffering. Barker further admitted that even though some suffering is acceptable, there simply is far too much to be reconciled with a loving God. Here

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again, it is important to notice that Barker's entire argument has been altered. It is no longer a "problem of evil (harm)" but now he has amended it to the "problem of **unnecessary** evil (harm)."

The next question that must be asked is: What would classify as "pointless," "unnecessary," or "unabsorbed" suffering? The simple answer that the atheistic position must suggest is that any suffering that **the atheist** does not deem necessary is pointless. As Timothy Keller points out, the fact is that Mackie and others use the term "pointless" to mean that they, themselves cannot see the point of it. Keller stated: "Tucked away within the assertion that the world is filled with pointless evil is a hidden premise, namely that if evil appears pointless to me, then it must *be* pointless."¹⁶ Keller further noted:

This reasoning is, of course, fallacious. Just because you can't see or imagine a good reason why God might allow something to happen doesn't mean there can't be one. Again we see lurking within supposedly hard-nosed skepticism an enormous faith in one's own cognitive faculties. If our minds can't plumb the depths of the universe for good answers to suffering, well, then, there can't be any! This is blind faith of a high order.¹⁷

Indeed, it is the atheist who lives by the blind faith that he mistakenly attributes to the biblical theist.

WHO IS IN THE BEST POSITION TO KNOW?

Since atheists cannot say that real, moral evil exists, they must adjust their objection and say that a loving God would not allow suffering. This position quickly becomes indefensible, so again the position is altered to posit that **some** suffering is morally permissible, but not pointless or unnecessary suffering. Who, then, is to determine if there truly exists unnecessary suffering that would negate the concept of God? Some atheists, such

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as Barker, are quick to set themselves up as the final judges who alone can set the proper limits of suffering. Yet, when those limits are analyzed, it again becomes apparent that the “problem of evil” is a legitimate problem only for the atheist.

In his book *godless*, Dan Barker stated: “There is no big mystery to morality. Morality is simply acting with the intention to minimize harm.”¹⁸ In his explanation about how to minimize harm, Barker wrote: “And the way to avoid making a mistake is to try to be as informed as possible about the likely consequences of the actions being considered.”¹⁹ Reasoning from Barker’s comments about morality, if there truly is an omniscient God Who knows every consequence of every action that ever has been or ever will be taken, then that Being, and only that Being, would be in a position to speak with absolute authority about the amount and kind of suffering that is “necessary.” Barker and his fellow atheists may object to God’s tolerance for suffering, but were God to condescend to speak directly to them, He could simply respond by saying: “What you do not know is...,” and He could fill in the blank with a thousand reasons about future consequences that would legitimize the suffering He allows.

Indeed, this is precisely the tact God employed with Job, when He challenged Job’s knowledge and comprehension of the mysteries of the Universe:

Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Have you comprehended the breadth of the earth? Tell Me, if you know all this. Do you know it, because you were born then, or because the number of your days is great? Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it. Would you

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indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified? (Job 38:2-4,18,21; 40:2,8).

God's interrogation of Job elucidated the fact of humanity's limited knowledge, especially as it relates to suffering. In contrast to this, Barker wrote:

Why should the mind of a deity—an outsider—be better able to judge human actions than the minds of humans themselves? Which mind is in a better position to make judgments about human actions and feelings? Which mind has more credibility? Which has more experience in the real world? Which mind has more of a right?²⁰

Of course, Barker's rhetorical questions were supposed to force the reader to respond that **humans** are in a better position to understand what actions are moral, or how much suffering is permissible. In light of his comments about knowing the consequences of actions, however, Barker's position falls flat. Whose mind knows more about the consequences of all actions? Whose mind is in a better position to know what will happen if this action is permitted? Whose mind has the ability to see the bigger picture? And Who alone is in the position to know how much suffering is permissible to bring about the ultimate good for humankind? That would be the infinite, eternal, omniscient Creator—the God of the Bible.

THE PURPOSE OF HUMAN EXISTENCE

In his monumental volume *Have Atheists Proved There Is No God?* philosopher Thomas Warren undercut completely the atheist's use of the problem of evil. He insightfully demonstrated that the Bible teaches that "God has a morally justifiable reason for having created the world...in which evil can (and does) occur."²¹ What is that reason? God created the planet to be "the ideal environment for soul-making."²² God specifically created humans to be immortal, free moral agents, responsible

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for their own actions, with this earthly life being their one and only probationary period in which their eternal fate is determined by their response to God's will during earthly life.²³ Hence, the world "is as good (for the purpose God had in creating it) as any possible world" since it was designed to function as man's "vale of soul-making."²⁴ The physical environment in which humans were to reside was specifically created with the necessary characteristics for achieving that central purpose. This environment would have to be so arranged that it would allow humans to be free moral agents, provide them with their basic physical needs, allow them to be challenged, and enable them to learn those things they most need to learn.²⁵

Whereas the atheist typically defines "evil" as physical pain and suffering, the Bible, quite logically, defines evil as violation of God's law (1 John 3:4). Observe, therefore, that **the only intrinsic evil is sin**, i.e., disobeying or transgressing the laws of God. Hence, pain and suffering are not intrinsically evil. ("[I]ntrinsic evil on the purely physical level does not exist.")²⁶ In fact, animal pain, natural calamities, and human suffering are all necessary constituent variables in the overall environment designed for spiritual development. Such variables, for example, impress upon humans the very critical realizations that life on Earth is uncertain, precarious, and temporary. They also demonstrate that life on Earth is brief—that it will soon end.²⁷ Such realizations not only propel people to consider their spiritual condition, and the necessity of using this life to prepare for the afterlife, they prod people to contemplate God! Suffering, pain, and hardship encourage people to cultivate their spirits and to grow in moral character—acquiring virtuous attributes such as courage, patience, humility, and fortitude. Suffering can serve as discipline and motivation to spur spiritual

growth and strength. It literally stimulates people to develop compassion, sympathy, love, and empathy for their fellowman.²⁸

The Wisest Man's Assessment

While this concept permeates the Bible, Solomon's treatise, Ecclesiastes, provides a succinct expression of the principle. Solomon was declared to be unsurpassed in wisdom and insight into the meaning of life. Ecclesiastes is somewhat of an autobiography that reflects the details of Solomon's life reported in the early chapters of 1 Kings. Being king and wielding great power and influence, he was in a position to immerse himself in the vicissitudes of life with all the typical endeavors to which humans have devoted themselves throughout time. Consider briefly his earthly pursuits and attainments.

1. He devoted himself to great feats of labor, toil, and hard work. He involved himself in monumental construction projects—including a beautiful palace of cedar (that took 13 years to build) and a great religious Temple (1 Kings 6-7). He built an extensive irrigation system to accommodate the gardens, orchards, groves, and vineyards that he developed (Ecclesiastes 2:4-6). He also constructed a fleet of ships (1 Kings 9:26).

2. He sought to acquire knowledge, super intelligence, wisdom and insight, and to educate and enhance his intellect (1:13,16-17; 2:12ff.,21,26; 7:11-12,19,23-25). His intellectual prowess was such that he became an author, poet, composer, and lyricist, generating an unexcelled literary legacy that included authoring thousands of proverbs and over a thousand musical compositions (complete with singers and musical instruments of all kinds—Ecclesiastes 2:8). His vast research and acquired knowledge qualified him to be a botanist, zoologist, ornithologist, entomologist, and ichthyologist (1 Kings

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4:29-34). People from all over the world visited him just to hear his unparalleled wisdom and insight (1 Kings 10:24).

3. He amassed great wealth and possessions. He had countless servants, herds, and flocks. He acquired “silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces” (Ecclesiastes 2:8). In fact, he accumulated **tons upon tons** of gold (1 Kings 9:28; 10:14-15). He regularly received gifts of gold, as well as great quantities of spices and precious stones (1 Kings 10:10,14). The drinking vessels in his palace were gold as well (1 Kings 10:21). His throne was made of ivory, overlaid with pure gold. Two lions stood beside the armrests. Six steps lead up to the throne with 12 lions, one on each side of the six steps (1 Kings 10:18-20). Every three years merchant ships arrived bringing more gold, silver, ivory, and exotic animals (vs. 22). The inspired writer gives this summary of King Solomon’s wealth: he “surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom” (vs. 23).

4. He wielded great military capability. He owned and operated thousands of horses, chariots, and horsemen (1 Kings 4:26-28). He gathered 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen; he stationed these forces in several storage cities that he built to accommodate the chariots and cavalry (1 Kings 9:17-19; 10:26). He raised a significant labor force using the survivors of conquered countries (1 Kings 9:20-21).

5. He secured significant political power, fame, and honor. He ruled over a considerable geographical area and received tribute and services from vassal kings (Ecclesiastes 8:4; 1 Kings 4:21-25; 5:1; 10:1).

6. He had unprecedented access to fleshly, sexual pleasure—“the pleasures of men—many concubines” (Ecclesiastes 2:8—NASB; 7:26). It seems surreal that one

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man would have carnal access to literally hundreds of women, but such was the case with Solomon (1 Kings 11:1ff.; cf. Song of Solomon).

7. It appears he also gave attention to assessing and resisting the aging process in order to retain youthfulness (Ecclesiastes 11:9-10; 12:1-6). American culture most certainly identifies with this concern with its emphasis on creams, gels, hair coloring, clothing, health clubs, and surgical procedures to prolong at least the illusion of youthfulness.²⁹

8. He also gave attention to the pursuit of pleasure and physical stimulation (Ecclesiastes 2:1-11). He sought to stimulate his body and gratify his flesh with alcohol. He focused on mirth, laughter, and entertainment. Indeed, he fully indulged his fleshly appetites, declaring: “Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure” (Ecclesiastes 2:10).

In essence, Solomon claimed: “I’ve had it all, I’ve seen it all, I’ve done it all! I have immersed myself in all the pleasures and pursuits that earthly life has to offer.” Yet, he was forced to pronounce all these pursuits as “vanity” and a “chasing after the wind” when they are approached “under the Sun”—by which he meant **apart from God**. While many human endeavors are noble, pure, and worthwhile in themselves, no human endeavor is of any **ultimate** value unless undertaken in view of God and His will for human beings. Hence, Solomon brought his matchless treatise on the meaning of human existence to a grand conclusion by announcing the central premise of life—the defining principle that gives life meaning and makes existence justifiable: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all.

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For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). Here, indeed, is man’s *raison d’etre*—reason for existing. Every single feature of life—money and possessions, fame and power, intelligence/wisdom/knowledge, sex, youthfulness, pleasure, toil/work, advancement, etc.—is **meaningless** if not approached in view of God and His will. Life was literally designed by the Creator and intended to be centered on rendering obedience to Him. The only way to make sense of life—with its incessant suffering—is to assimilate this fundamental principle of existence into one’s being. Rather than merely living “under the Sun,” we must live life under the Son.³⁰

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Kyle Butt and Dan Barker (2009), *Butt/Barker Debate: Does the God of the Bible Exist?* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press).
- ² William Provine (1998), “Evolution: Free Will and Punishment and Meaning in Life,” (<http://eeb.bio.utk.edu/darwin/Darwin-DayProvineAddress.htm>).
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche (2007 reprint), *Beyond Good and Evil* (Raleigh, NC: Hayes Barton Press), p. 35, emp. added, http://books.google.com/books?id=C7sRYOPWke0C&pg=PA1&source=gbs_selected_pages&cad=0_1#PPP1,M1.
- ⁵ C.S. Lewis (1952), *Mere Christianity* (New York: Simon and Schuster), pp. 45-46, italics in orig.
- ⁶ William Lane Craig (no date), *Pain and Suffering Debate*, Part 1, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZTG5xyefEo>.
- ⁷ The atheist’s argument has not really changed. He is still contending that suffering is “bad” or “evil” and would not be present in a “good” world. In truth, he remains in the same dilemma of proving that evil exists and that suffering is objectively evil.
- ⁸ 2009, emp. added.

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- ⁹ Dan Barker and Peter Payne (2005), *Barker/Payne Debate: Does Ethics Require God?* http://www.ffrf.org/about/bybarker/ethics_debate.php, emp. added.
- ¹⁰ Dan Barker (1992), *Maybe Right, Maybe Wrong: A Guide for Young Thinkers* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus), p. 33, emp. added.
- ¹¹ J.L. Mackie (1982), *The Miracle of Theism: Arguments For and Against the Existence of God* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p. 154.
- ¹² Ibid., p. 154.
- ¹³ Ibid., p. 155, emp. added.
- ¹⁴ Dan Barker and Rubel Shelly (1999), *Barker/Shelly Debate: Does God Exist?* (Brentwood, TN: Faith Matters).
- ¹⁵ Ibid., emp. added.
- ¹⁶ Timothy Keller (2008), *The Reason for God* (New York: Dutton), p. 23, italics in orig.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., p. 23.
- ¹⁸ Dan Barker (2008), *godless* (Berkeley, CA: Ulysses Press), p. 214.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Ibid., p. 211.
- ²¹ Thomas Warren (1972), *Have Atheists Proved There Is No God?* (Ramer, TN: National Christian Press), p. 16.
- ²² Ibid., p. 16.
- ²³ Ibid., p. 19.
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ Ibid., p. 47.
- ²⁶ Ibid., p. 93.
- ²⁷ Ibid., p. 58.
- ²⁸ Ibid., p. 81.
- ²⁹ Physical exercise, in moderation, does yield healthful benefits (1 Timothy 4:8).
- ³⁰ For an in-depth biblical response to the alleged “problem of suffering,” see Dave Miller (2016), *Why People Suffer* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press).

CHAPTER 11

IS FREE WILL AN ILLUSION?

Kyle Butt, M.Div.

Renowned atheist Carl Sagan began his immensely popular book *Cosmos* with these words: “The Cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be.”¹ What do today’s atheists mean when they use the term Cosmos? The modern “scientific” idea is that the Cosmos is completely, entirely, and altogether materialistic, composed of matter and energy, and contains nothing immaterial or “not-matter.” The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines **materialism** as, “The theory that physical matter is the only reality and that everything, including thought, feeling, mind, and will, can be explained in terms of matter and physical phenomena.”² As it now stands, the ideas of the Cosmos or of “nature” have been redefined to include only **physical** matter and energy. Evolutionists Hewlett and Peters demand that “to be scientific in our era is to search for **solely natural explanations.**”³ Physicist Paul Davies correctly stated, “The materialist believes that mental states and operation are nothing but physical states and operations.”⁴ Evolutionary biologist Richard Lewontin admitted that evolutionists “have a prior commitment, a commitment to naturalism.... Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine foot in the door.”⁵

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What are the logical implications of the idea that everything in the Universe consists solely of matter and energy? At first glance, the materialistic idea may not seem very profound or Earth shattering, but a deeper probe into the concept reveals that some of the most fundamental aspects of humanity are at stake. In this chapter, we will focus on one feature of humanity that must be denied if materialism is accepted—human free will. You see, if matter and energy are all that “really” exists, then the notion must be rejected that there is a human will that directs the decision making process. In short, if you, as a person, have ever made a single real decision; if you have ever freely chosen to do or not do anything, then atheism cannot be true. This is the case because your decision would be the result of something “more than” matter. It could not be explained by a naturalistic “cause and effect” chain of chemical events. If there is a “you” inside your body that freely chooses this or rejects that, then the materialist understanding of the Universe is false.

Modern leaders in the atheistic community admit as much. Sam Harris, recognized in skeptical circles as one of the four leading voices of modern atheism, penned a book titled *Free Will*. In that short volume, he wrote: “Free will *is* an illusion. Our wills are simply not of our own making... We do not have the freedom we think we have.”⁶ He further stated, “I cannot determine my wants... My mental life is given to me by the cosmos.”⁷ Again, “People feel (or presume) an authorship of their thoughts and actions that is illusory.”⁸ And, “What I will do next, and why, remains, at bottom, a mystery—one that is fully determined by the prior state of the universe and the laws of nature (including the contributions of chance).”⁹ As he begins to summarize his views toward the end of the book, he says, “You will do whatever it

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is you do, and it is meaningless to assert that you could have done otherwise.”¹⁰

Why does Harris demand that free will is non-existent? His commitment to materialism paints him into this corner, which is obvious from his statement: “In improving ourselves and society, we are working directly with the forces of nature, for there is nothing but nature itself to work with.”¹¹ On the second-to-last page he writes, “Am I free to change my mind? Of course not. It can only change *me*.”¹²

There are striking ironies in the position that Harris and others take as they deny their own free will and their readers’ as well. First, why in the world would these men write books and articles in an attempt to persuade anyone to believe their “no free will” position if the reader cannot decide for himself to change his mind? What is the point of trying to convince a person who believes in free will, if that “belief” is nothing more than the consequence of the cause-and-effect, natural processes that are banging around in his brain? If the reader does not have the ability to choose his or her belief, what is the point of trying to “show” the superiority of the “no-free-will” position? According to Harris and crew, you believe what you believe because of the physics of the Cosmos working in your brain, and how in the world words on a page could change those physics would indeed be a mystery worth uncovering. The fact that modern atheists are writing books to convince people that there is no free will belies the undeniable fact that humans have free will.

Second, Harris’ concluding statement brings to light another glaring difficulty in the no-free-will position. He says, “Am I free to change my mind? Of course not. It can only change *me*.”¹³ Wait just a minute. Who is the

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“I” or the “me” in the sentence? If there is no free will, and humans are simply the combined total of the physical processes at work in their brains, then there should be nothing more than the “mind” in Harris’ sentence. The fact that he can differentiate between “himself” and his “mind” shows that there is something more at work than determinism. A purely physical entity such as a rock or atom does not have the ability to think in terms of “I” or “me.” In truth, that Harris is conscious of an “I” or of a “self” contradicts his claim that free will does not exist.¹⁴

In addition, it seems humorous and superfluous for people such as Harris to write an “Acknowledgements” section in their books. Why thank people and acknowledge their contributions to your work if they could not have done otherwise. He writes, “I would like to thank my wife and editor, Annaka Harris, for her contributions to *Free Will*. As is always the case, her insights and recommendations greatly improved the book. I don’t know how she manages to raise our daughter, work on her own projects, and still have time to edit my books—but she does. I am extremely lucky and grateful to have her in my corner.”¹⁵ That’s all well and good, but since she has no free will, she didn’t choose to help Sam, it was thrust upon her by the nature of the Cosmos. Why thank a person who stays with you and helps you due to no choice or decision of her own, but due to an unalterable course of cause-and-effect actions in her brain? Why not thank the computer that “typed the words so faithfully as I hit the key strokes,” or the oxygen that “so generously entered my lungs and allowed my cells to function,” or the light that “so gracefully bounced from the screen (or page) to my eye, allowing me to see”? That Harris thanks his wife and not his computer gets to the point that there is something very different about

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the two entities. You thank a person because that person helped you (but could have **chosen** to do otherwise).

Recall that William Provine took to the podium on the campus of the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. He was invited to deliver the keynote address at the second annual Darwin Day, a day dedicated to commemorating the life and teachings of Charles Darwin. In an abstract of that speech on the Darwin Day Web site, Dr. Provine's introductory comments are recorded in the following words: "Naturalistic evolution has clear consequences that Charles Darwin understood perfectly. 1) No gods worth having exist; 2) no life after death exists; 3) no ultimate foundation for ethics exists; 4) no ultimate meaning in life exists; and 5) **human free will is nonexistent.**"¹⁶ Provine's ensuing message centered on his fifth statement regarding the lack of human free will.

Several years later, Provine continued to hold to this position. He appeared in the Ben Stein documentary *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* in 2008. In his discussion about Darwinian evolution, he said, "It starts by giving up an active deity, then it gives up the hope that there is any life after death. When you give those two up, the rest of it follows fairly easily. You give up the hope that there is an imminent morality. **And finally, there's no human free will. If you believe in evolution, you can't hope for there being any free will.** There's no hope whatsoever in there being any deep meaning in life. We live, we die, and we're gone."¹⁷ The late Nobel Prize winner Francis Crick concurred with Provine. He wrote in his book *The Astonishing Hypothesis*: "You, your joys and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense of personal identity and free will,

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are in fact no more than the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules.”¹⁸

In his million-copy international best-selling book *The Selfish Gene*, renowned atheistic writer and speaker Richard Dawkins explained the evolutionary ideas that force atheism to deny human free will. He asserted that humans are “survival machines—robot vehicles blindly programmed to preserve selfish molecules known as genes.”¹⁹ Since Dawkins views humans as a compilation of physical genes fighting for survival, he must insist that these genes instinctively strive to live and pass on their information. That being the case, every human action must then be a product of the physical “gene” forces at work in the human body and brain. Human actions cannot be the result of some type of personality or free will according to this notion. In his attempt to flesh out his view more thoroughly and give answers to behaviors that have traditionally been attributed to human free will, he expounds on the selfish gene idea: “This gene selfishness will usually give rise to selfishness in individual behaviour.”²⁰ When explaining the relationships that survival machines (humans) have with each other, he stoically quips:

To a survival machine, another survival machine (which is not its own child or another close relative) is part of its environment, like a rock or a river or a lump of food. It is something that gets in the way, or something that can be exploited. It differs from a rock or a river in one important respect; it is inclined to hit back. This is because it too is a machine that holds its immortal genes in trust for the future, and it too will stop at nothing to preserve them.²¹

Dawkins’ ultimate explanation for human behavior is that we do not choose the way we relate to each other, but are driven by our genes to use or exploit other

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humans to produce the greatest chance to pass on genetic information.

It is often the case that many atheists attempt to distance themselves from the views of Dawkins, Harris, and other free-will-deniers. They contend that, even though they are atheists, they still believe that humans have free will and choose their own behavior. They do this because they know, deep down in their heart of hearts, that they have chosen their behaviors in the past. The problem with their mode of operation, however, is that atheism **necessarily implies** that free will cannot exist. If humans actually make their own, personal decisions, then something must be at work that is more than nature—that is over and above the natural, physical movement of atoms. There must be a human mind, or soul, or spirit that is supernatural—that controls the movement of the physical body. A person can choose atheism, or he can accept human free will, but not both and still be logically consistent.

Recall atheist Dan Barker, prolific debater and author. Barker feels the tension between atheism's denial of free will and the fact that humans know that they make personal choices. His solution is simply to redefine the term free will. In his debate with Peter Payne, Barker stated: "I happen to think that we have the **illusion** of freewill.... I'm a strict determinist. We are natural creatures. The material world is all there is. We **actually don't have** what we would call libertarian freewill."²² In his book, *godless*, Barker stated: "I am a determinist, which means that I don't think complete libertarian free will exists. Since we don't know the future...we have the illusion of free will, which to me is what 'free will' actually means." Barker recognizes that humans certainly feel like they make decisions, but his atheism

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demands that they cannot do so. In order to hang on to his atheism, and allow for “free will,” he changes the definition of free will to “thinking that you are actually making a free will choice when you are not.”²³

Barker is not the only atheist that is forced to turn to this “illusion of free will” idea. Anthony Cashmore, biologist at the University of Pennsylvania, penned an article alleging that human free will does not exist. He wrote: “It is my belief that, as more attention is given to the mechanisms that govern human behavior, it will increasingly be seen that the concept of free will is an illusion.”²⁴ According to Cashmore, you are reading this book because your genes and your environment have forced you to. You are not responsible for your decision to read this book, and based on your alleged evolutionary history and your environment, you could not choose to be doing anything different than what you are doing now. You are literally a slave to your genes and your environment. As Cashmore wrote: “[A]n individual cannot be held responsible for either his genes or his environment. From this simple analysis, surely it follows that individuals cannot logically be held responsible for their behavior.”²⁵

One of the most damaging lines of reasoning against the illusion idea put forth by Barker and Cashmore is the way in which these men attempt to convince their readers of its truth. Cashmore used five-and-a-half pages to argue that our society should disregard the outdated concept that humans are responsible for their behavior. Barker has been in more than 80 moderated debates attempting to bring people over to his view. But if Cashmore and Barker are right, then there is no way we can disregard the concept of free will, as they propose we should, due to the simple fact that we did not choose it

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in the first place. If humans are not responsible for their beliefs or behaviors, then the generally held concept of free will is nothing more than an evolutionary, environmental by-product. According to their line of thinking, if we believe in free will at the present, and act on that belief, we are not responsible for it. If they are right, why in the world would they attempt to urge the scientific community to change its mind about free will, if the community does not have the power to change its mind? Why spend time and effort arguing against free will, if your audience does not have the freedom to choose to accept or reject your reasoning anyway? The fatal flaw of the “no free will” argument is that it demands that the person making the argument has the free will to do so, and it tacitly assumes the parties evaluating the argument have the power to accept or reject it.

If humans are survival machines that cannot make any real choices, then all “persuasive” arguments would be worthless. Those who believe in God are programmed and forced by their genes to do so. Those who believe there is no God are equally products of their bodily physics. If humans don’t change their minds, but, as Harris claims, their minds change them, then why attempt to **change** believers’ minds, since they don’t really have “minds” and their brains are going to “believe” whatever their genes tell them anyway? The atheists actually have to assume free will in order to even discuss the topic. It’s as if they are saying, “I want you to turn your eyes to look at me so that I can show you that you really can’t see anything.”

Television personality Bill Nye the “Science Guy” finds himself in a terrible quandary when asked about human free will. In a video on the subject titled, “Hey Bill Nye, Do Humans Have Free Will?” he states: “But

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clearly, I know I have made decisions based on things that happened around me that I wouldn't have made without being informed by history or what I noticed. I know I have. Now if that turns out not to be true, I'd be very surprised."²⁶ Near the end of the video, however, he then backtracks and claims that our decisions really are the result of the quantum physics at work in our brains, and then he claims: "At some level there is randomness in what we think, because we are made of chemicals that have randomness." Then he said, "I mean, I don't mean to skirt your question."²⁷ Actually, skirting the question was exactly what he was doing. He has to admit that he makes choices, but his adherence to atheistic naturalism forces him to back peddle and attribute those "choices" to chemistry and physics. His video is the epitome of atheism's failure to deal with the fact of human free will.

In June of 2015, evolutionary biologist Jerry Coyne delivered a lecture at the Imagine No Religion convention in Vancouver, Canada. His speech was titled, "You Don't Have Free Will." It is one of the clearest examples of the new age atheistic position. Based on his atheistic beliefs, he argues for a purely deterministic world in which human free will is nothing more than physical processes at work, molecules moving to the beat of the laws of physics. Addressing his primarily atheistic audience, he said, "Now many of you don't accept that. You don't believe that **you are robots made out of meat**, which is what I'm going to try to convince you of today." He takes this position, because if atheism is true, and there is nothing supernatural, then (as he says), "Our behavior is absolutely determined by the laws of physics."²⁸

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Coyne takes serious issue with his fellow atheists who claim to be naturalists and determinists, but who attempt to say that humans do have some kind of free will. He correctly shows that atheistic naturalism cannot permit **any type** of free will. Those atheists who are trying to accommodate both ideas, according to Coyne, are simply playing “semantic tricks” trying to convince people “that we are still okay even though we are meat robots.”²⁹ Coyne went on to say, “As Anthony Cashmore said, ‘We have no more free will than a bowl of sugar.’” Coyne then added his own words, “We are bowls of sugar, just very complicated ones.” Coyne does an excellent job of proving that atheism demands that human free will cannot exist. What he fails to do, however, is prove that free will does not exist. He claims it. He asserts it, but he cannot prove his false assertion. The reason for that is simply because humans really do have free will.

At one point in his speech, he attempted to deal with the biggest problem that the “no-free-will” idea encounters. He tried to tackle the question of why he would try to persuade anyone to believe his view, since, according to his view, no one can choose any beliefs. His argument was that, just like kicking a dog teaches the dog to avoid harm, presenting the material he was presenting may “teach” a human to adopt his viewpoint, even though humans would just be reacting to his material, not choosing to believe it. So, Coyne says, “Why did I get out of bed this morning? I thought, I hope to persuade people, and that was determined by the laws of physics.” He goes on to say, “Even our very desire to try to change people’s minds. The fact that I’m up here trying to do this is determined by my own, you know, physical constitution and environment. That is the infinite regress and the sort of annoying thing about determinism. It’s turtles all the way down.”

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Let's analyze Coyne's statement. Who is "annoyed" by this "infinite regress" of physics? Is it Coyne? Why, if he is just doing what his chemistry is forcing him to do, does he get "annoyed" at this? And who, exactly, is it that is getting annoyed at the situation? Is it Coyne's physical, "meat robot" self? Obviously, the fact that he is "annoyed" speaks to there being something more to Coyne than molecules in motion.

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Consider the chain of implications. First, if there is no God, then this material world must be all there is. There can be nothing supernatural. Second, if the physical world is all that exists, then all entities that are made of matter must be driven solely by physical laws. Third, since there is nothing supernatural (according to this view), then there can be nothing more-than-matter inside of humans that can choose anything. Free will cannot exist in an atheistic world. But do not stop there. If humans cannot make decisions, then what is the necessary implication of that belief? What would that mean in regard to morality, crime, punishment, etc? The necessary implication is that humans are not morally responsible for any of their behavior, any more than a rock, squirrel, or turtle is.

In Coyne's speech, after making one of his points about most of his audience being determinists, he said, "Almost all of you here don't believe in moral responsibility. Think about that." He went on to say that because of his belief in determinism, "I don't consider myself morally responsible, because I don't have a choice." Cashmore said the same when he stated, "From this simple analysis, surely it follows that individuals cannot logically be held responsible for their behavior."³⁰ While the atheists who deny free will attempt to con-

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jure up a world where no moral responsibility brings about a modern utopia, nothing could be further from the truth. The rapist blames his genes. The murderer blames his chemistry. The adulterer points the finger at his environment. The thief “cannot help himself.” The perjurer acted only in response to molecular motion in his brain. The school shooter followed his urge to kill as many students as possible. The suicide bomber could not have chosen otherwise. An environment saturated with such thinking would hardly be described as utopia.

Along these lines, Coyne said, “Whether or not you are the kind of person who accepts other people’s notions of morality is something that you have no control over. And if you don’t, that’s something you don’t have any control over either.” Let that sink in. If you think it is “morally” acceptable to fly a plane into a building in an attempt to kill as many people as possible, you could not think otherwise and you are not “morally” responsible for doing anything wrong. Truly, **the denial of moral responsibility is one of the most fallacious and harmful implications of the false idea of atheism.**

If we are to be “scientific” about these matters, we must take what we know to be the case and find the explanation that best fits the facts. If we are honest, each of us knows that we have freely chosen attitudes and behaviors. We know that we could have chosen differently. And we often feel the guilt of having chosen wrong, or the triumphant feeling of having chosen right. In all honesty, you know that you could choose to quit reading this book right now, or you could continue. Your freedom is not an illusion, but is an actuality, a statement of the way things really are, not the way they only seem to be. Since that is the case, we must take the fact—our free will—and find an explanation that best fits

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the fact. Atheism cannot account for human free will. Atheists who are consistent with their belief are forced to admit this is a logical implication of it. Therefore, if humans have free will, and atheism implies that they do not, then atheism is false (and therefore theism is true). On the other hand, the idea of a supernatural God endowing humans with a mind, consciousness, and soul fits perfectly with the fact of human free will. Thus, the person who is trying to “follow the evidence where it leads” must conclude that human free will **proves** a supernatural Creator exists.

WHY CHOOSE TO BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE NO CHOICE?

As I have studied atheistic books and writings and watched several videos, I’ve tried to put my finger on why atheists do not want to believe they choose. Most admit that humans think we are free to choose, but they insist that we are not really choosing anything. They maintain that there is really no “Sam Harris” upstairs, or Jerry Coyne “in there somewhere.” They insist that “Richard Dawkins” is just another name for the physical molecules that make up a certain body, and that there is no real soul or personality of a non-material nature “in there.” If there really is such a thing as free will (and there is), why would a group of people choose to deny it in spite of the evidence that proves it exists? Why don’t they want to be viewed as free moral agents who deserve praise for their morally correct actions and who deserve blame for their moral failures? An exhaustive list of possible reasons why this is the case is impossible, but Coyne did give us one very telling idea.

Near the end of Coyne’s speech, he attempted to explain the benefits he sees in adopting the idea that free will does not exist (not to be tedious, but keep in

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mind that he does not really think you can adopt it, instead you are forced to accept whatever your chemistry determines). He said that a benefit of denying free will is that you would have a “lack of regret for bad things that happen. It takes away a certain amount of guilt feelings from you. You don’t have to beat yourself up over, ‘I should have done this instead of that.’” There you have it. Humans, from the beginning of Creation, have looked for ways to plead “not guilty” in the face of their own sins. We have attempted to blame everyone else except ourselves for our moral failures. Humans have tried to blame God, their parents, their genes, their society, their spouses, their circumstances, and everything under the Sun for the selfish, sinful choices they have made. The next step with this approach is to say that, since we cannot choose our behavior, then “punishment is not justified for retribution (people get—or should get—what they deserve).”³¹

Notice the reasoning. If I can say that I cannot help myself (I **cannot** choose differently), then I do not have to feel guilty for the things I do “wrong.” Furthermore, if I did not choose the immoral actions that I committed, then neither society (nor God) can punish me for doing immoral things. Truly, the Proverbs writer accurately stated many years ago, “Evil men do not understand justice” (Proverbs 28:5). The atheistic position not only rejects the concept of free will, but then jettisons the concept of justice as well. Yet how acutely aware we humans are when injustice has been done to us.

In regard to the current situation, Romans 1 reads almost like a prophecy,

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is evident in them, for God

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has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead **so that they are without excuse**, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools (1:18-22, emp. added).

“I was just a meat robot.” “My selfish genes drove me to....” “The physical properties in my brain forced me to act that way.” “I could not have chosen differently so I’m not morally responsible.” These and other empty excuses will not be accepted by the Maker on the Day of Judgment. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Carl Sagan (1980), *Cosmos* (New York: Random House), p. 4.
- ² *American Heritage Dictionary of English Language* (2000), (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin), fourth edition.
- ³ Martinez Hewlett and Ted Peters (2006), “Theology, Religion, and Intelligent Design,” *Not in Our Classrooms*, ed. Eugenie Scott and Glenn Branch (Boston, MA: Beacon Press), p. 75, emp. added.
- ⁴ Paul Davies (1983), *God and the New Physics* (New York: Simon & Schuster), p. 82.
- ⁵ Richard Lewontin (1997), “Billions and Billions of Demons,” *The New York Review*, January 9.
- ⁶ Sam Harris (2012), *Free Will* (New York: Free Press), p. 5, italics in orig.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

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- ¹² Ibid., p. 65, italics in orig.
- ¹³ Ibid., italics in orig.
- ¹⁴ For an extended discussion of consciousness and creation see B. Thompson and B. Harrub, “The Origin of Consciousness: Part 2,” Apologetics Press, <http://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=249&article=630>.
- ¹⁵ Harris, p. 67.
- ¹⁶ William Provine (1998), “Evolution: Free Will and Punishment and Meaning in Life,” <http://eeb.bio.utk.edu/darwin/Darwin-DayProvineAddress.htm>, emp. added.
- ¹⁷ Ben Stein and Kevin Miller (2008), *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* (Premise Media), emp. added.
- ¹⁸ Francis Crick (1994), *The Astonishing Hypothesis* (London: Simon and Schuster), p. 3.
- ¹⁹ Richard Dawkins (2006), *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press), 30th Anniversary edition, p. xxi.
- ²⁰ Ibid., p. 2.
- ²¹ Ibid., p. 66.
- ²² Dan Barker and Peter Payne (2005), “Does Ethics Require God?” http://www.ffrf.org/about/bybarker/ethics_debate.php.
- ²³ Dan Barker (2008), *godless* (Berkeley, CA: Ulysses Press), p. 128.
- ²⁴ Anthony Cashmore (2010), “The Lucretian Swerve: The Biological Basis of Human Behavior and the Criminal Justice System,” *PNAS*, 107:10, <http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2010/02/04/0915161107.full.pdf+html>.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Bill Nye (2016), *Big Think*, “Hey Bill Nye, Do Humans Have Free Will?” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITdMa2bCaVc>.
- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ Jerry Coyne (2015), “You Don’t Have Free Will,” Imagine No Religion Convention, Vancouver, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ca7i-D4ddaw>.
- ²⁹ Ibid. All other quotes from Coyne’s speech have the same bibliographic information unless otherwise noted.
- ³⁰ Cashmore.
- ³¹ Coyne. Cf. Dave Miller (2017), “Why Be An Atheist?” *Reason & Revelation*, 37[6]:70-71.

CHAPTER 12

WHICH GOD EXISTS?

Jeff Miller, Ph.D. and Dave Miller, Ph.D.

Several decades ago, the United States was overwhelmingly Christian in its religious persuasion. When naturalism and Darwinian evolution picked up speed in the U.S. and challenged the biblical account of man's origins—the perspective most held by Americans—apologists sprang up in response, dealing a death blow to the naturalistic religion in the minds of many. Once evolutionary theory had been dealt with, both biblically and scientifically, it was natural for many Americans to recognize that they had always been right—Christianity is the true religion.

Sadly, under the banner of “tolerance,” the “politically correct” police have made significant inroads in compelling the American public, not only to tolerate, but to endorse and encourage pluralism and the proliferation of false religion in America. What was once an understood conclusion—that if evolution is wrong, then biblical Creation must be true—is now heavily challenged in America.

It has become a popular tactic among atheistic scoffers to mock Bible believers by sarcastically arguing that there's just as much evidence for the Flying Spaghetti Monster as there is for any god. Therefore, if intelligent design doctrine deserves time in the classroom, so does

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the doctrine of the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster—the Pastafarians.¹ At the University of South Carolina, a student organization made up of Pastafarians was responsible for sponsoring the debate held between A.P.’s Kyle Butt and popular atheist, Dan Barker.²

One such scoffer approached me [JM] a few years ago after one of the sessions of my evolution seminar—a biology professor from the local university in the city where I was speaking. His quibble was a fair one: “Even if you’re right that naturalistic evolution/atheism is false, you still haven’t proven **which** God exists. You haven’t proven it’s the God of the Bible. Why couldn’t it be Allah? Or [sarcastically] the Flying Spaghetti Monster?”

It is true that many times when apologists show evidence for the existence of God using the arguments in this book, or discredit naturalism and thereby show that the evidence points to supernaturalism, they do not necessarily always take the next step and answer how we arrive specifically at the God of the Bible as the one true God. Perhaps the main reason, again, is because the answer was once so obvious that the additional step did not need to be taken. People already had faith in the Bible, and they only needed someone to answer an attack on its integrity. Upon answering it, they went back to their already substantiated faith in Christianity comfortably. But as naturalism and pluralism have eroded the next generation, and Bible teaching—the impetus for developing faith (Romans 10:17)—has declined, Christianity is no longer a given.

Many in Christendom would respond to the professor’s questions by saying, “You just have to have faith. You just have to take a leap and accept the God of the Bible. You don’t have to have tangible evidence.” That reaction, of course, is exactly how scoffers want you to

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answer. Their response: “Aha! You don’t have proof that the God of the Bible exists. So why should I believe in Him? I might as well pick one that suits me better or make up my own god to serve.”

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Bible simply does not teach that one should accept God without evidence. We should test or **prove all things**, and only believe those things that can be sustained with evidence (1 Thessalonians 5:21). We should not accept what someone tells us “on faith,” because many teach lies; they should be tested to see if their claims can be backed with evidence (1 John 4:1). The truth should be searched for (Acts 17:11). It can be **known** (John 8:32). God would not expect us to believe that He is the one true God without evidence for that claim (John 10:37).

While there are different ways to answer the question posed by the professor, the most direct and simple answer is that **the Bible contains characteristics which humans could not have produced**. If it can be proven that a God exists and that the Bible is from God, then logically, the God of the Bible is the true God. It is truly a sad commentary on Christendom at large that the professor, as well as the many individuals that are posing such questions today, have not heard the simple answer about the nature of God’s divine Word. After taking a moment to recover from the fact that he clearly had never experienced anyone responding rationally to his criticisms, the professor said, “Really? [pause] I’d like to see that evidence.”³

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So who is this God? Over the millennia, humans have believed in many gods. Even today, a billion Hindus on Earth believe in the existence of thousands of deities—including Shiva, Ganesh, Durga, and Vishnu.

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It is the contention of this book that the features and traits of the created realm testify to the existence of a specific deity Who is characterized by certain definable, recognizable attributes. The very nature of the Universe reflects the nature and personality of this deity (Romans 1:20). While the Bible itself may be shown to be of supernatural, divine origin,⁴ and therefore its testimony concerning the existence of the triune God verifies His existence, nevertheless, the created order itself testifies to the existence of the God of the Bible. One of the Founders of the American Republic, Noah Webster, alluded to this self-evident truth in “Advice to the Young” in his monumental *A History of the United States*:

From such familiar observations and reflections [of the created order—JM/DM], children may be convinced, with absolute certainty, that there must be a being who has been the creator of all the things which they see. Now when you think that of all the substances about you, not one can have been its own creator, and when you see the vast multitude of things, their variety, their size, their curious forms and structures, you will at once conclude that the Being who could make such things must possess immense power, altogether superior to the power of any being that you see on the earth.⁵

Indeed, a thorough examination of the created order—the Universe and everything within it that humans have been able to observe—offers compelling verification for the existence of the Supreme Being described in the Bible, Who is responsible for that created realm.

His Nature

First, the very nature of the physical realm and the laws that govern it imply the existence of a Creator Who must not, Himself, be physical or subject to physical laws. So, He does not possess a physical body. Rather, He

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is “spirit”—even as Jesus explained (John 4:24). God’s nature is evidenced in the Universe that He created:

Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness (Acts 14:17).

Second, God must be eternal and pre-existent. He is uncreated. The term “self-existent” aptly characterizes God. He had no beginning and He has no end: “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God” (Psalm 90:2). He “alone has immortality” (1 Timothy 6:15-16). He is not subject to the passing of time, but as the cause of time, He transcends time. The words “in the beginning, God...” (Genesis 1:1) do not imply that God had a beginning. “Beginning” refers to the beginning of the physical Universe. Only deity is eternal in nature. Everything and everyone else had a beginning—including all humans and all other spirit beings (like angels).

For by Him **all things** were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **All things** were created through Him and for Him. And **He is before all things**, and in Him all things consist (Colossians 1:16-17).

His Attributes

Third, God must be infinite in all His attributes. He possesses His qualities to a perfect, infinite degree—unlike all the fake deities conjured by humans throughout history. Consider a few of these inherent attributes which distinguish the God of the Bible from other alleged gods and which, upon close examination, are reflected in the natural realm:

1. He is **omnipotent** (all-powerful). He is the Almighty Who is able to do anything that infinite power is capable

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of doing (Job 42:2; Mark 10:27). He spoke the entire Universe into existence (Psalm 33:5-9; 148:5; Hebrews 11:3). There is nothing too hard for God (Genesis 18:14; Jeremiah 32:17)—though He will do nothing that is contrary to His nature (Titus 1:2).

2. He is **omnibenevolent** (all-loving). He cares for His created creatures with a perfect love. He is the epitome of kindness and compassion (Acts 14:17). He is tender, gracious, and merciful. He is good (Nahum 1:7). “The goodness of God endures continually” (Psalm 52:1; see also Ephesians 2:7).
3. He is **omnipresent**. He is aware of all that is happening everywhere, whether in the physical realm or the spirit realm. “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there” (Psalm 139:7-8). “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good” (Proverbs 15:3). He sees the actions of every individual (Proverbs 5:21).
4. He is **omniscient** (all-knowing). He knows everything there is to be known. He even knows what every human being on the planet is thinking (1 Chronicles 28:9). He knows the number of stars (Psalm 147:4), the number of hairs on every human head, and He is aware of every sparrow that falls to the ground (Matthew 10:29-30). “And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account” (Hebrews 4:13). He knows the past, present, and future. He possesses perfect knowledge. See also Genesis 6:5; Job 21:22; 36:4; 37:16; Psalm 33:13-15; 139:2-4; 17-18; Matthew 6:8; 11:27; Acts 15:17-18; Romans 11:33; 8:29.
5. He is **omnisapient** (all wise). He is the source of wisdom (Ezra 7:25) and therefore is, ultimately, “alone wise” (Romans 16:27). His wisdom is “manifold” (Ephesians 3:10), i.e., diverse and multifarious, and particularly seen in His orchestration of man’s redemption from eternity (1 Corinthians 1:24; 2:7). See also Job 12:13; Daniel 2:20; Luke 11:49; Revelation 7:12.

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6. He is **immutable** (unchanging) in His nature, character, essence, and attributes (Malachi 3:6), though He adjusts His actions to respond to man's actions and conduct. He is "the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). With Him is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). The entire Universe will be changed through dissolution, but as the psalmist uttered to God: "You are the same, and Your years will have no end" (Psalm 102:27; see also Hebrews 6:18).
7. He is **holy**. He is separate and distinct from everything and everyone in His moral and spiritual status. "Who is like You, O LORD,...glorious in holiness?" (Exodus 15:11). He is in a class by Himself. "I the LORD your God am holy" (Leviticus 19:2; 11:44-45; 20:26; 21:8; cf. 1 Peter 1:16). "For You alone are holy" (Revelation 15:4; cf. 4:8; Psalm 47:8; 60:6; 93:5; 97:12; Isaiah 6:3).
8. He is **just** and **righteous**. He is completely impartial and fair. He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11). He shows no favor or bias. He is always right. He has never conducted Himself inappropriately (Psalm 129:4; 145:17). Every one of His actions has been proper and correct (Isaiah 28:17). "For the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness" (Psalm 11:7; cf. 119:137).
9. He is **pure, morally perfect, and without spiritual defect**. "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). "He is pure" (1 John 3:3) and dwells in "unapproachable light" (1 Timothy 6:16). "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19; cf. 1 Samuel 15:29). "You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness" (Habakkuk 1:13).
10. He is **sovereign**. He is the absolute, supreme ruler of the material and spiritual realms (1 Chronicles 29:11-12). Everyone and everything belongs to Him as the ultimate authority (Psalm 24:1; Ezekiel 18:4; Daniel 4:34-35). "I am the LORD, and there is no other" (Isaiah 45:18). His dominion and His will surpass all others (Romans 9-11)—though His justice and love prevents Him from

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interfering with anyone's free will. He will do nothing that is contrary to His nature.⁶

11. He is **patient** and **longsuffering**. Like a loving parent, He waits on people, giving them time to make the right decision and to get their lives in order (Romans 2:4). He bears with people for long periods (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 3:9). “[T]he mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting” (Psalm 103:17).
12. He is **humble**. “Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart” (Matthew 11:29).
13. He is **kind** (Romans 2:4). “For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful” (Luke 6:35-36; cf. James 5:11). See also Jeremiah 9:24; Acts 14:17; Titus 3:4; Joel 2:13; Nehemiah 9:17; Deuteronomy 5:10.
14. He is **wrathful**. He possesses the appropriate disdain for evil with the correspondingly correct manifestation of wrath. His wrath, unlike human anger, is unemotional, impersonal, and appropriate in magnitude and duration. “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men” (Romans 1:18). The holiness of God is reflected in the justice of God and manifested in the wrath of God. See also Hebrews 3:10,17; Psalm 2:12; 7:11; Ezra 9:14-15.
15. He is **one** in His divine essence—yet exists in three separate, distinct persons, forming the unified Godhead (Deuteronomy 6:4; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9), consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:26).

CONCLUSION

“In the beginning, God....” So begins the Bible. The message of the Bible in its entirety, as well as the sum of human existence, are embodied in those first four words. The only ultimate reality, from Whom flows everything else, is Deity. These few (and many other) attributes help us to identify the true Deity, the God of the Bible. He is matchless, unsurpassed, and incom-

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parable to the deities conjured in the minds of mere men throughout human history. “[T]here is none other besides Him” (Deuteronomy 4:35). Neither the gods of the Canaanites, nor the gods of Egypt, nor the gods of the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, nor the gods of Hinduism or Native American religion, begin to compare with the reality of “the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen” (1 Timothy 6:15-16). The atheist is wrong. God exists. And He is the God depicted on the pages of the Bible.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Cf. James Langton (2005), “In the Beginning There Was the Flying Spaghetti Monster,” *The Telegraph*, September 11, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/1498162/In-the-beginning-there-was-the-Flying-Spaghetti-Monster.html>.
- ² Kyle Butt (2010), *A Christian’s Guide to Refuting Modern Atheism* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), p. 12.
- ³ See Kyle Butt (2007), *Behold! The Word of God* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press) and the massive evidence at the apologeticspress.org Web site for the inspiration of the Bible. God’s Word is compelling, conclusive, complete, and final.
- ⁴ See Endnote #3 and Chapter 13.
- ⁵ Noah Webster (1832), *History of the United States* (New Haven, CT: Durrie & Peck), p. 295, <https://goo.gl/Yh1YtR>.
- ⁶ Dave Miller (2009), “Things God Cannot Do,” Apologetics Press, <http://apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=11&article=1240>.

CHAPTER 13

THE BIBLE ITSELF IS PROOF OF GOD

Kyle Butt, M.Div. and Eric Lyons, M.Min.

The Bible is the most popular book that has ever been printed. It was one of the first books mass produced on Gutenberg's printing press in 1455. To estimate a total number of Bibles and portions of it that have been produced and distributed worldwide throughout history would be virtually impossible, but the number stands well over 10 billion, since the United Bible Society alone has distributed over nine billion in the past 70 years.¹ Without dispute, the Bible is the best selling book of all time worldwide.²

Why is the Bible so popular? The reason most often given is that those who are printing, distributing, and reading the Bible believe it is the inspired Word of God. Most people who read the Bible do not think it is good advice from mere men. Nor do they think it is a book of fairy tales written for entertainment. Instead, they believe the Book they are reading is the product of the one true God.

Oftentimes, when people are asked to give reasons that support their belief that the Bible is from God, they say that the Bible claims to be from God. It is certainly true that the Bible contains numerous statements that claim inspiration. Second Timothy 3:16-17 states: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God..." In fact, any-

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one who wants to search the entire Bible will discover that it contains more than 2,700 instances in which divine inspiration is claimed (e.g., “God said;” “the Lord said;” “by revelation He [God] made known”).

Yet, even though we would expect to find that any book produced by God would claim divine inspiration, **such a claim does not prove anything in and of itself.** It is a necessary trait of inspiration, but it is not a sufficient trait. Various books claim to be inspired by God (such as the *Quran* and the *Book of Mormon*), but simply because a book or writing claims divine inspiration is not positive proof of its inspiration. Any person could stand in front of an audience and claim to be the President of the United States of America. In fact, he could make that claim over 2,700 times. But his multiple claims to the presidency would fail to prove his case unless he could provide more adequate and sufficient evidence.

When Jesus revealed Himself to the world as the Son of God at about the age of 30 (Luke 3:23), He did not expect people to believe Him simply because **He said** He was the Messiah. On the contrary, Jesus said, **“If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me;** but if I do, though you do not believe Me, **believe the works,** that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him” (John 10:37-38).³ If the Messiah was not to be trusted merely based upon **claims** of messiahship, neither should the Bible. Again, though the claim of inspiration is important (and expected if the Bible is the Word of God), **mere claims prove nothing.**

Those who penned the Bible did not expect the world to receive their writings as God’s Word simply because they claimed they were. The Bible writers insisted that

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their writings were not based on imaginary, unverifiable people and events, but instead were grounded on solid, verifiable facts. The apostle Peter wrote: “For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty” (2 Peter 1:16). In his introduction to the book of Acts, Luke stated that Jesus “presented Himself alive after His suffering by **many infallible proofs**, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3). The Bible writers understood and insisted that the information they penned was accurate and factual, and should be accepted, not based on a lack of evidence or a “leap in the dark,” but on an abundance of verifiable proof.

So what proof do we have to confirm the Bible’s supernatural origin? Why should an honest truth-seeker come to the conclusion that the Bible is the special revelation from the Creator of the Universe? In short, the main, overarching reason that the Bible is demonstrated to be of divine origin is because **the Bible writers were correct in everything they wrote—about the past, the present, and even the future.**

Eighteenth-century English poet Alexander Pope succinctly noted in “An Essay on Criticism” what every rational person knows all too well—“**to err is human.**”⁴ Even though we may set high standards for ourselves and learn all that we can, and even though we may put as many safeguards in place as is humanly possible, mistakes will be made; ignorance will be revealed; errors will occur. As great of a historian as Herodotus was, he sometimes erred. As brilliant of a man as Aristotle was, he was terribly incorrect at times.⁵ As accomplished a writer as was the 8th-century B.C. Greek poet Homer,

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sometimes “even good old Homer nods.”⁶ It simply is **humanly** impossible to be correct about everything a person says or writes. “**With God,**” however, “all things are possible” (Mark 10:27).

If an all-knowing, all-powerful God exists (and there is ample proof that He does as this book has shown), then such a God could produce written revelation for His human creation that was flawless in its original production. He could guide uneducated men to write about events that occurred hundreds or thousands of years before their time with complete accuracy. He could “move” (otherwise) ordinary men to write flawlessly about any number of contemporary people, places, and things (2 Peter 1:20-21). He could even guide man to write about future events with perfect accuracy. In truth, the all-encompassing reason (which shall be dissected into three parts) that a person can come to the rational conclusion that the Bible is “given by inspiration of God” is because the writers of the Bible were amazingly accurate...about **everything**. In the following pages, consider three reasons why the Bible is proof of God.

REASON #1: PREDICTIVE PROPHECY

On Tuesday, September 11, 2001, a horrible tragedy shocked the United States of America when terrorists attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Amid the tragedy, a rumor circulated that Nostradamus, a supposed fortuneteller, had predicted the turn of events. Web sites with information on Nostradamus received thousands, even millions of hits. After all was said and done, the rumored prediction was discovered to have been fabricated and misunderstood; Nostradamus had not predicted the future. But it was obvious from the public’s response that anyone who can accurately predict the future is more than just a little special. The

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prophet Jeremiah wrote: “Who is he who speaks, and it comes to pass, when the Lord has not commanded it?” (Lamentations 3:37). The prophet’s point was clear: no one accurately foretells the future unless God informs him of it. Therefore, if the Bible accurately predicts the future, we can know that it is from God.

The fact is, the Bible contains numerous prophecies that ancient history has shown to be perfectly fulfilled in every detail. Consider a few examples. [NOTE: For many other instances that space restraints will not allow, please consult Apologetics Press’s book *Behold! The Word of God* or visit the “Inspiration of the Bible” section of www.apologeticspress.org.]

The Fall of the City of Tyre

According to history, the Phoenician city of Tyre stood as one of the most ancient and prosperous cities in history. During a visit to the temple of Heracles in Tyre in the 5th-century B.C., the historian Herodotus inquired about the age of the temple, to which the inhabitants replied that the temple was as old as “Tyre itself, and that Tyre had already stood for two thousand three hundred years.”⁷⁷ According to the early 20th-century Hebrew and Greek scholar, Wallace Fleming, in his book *The History of Tyre*, “As early as 1400 B.C., Tyre was not only a great city but was considered impregnable.”⁷⁸

In the early 6th-century B.C., however, the prophet Ezekiel mentioned several events that were to occur in Tyre as punishment for the city’s arrogance and merciless actions (26:1-14,19-21). The prophet predicted: (1) Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, would build a siege mound against the city; (2) many nations would come against Tyre; (3) the city would be broken down, scraped like the top of a rock, and the stones, timber, and soil would be thrown in “the midst of the water;”

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(4) the city would become a “place for spreading nets;” and (5) the city would never be rebuilt.

History reveals that everything Ezekiel prophesied about Tyre came to pass.

1. Nebuchadnezzar “besieged Tyre for thirteen years in the days of Ithobal, their king.”⁹ The king of Babylon severely damaged the mainland as Ezekiel predicted, but the island city remained primarily unaffected.
2. Regarding the prediction that “many nations” would come against Tyre, in 392 B.C., “Tyre was involved in the war which arose between the Persians and Evagorus of Cyprus” in which the king of Egypt “took Tyre by assault.”¹⁰ Sixty years later, in 332, Alexander the Great besieged Tyre and crushed it. In fact, Tyre was contested by so many foreign forces that Fleming wrote: “It seemed ever the fate of the Phoenician cities to be between an upper and a nether millstone.”¹¹ Thus, Ezekiel’s prophecy about “many nations” remains as a historical reality that cannot be successfully gainsaid.
3. By 333 B.C., Ezekiel’s 250-plus-year-old prophecy that Tyre would be destroyed and its building material cast into the midst of the waters had yet to materialize. But that situation soon changed. Ancient historian Diodorus Siculus, who lived from approximately 80-20 B.C., wrote extensively of Alexander the Great’s dealing with Tyre.¹² Secular history details Alexander’s destruction of Tyre, which coincides precisely with Ezekiel’s prophecy concerning what would happen to the city’s building materials. As Ezekiel had predicted, the stones, timber, and soil of the mainland city were thrown into the midst of the sea in an unprecedented military maneuver,¹³ which allowed Alexander to create a land bridge upon which his army could come across to defeat the island city of Tyre. For Ezekiel to have accurately “guessed” this situation would be to stretch the law of probability beyond the limits of absurdity.

So accurate were the prophecies made by Ezekiel that skeptics are forced to suggest a later date for his writings. Yet, such a later date cannot be maintained, and

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the admission of Ezekiel’s accuracy stands as irrefutable evidence of the prophet’s divine inspiration. With the penetrating gaze that can only be maintained by the Divine, God looked hundreds of years into the future and instructed Ezekiel precisely what to write so that in the centuries following the predictions, the fulfillment of every detail of the prophet’s words could be denied by no honest student of history. “When the word of the prophet comes to pass, the prophet will be known as one whom the Lord has truly sent” (Jeremiah 28:9).

The Fall of Babylon and the Rise of Cyrus

Imagine taking a trip to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and visiting the State House where the Constitutional Convention took place in 1787. During the tour, your guide points to a document dating back to just this side of the Convention—about the year 1820. The piece of parchment tells of a man named George W. Bush from Austin, Texas who would be President of the United States within the next 200 years. But how could someone know that a man named George W. Bush would be born in the United States? And how could someone know more than a century before Mr. Bush ever was born that he would be President of the United States? Furthermore, how could someone in 1820 know that a man from Texas (named George W. Bush) would be President of the United States when Texas wasn’t even part of the Union yet? Such a prophecy truly would be amazing! Yet, obviously no such prediction was ever made. Amazingly, the Bible makes a comparable prediction, which was fulfilled with complete accuracy.

In the 8th-century B.C., Isaiah vividly described how God would destroy the powerful kingdom of Babylon, “the glory of kingdoms” (13:19). Writing as if it had already occurred (commonly known as the “prophetic

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perfect,” frequently employed in the Old Testament to stress the absolute certainty of fulfillment), Isaiah declared Babylon would fall (21:9). He then prophesied that Babylon would fall to the Medes and Persians (Isaiah 13; 21:1-10). Later, he proclaimed that the “golden city” (Babylon) would be conquered by a man named Cyrus (44:28; 45:1-7). (This prophecy is remarkable, especially since Cyrus was not even born until almost 150 years after Isaiah penned these words.) Not only did Isaiah predict that Cyrus would overthrow Babylon, he also wrote that Cyrus, serving as Jehovah’s “anointed” and “shepherd,” would release the Jews from captivity and assist them in their return to Jerusalem for the purpose of rebuilding the Temple. All of this was written almost two centuries before Cyrus conquered Babylon (539 B.C.).

Amazingly, secular history verifies that all of these events came true. There really was a man named Cyrus who ruled the Medo-Persian Empire. He did conquer Babylon. And just as Isaiah prophesied, he did assist the Jews in their return to Jerusalem and in the rebuilding of the Temple.

Jeremiah also predicted the destruction of Babylon, the most powerful nation in the world at the time the predictions were made (Jeremiah 50-51). He predicted that Babylon’s water would be dried up, and its soldiers would be drunken and sleep a perpetual sleep. The precision of his predictions was remarkably verified when Cyrus redirected the Euphrates River and entered Babylon through the opening where the river usually entered. The entrance was left unattended because the Babylonians were getting drunk at a festival celebration.

Messianic Prophecies

Throughout the pages of the Old Testament there are over 300 prophecies about a coming Messiah. Each

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one of these prophecies is fulfilled in minute detail in the life of Jesus Christ. While it is true that most people's lives can only be chronicled after they have lived it, the life of Jesus was chronicled before He arrived on Earth. In addition, a host of the prophecies concerning Christ were intentionally specific and could not have been arranged by a mere human who was falsely claiming to be the Messiah. For instance, the Old Testament told where the Messiah would be born (Micah 5:2), a situation that cannot be manipulated by the one being born. The circumstances of the Messiah's death were detailed, even down to His burial, which provides another instance in which the deceased could not have connived a fulfillment.

In contrasting the God of Israel with the pagan idols of old, the prophet Isaiah issued a challenge to those who believed in the potency of their pagan deities. Isaiah said this about the idols: "Let them bring forth and show us what will happen; let them show the former things, what they were, that we may consider them.... Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are gods" (41:22-23). According to Isaiah, any deity that could consistently forecast the future would be recognized as a true God, while any unable to tell the future should be relegated to the rubbish pile of false religions. In order to prove that the God of Israel was the true God, Isaiah quoted this from the mouth of God: "I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done" (46:9-10). Truly, Isaiah's God could tell the future. The fall of Tyre and Babylon, the reign of Cyrus, and the coming Messiah are but a few of the more prominent examples. When evidence is honestly considered, the truth seeker must admit that

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the prophecies contained in the Bible show that it was penned by inspiration of God.

REASON #2: SCIENTIFIC ACCURACY AND FOREKNOWLEDGE

While the Bible does not present itself as a scientific or medical textbook, it is only reasonable that if God really did inspire the books of the Bible, they would be completely accurate in every scientific or medical detail found within their pages. Furthermore, all scientific and medical errors that fill the pages of other ancient, non-inspired texts should be entirely absent from the biblical record. Is the Bible infallible when it speaks about scientific disciplines, or does it contain the errors that one would expect to find in the writings of fallible men in ancient times?

The Egyptians were renowned in the ancient world for their progress in the field of medicine. Dr. Samuel Massengill, early 20th-century pharmaceutical chemist, noted that “Egypt was the medical center of the ancient world.”¹⁴ Herodotus recorded that it was king Darius’ practice “to keep in attendance certain Egyptian doctors, who had a reputation for the highest eminence in their profession.”¹⁵ Among the ancient documents that detail much of the Egyptian medicinal knowledge that has survived, the Ebers Papyrus (discovered in 1872) ranks as one of the foremost sources.¹⁶ It consists of a host of medical remedies purported to heal, enhance, and prevent. “Altogether 811 prescriptions are set forth in the papyrus, and they take the form of salves, plasters, and poultices; snuffs, inhalations, and gargles; draughts, confections, and pills; fumigations, suppositories, and enemata.”¹⁷ Among the hundreds of prescriptions, we find disgusting treatments that would have caused much more harm than good. For instance, under a section

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titled “What to do to draw out splinters in the flesh,” a remedy is prescribed consisting of “worm blood, mole, and donkey dung.”¹⁸ Remedies to help heal skin diseases included such things as cat dung, dog dung, and a hog’s tooth.¹⁹ It seems that the Egyptians were among the first to present the idea of “good and laudable pus.”²⁰ While it must be noted that some of the Egyptian medicine was helpful, the harmful remedies and ingredients cast a sickening shadow of untrustworthiness on the entire Egyptian endeavor as viewed by the modern reader.

Admittedly, the Bible is not devoted to long lists of medical prescriptions. The Bible writers did not intend to write a medical textbook. There are, however, especially in the first five books of the Old Testament, numerous rules for sanitation, quarantine, and other medical procedures that were to govern the daily lives of the Israelites. Interestingly, the harmful remedies and ingredients prescribed by other ancient civilizations are missing entirely from the pages of the Bible. In fact, the Pentateuch exhibits an understanding of germs and disease that the “modern” medical community did not grasp until relatively recently.

Germs, Labor Fever, and Biblical Sanitation

In 1847, an obstetrician named Ignaz Semmelweis was the director of a hospital ward in Vienna, Austria. Many pregnant women checked into his ward, but 10-18% of those women never checked out. About one out of every six that received treatment in Semmelweis’ ward died of labor fever.²¹ Autopsies revealed pus under their skin, in their chest cavities, in their eye sockets, etc. Semmelweis was distraught over the mortality rate in his ward, and other hospital wards like it all over Europe. Australia, the Americas, Britain, Ireland, and practically every other nation that had established a

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hospital suffered a similar mortality rate.²² If a woman delivered a baby using a midwife, then the death rate fell to only about 3%. Yet if she chose to use the most advanced medical knowledge and facilities of the day, her chance of dying skyrocketed immensely!

Semmelweis had tried everything to curb the carnage. He turned all the women on their sides in hopes that the death rate would drop, but with no results. He thought maybe the bell that the priest rang in the wee hours of the morning scared the women, so he made the priest enter silently, yet without any drop in death rates. As he contemplated his dilemma, he watched young medical students perform their routine tasks. Each day the students would conduct autopsies on the dead mothers. Then they would rinse their hands in a bowl of bloody water, wipe them off on a shared, dirty towel, and immediately begin internal examinations of the still-living women. Medical doctor and historian Sherwin Nuland commented concerning the practice: “Because there seemed no reason for them to wash their hands, except superficially, or change their clothing before coming to the First Division, they did neither.”²³ As a 21st-century observer, one is appalled to think that such practices actually took place in institutes of what was at the time “modern medical practices.” What doctor in his right mind would touch a corpse and then perform examinations on living patients—without first employing some sort of minimal hygienic practices intended to kill germs? But to Europeans in the middle-19th-century, germs were virtually a foreign concept.

Semmelweis then ordered everyone in his ward to wash his or her hands thoroughly in a chlorine solution after every examination. In three months, the death rate fell from 18% to 1%. Semmelweis had made a

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groundbreaking discovery...or had he? Almost 3,300 years before Semmelweis lived, Moses had written: “He who touches the dead body of anyone shall be unclean seven days. He shall purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; then he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean” (Numbers 19:11-12). Germs were no new discovery in 1847; the biblical text recorded measures to check their spread as far back as circa 1500 B.C.

Germs and the Water of Purification

When Old Testament instructions are compared to the New Testament explanations for those actions, it becomes clear that some of the ancient injunctions were primarily symbolic in nature (e.g., John 19:31-37). With the presence of such symbolism in the Old Testament, however, it is important that we do not overlook Old Testament instructions that were pragmatic in value and that testify to a Master Mind behind the writing of the Law. One such instruction is found in Numbers 19, where the Israelites were instructed to prepare the “water of purification” that was to be used to wash any person who had touched a dead body.

At first glance, the water of purification sounds like a hodge-podge of superstitious potion-making that included the ashes of a young cow, hyssop, cedar wood, and scarlet. But this formula was the farthest thing from a potion intended to “ward off evil spirits.” On the contrary, the recipe for the water of purification stands today as a wonderful example of the Bible’s brilliance, since the recipe is nothing less than a procedure to produce an antibacterial soap.

When we look at the ingredients individually, we begin to see the value of each. First, consider the use

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of ashes. The chemical known as lye is one of the main ingredients in many soaps today. In fact, lye, in high concentrations, is very caustic and irritating to the skin. In more diluted concentrations, it can be used as an excellent exfoliate and cleansing agent. Various lye-soap recipes reveal that, to obtain lye, water often is poured through ashes. The water retrieved from pouring it through the ashes contains a concentration of the chemical. Moses instructed the Israelites to prepare a mixture that would have included lye mixed in a diluted solution, which would have been ideal for stopping the spread of germs.

What about the other specific ingredients for the water of purification? Hyssop contains the antiseptic thymol, the same ingredient that we find today in some brands of mouthwash.²⁴ “Cedar wood has long been used for storage cabinets because of its ability to repel insects and prevent decay. In oil form, applied to the human body, it is an antiseptic, astringent, expectorant (removes mucus from the respiratory system), anti-fungal, sedative and insecticide.”²⁵ The Israelites were instructed to toss into the mix “scarlet,” which most likely was scarlet wool (see Hebrews 9:19). Adding wool fibers to the concoction would have made the mixture the “ancient equivalent of Lava® soap.”²⁶

Thousands of years before any formal studies were done to see what type of cleaning methods were the most effective; millennia before American pioneers concocted their lye solutions; and ages before our most advanced medical students knew a thing about germ theory, Moses instructed the Israelites to concoct an amazingly effective recipe for soap that, if used properly in medical facilities like hospitals in Vienna, would literally have saved thousands of lives.

Quarantine

The Old Testament record added another extremely beneficial practice to the field of medicine in its detailed descriptions of maladies for which people should be quarantined. The book of Leviticus lists a host of diseases and ways in which an Israelite would come in contact with germs. Those with such diseases as leprosy were instructed to “dwell alone” “outside the camp” (Leviticus 13:46). If and when a diseased individual got close to those who were not diseased, he was instructed to “cover his mustache, and cry, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’” (13:45). It is of interest that the covering of one’s mustache (“upper lip”—ASV) would prevent spit and spray from the mouth of the individual to pass freely through the air, much like the covering of one’s mouth during a cough.

In regard to the understanding of contagion that is evident in the quarantine rules in the Old Testament, Roderick McGrew noted in the *Encyclopedia of Medical History*: “The idea of contagion was foreign to the classic medical tradition and found no place in the voluminous Hippocratic writings. The Old Testament, however, is a rich source for contagionist sentiment, especially in regard to leprosy and venereal disease.”²⁷ Here again, the Bible exhibits amazingly accurate medical and scientific knowledge that surpasses any known human ingenuity available at the time of its writing.

Many physicians who have compared Moses’ medical instructions to effective modern methods have come to realize the astonishing value and insight of the Bible. As 20th-century pharmacologist and Hebrew scholar, Dr. David Macht of Johns Hopkins University, once wrote: “Every word in the Hebrew Scriptures is well chosen and carries valuable knowledge and deep significance.”²⁸ Indeed, the accurate medical practices

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prescribed thousands of years before their significance was completely understood provide excellent evidence for the divine inspiration of the Bible.

REASON #3: THE OVERALL FACTUAL ACCURACY OF THE BIBLE

Suppose we were to ask a group of historians to author the most up-to-date history of the United States of America on the market. Suppose we gave them years to finish it and unlimited resources to use for their research. At the end of that period, with their newly published volume in hand, could we be confident that they had accurately recorded the significant dates and information perfectly? No, we could not. In fact, within just a few years, as every decent publishing company owner knows, we would need a second edition. Within a decade, so much new information would have come to light that a third or fourth edition would be necessary. And within 20 years, we most likely would need a completely new book if we wanted to preserve history accurately. But when we look into the 66 books of the Bible, we find perfect historical accuracy that has never needed updating or correcting.

Every single statement of the Bible that can be historically checked or verified has shown that the Bible writers never once made a mistake. The fact that the books of the Bible are perfectly accurate indicates that an intelligence beyond human ability must have been involved in the composition of the books.

The Accuracy of Acts

Sir William Ramsay was a one-time unbeliever and world-class archaeologist. His extensive education had ingrained within him the keenest sense of scholarship. But along with that scholarship came a built-in prejudice

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about the supposed inaccuracy of the Bible (specifically the book of Acts). As Ramsay himself remarked:

[A]bout 1880 to 1890, the book of the Acts was regarded as the weakest part of the New Testament. No one that had any regard for his reputation as a scholar cared to say a word in its defence. The most conservative of theological scholars, as a rule, thought the wisest plan of defence for the New Testament as a whole was to say as little as possible about the Acts.²⁹

As could be expected of someone who had been trained by such “scholars,” Ramsay held the same view. He eventually abandoned it, however, because he was willing to do what few people of his time dared to do—explore the Bible lands themselves with an archaeologist’s pick in one hand and an open Bible in the other. His self-stated intention was to prove the inaccuracy of Luke’s history as recorded in the book of Acts. But, much to his surprise, the book of Acts passed every test that any historical narrative could be asked to pass. In fact, after years of literally digging through the evidence in Asia Minor, Ramsay concluded that Luke was an exemplary historian. Lee S. Wheeler, in his classic work *Famous Infidels Who Found Christ*, recounted Ramsay’s life story in great detail,³⁰ and then quoted the famed archaeologist, who ultimately admitted:

The more I have studied the narrative of the Acts, and the more I have learned year after year about Graeco-Roman society and thoughts and fashions, and organization in those provinces, the more I admire and the better I understand. I set out to look for truth on the borderland where Greece and Asia meet, and found it here [in the book of Acts— KB/EL]. You may press the words of Luke in a degree beyond any other historian’s, and they stand the keenest scrutiny and the hardest treatment, provided always that the critic knows the subject and does not go beyond the limits of science and of justice.³¹

Luke, the writer of the book of Acts, is now widely acknowledged as an extremely accurate historian in his

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own right—so much so that Ramsay came to believe in Christianity as a result of his personal examination of the precision of Luke’s historical record. What legitimate reason is there to reject Luke’s amazingly accurate testimony? As Wayne Jackson summarized:

In Acts, Luke mentions thirty-two countries, fifty-four cities, and nine Mediterranean islands. He also mentions ninety-five persons, sixty-two of which are not named elsewhere in the New Testament. And his references, where checkable, are always correct. This is truly remarkable, in view of the fact that the political/territorial situation of his day was in a state of almost constant change.³²

The Pilate Inscription

The last few days of Jesus’ life were the most tragic of any in human history. Amidst all the violence, there stood one man who had the power to stop all the torture. One man could call off the Roman soldiers and save Christ from being crucified. His name—Pontius Pilate, the Roman official who governed the area of Judea at the time of Christ’s death. The story of the crucifixion can hardly be told without mentioning the name of this Roman official who sentenced Christ to death—even though Pilate knew He was innocent (John 18:38; 19:4,6).

Although the Bible mentions Pilate on several occasions, his name could not be found among the archaeological evidence. For hundreds of years, no stone inscriptions or other physical evidence could be produced to support the idea that a man named Pilate had anything to do with either Christ or Judea. Because of this, many mocked the Bible and claimed that creative biblical writers concocted Pilate from their own fertile imaginations. After all, if Pilate was such a prominent leader, wouldn’t there be some kind of archaeological evidence to verify his existence?

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Critics were silenced when, in 1961, an Italian archaeological team working at Caesarea found a stone tablet that measured 32 inches high, by 27 inches wide, by 8 inches thick. On this slab, now known as the “Pilate Inscription,” were the remains of this simple title: “Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judea”—almost the exact same title as the one given to him in Luke 3:1. This, then, became yet another find to remind us that the more we uncover the past, the more we uncover the truth that the Bible is indeed the Word of God.³³

The truth is, numerous archaeological finds have verified the Bible’s accuracy. As the renowned archaeologist Nelson Glueck wrote, “It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical statements in the Bible.”³⁴ Truly, the perfect historical accuracy, without the tell-tale mistakes that are found in works written by mere humans, testifies to the Bible’s divine origin.

CONCLUSION

No series of books in human history has maintained the supernatural consistency that is present within the pages of the Bible. From the first book of Genesis to the last book of Revelation, approximately 40 men penned individual treatises that combine to form the best-selling, most widely distributed, perfectly unified, flawlessly written book ever produced. Mere human genius never could have produced a work with such predictive prophecy, scientific foreknowledge, and overall factual accuracy. Common sense demands an adequate explanation. The only rational conclusion, which is in keeping with the evidence at hand, is that the Bible is

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“given by inspiration of God.” And if the Bible is from God, then the God of the Bible exists!

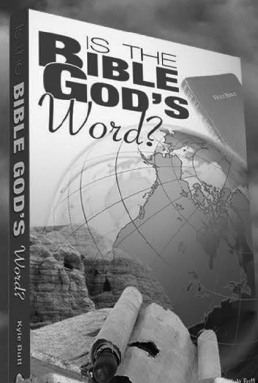
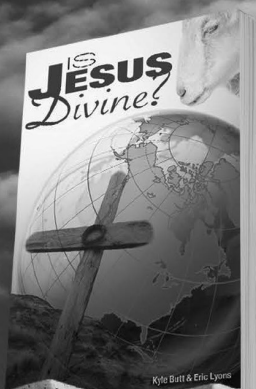
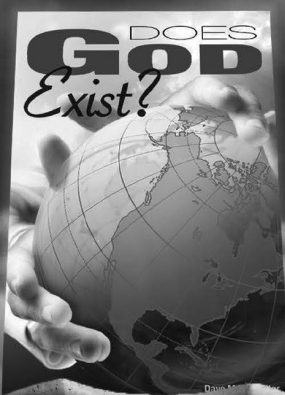
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FACTUAL ACCURACY OF THE BIBLE
SCIENTIFIC FOREKNOWLEDGE
FULFILLED PROPHECY