
◆ THE EDIFIER ◆

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CHURCH of GOD 7th DAY - AUSTRALIA

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WHAT ARE THE CHANCES?

Introduction

I pondered the world. I pondered life and meaning. I pondered everything. Even if there was a 'Big Bang', as mainstream scientists hypothesize, why this, how that, where did, and what if ...? So many questions. So few real answers in secular circles. Only theories raising more questions.

Mysterious origins

Okay, let's say our planet somehow un-supernaturally arrived in this quadrant of the universe, perfectly positioned in relation to our wonderfully stable sun for the possibility of later sustaining life. And let's say that somehow natural forces just so happened to arise that put the earth on a perfectly consistent orbit around the Sun. I guess the moon then must have by chance been put into its perfect position and orbit of the earth at the same time too because I mean, I'm just

not sure how a moon would later just come along and say, "yep, I am about the perfect size to orbit this planet earth, and I think if I stop right about here, I should be able to have a positive influence on the earth's tides, should the earth develop oceans one day. This looks like



a good spot. I'll set my orbit up here and start spinning at the exact required speed."

Just how the moon and the earth got their spherical shapes and knew the importance of rotating at the right speed to keep things together, absent the supernatural, I really don't know, but maybe one day man might create a time machine, go

back in time, and know for sure exactly what happened.

Well we're here aren't we, so we obviously got here somehow? Where on earth though did all of this water come from? I can't seem to recall there being much, if any water, anywhere else in the universe that we know about so far. Didn't you hear the recent hullabaloo over what might be a few drops of water on Mars? Scientists are now convinced that there is sufficient evidence that Mars was flooded. How ironic when scientists balk at the thought of our water-infested planet being flooded? Perhaps that idea is just a bit too biblical. Oceans, rivers, springs. Seventy per cent of the earth's surface alone being made up of water, with some parts of the ocean being as deep as Mt Everest is high (and even deeper). How did it all get here?

Frankly, I'm also in amazement at how some of it organized itself into sandy,

"Shall the thing made say of him who made it, 'He did not make me'?"

Isaiah 29 : 16

A magazine dedicated to uplifting and transforming peoples lives through the uncompromised word of God.

tidal oceans that generally know when to stop overflowing the land. Did we always have so much water? Did it come at the same time as the formation of the earth, or after? Many scientists say that at the earth's formation the water was trapped in the rocks in the earth's crust and it was gradually released to fill the ocean basins. Is that why the Bible says that God supplied the Israelites in the wilderness with water from a huge rock? Hardly, but it's an interesting story.

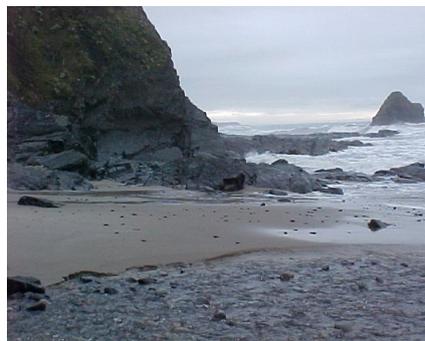
Maybe it just rained a whole lot for oodles of years (aren't you glad that trend didn't continue) and so all this liquid just built up over time. You'd have to admit that would have been really convenient though, that clouds somehow developed on their own along with all the other required mechanisms which contribute to the production of rain, snow, and hail. I wonder how all the gases and chemicals needed for these substances came into existence and came together in the requisite fashion? Those hypothesized 'Big Bang' and 'Nebula' things must have been really magic.

The brilliance of diversity

Talking about magic substances, don't you just love the vast diversity of useful substances that unguided, random, universal forces allegedly left us with, or at least gave us the potential to have?

Don't you just love soil for example? I just don't know how I'd live without it, let alone the trees, the plants and my vegetables. I can put a little seed in my garden and abracadabra, the soil helps me to grow all kinds of things, as long as I have water, but as you know,

water's been taken care of. But how did this soil thing get going in the first place, and if there were no seeds to go with it, it wouldn't be anywhere near as useful? Can soil evolve by itself? Can seeds evolve by themselves, and is there any concrete evidence in the fossil record for the evolution of invisible processes or miniscule things such as seeds and the not-so-simple, simple cell and atoms? Of course not!



“...tidal oceans that generally know when to stop overflowing the land.”

Proverb 8 : 29

“He assigned to the sea its limit, So that the waters would not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth ...”

We're told of course that soil is formed by environmental forces such as water breaking down rocks and similar materials that lie on or near the earth's surface. Maybe you can thank random universal forces for the rocks and for putting us in a place where the right kinds of environmental forces existed for the breaking down of the rocks.

We sure do have an awful lot of soil in this world so uniformly spread though. Those environmental forces would have had to work overtime. They would have been very appreciative when water finally built up enough to help the process along, and when plants and animals came along to help out. Soil must have also been really grateful when insects and animals later came along to give it amazing nutrients. But what a terribly long wait it had, *if* currently accepted time lines are anything to go by?

There's another vital chemical substance that just so happened to be around at the beginning too that I'm really grateful for – that's oxygen. Apparently we have to take it with us whenever we leave this planet, as it's just not the same elsewhere. Virtually all life forms on earth, including plants, need it to survive. Why are we so blessed?

The vast variety of natural substances I see around me, with all their different textures and colours, just boggles my mind. All of these apparently made possible and brought to you by the random mind of the Big Bang, the resulting nebula of gas and dust, and the sun in our quadrant which our earth somehow theoretically came from with our moon. As you read the abbreviated list below of various wonderful natural substances that somehow exist, why don't you feel the textures, see the colours, and admire the beauty and diversity:

sand, shell, sea weed, gold, silver, bronze, diamond, sapphire, etc, wood, magnesium, copper, uranium, iron, glass, coral, rubber, leather, wool, skin, hair, finger nail, fur, feather, blubber, spider web, wax, bone, ivory, antler, silk, oil, milk, blood, honey, grass, seed, leaf, bark, flower, pine needle, cactus, flax, coconut shell, orange peel, banana skin, melon etc, salt, spices, grain, carbon dioxide, nitrogen, sulphur, and fire.



Ask yourself, what are the chances of this lot developing out of random forces in the universe, without a designer?

The many different mechanisms in nature also boggle the mind. Just contemplate their complexity and practical usefulness as you read the abbreviated list below:

atmosphere, air, ocean current, electromagnetic wave, sound wave, all kinds of wave, sonar, cell, atom, reproductive system, nervous system, digestive system, excretory system, respiratory system, internal healing mechanism, brain, blood clotting, hearing, smelling, seeing, speaking, gravity, electricity, seasons, photosynthesis, thermogenesis, hydrologic cycle, wind, rainbow, and sunset etc

Please seriously ask yourself again, what are the chances?

The 'Freak'

Now think of the very first form of life (let's call it 'the freak') that supposedly came into existence via chemicals just happening to combine together in the right combination. You know, don't you, if this freak was to benefit anyone, it would need to be immediately self-sustaining and self-replicating, or base one for evolutionary theory would be lost? If it couldn't survive long enough to reproduce itself, then it would be back to the drawing board. It sounds like the first simple life form couldn't have been that simple after all.

Again, what are the chances of a life form that instantly has the complexity to sustain itself, reproduce itself, and the already inbuilt capacity to evolve into every known living plant or creature just happening by chance?

Surely nil!

In this case Darwinian evolutionary theory does not even get a look-in. So what's the alternative? Sadly, the alternative is no alternative at all for many, because they don't want to know about it for whatever reason. Many prefer to remain in ignorance of the more rational alternative that we must have a Creator.

I reason that life only comes from life, just as the famous scientist Louis Pasteur was credited as discovering.

About Pasteur, the *World Book Encyclopaedia* states:

"he was the first to show that living things only come from living things. Before that, many scientists believed in spontaneous generation, a theory that life could come from things that are not alive, such as dirt."

If life only comes from life, then doesn't it stand to reason that a life form must have always existed and that that life form is super-intelligent? Perhaps it's God. No, it must be God.

Conclusion

No, it is God!

**Please note. The basic scientific information contained in this article has been derived from The World Book Encyclopaedia.*

David Kidd



Have you entered the treasury of snow, Or have you seen the treasury of hail...?

Job 38:22





Assisted suicide to come to South Australia?

South Australia's politicians are soon to debate another euthanasia/assisted suicide bill, the second one in just two years. It seems a majority of South Australians want euthanasia. There is even a group identifying themselves as Christians actively lobbying for such laws.

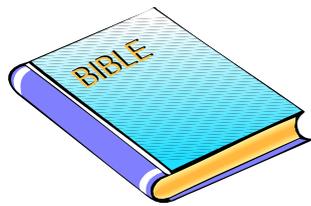
Whilst euthanasia is an emotional issue and many people do experience great suffering in the last days of their lives, I wonder, how many people favouring euthanasia have considered the message that such legislation might send. Apart from common sense suggesting it, there is evidence that legalising assisted suicide may increase the unassisted suicide rate by sending the dangerous general message that there is nothing wrong with suicide if one is experiencing suffering. Just Google Oregon's terrible experience. Euthanasia has been legal there for many years and its suicide rate (excluding assisted suicides) is 35% above the national average! * Some countries with legalised euthanasia are not fairing too well in the suicide statistics either – namely Finland, Belgium, Switzerland and Sweden. To be fair it should be noted that not all of the countries who have some form of legalized euthanasia are doing as badly as these countries, and Finland's and Belgium's (etc) suicide rates are exceeded by several countries. However, the suicide statistics of these countries with euthanasia are understated, as they do not include assisted suicides.

The real possibility of lessening the taboo on unassisted suicide through legalising assisted suicide is just one more thing to be concerned about and to share with others while discussing this touchy issue. Of course there are many other concerns too, both practically and theologically, not addressed here, which are also very important.

Suicide rates in Australia and around the world are bad enough already. I pray that our government and other governments around the world won't make it that much easier for people to justify taking their own lives through suicide by legalising euthanasia. God help our children if they do.

* <http://www.lifenews.com/2010/09/10/bio-3174/>

<http://alexschadenberg.blogspot.com/2010/09/oregon-suicide-rate-soars-after.html>



MAKING SENSE

of

SCRIPTURE

A Collection of Articles on Biblical Interpretation (80 page book)

Introduction : Hermen . . . Who?

It has been said that if one hundred people read a certain verse of Scripture they would undoubtedly offer one hundred different interpretations. Is this what God intended when He delivered His Word to mankind? Should the Bible mean anything anyone wants it to mean? Is its message that arbitrary?

If not, then what does a given text mean, and how should one go about discovering its meaning? Moreover, how do *you* go about reading, studying, and interpreting the Bible? Have you ever thought about your own process of interpretation?

Such questions pertain to the subject of *hermeneutics*. Simply defined, hermeneutics is the science and art of interpreting the Bible —of getting the message in what one reads. It is a science because it adheres to the regular rules of grammar as they apply to written communication. Moreover, it is an art because communication is flexible, and a mechanical application of rules will sometimes distort the true meaning. To be a good interpreter, one must learn the rules of hermeneutics as well as the art of applying those rules.

Example of Contents

Watch How You Handle Scripture
Personal Bible Study and Private Interpretation
The Importance of Context
Making Sense of Parables
Making Sense of Prophecy

Please order this **free** book from, Church of God
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A sermon preached 1600 years ago still speaks today:



Why You Need the Bible

John Chrysostom
(c. 347—407)

My usual custom is to let you know beforehand what subject I intend to preach on next week, so that before you come to church again you can read the passage for yourselves and get an idea of what it is all about. At the same time, this will help you to remember what I have already said about the subject, and what still needs explaining; and so you will be better prepared to hear what I'm going to say next. And may I urge you — as I always have done, and always will — don't just listen carefully to what the preacher says, but take time regularly to read the Bible at home as well. This is something I never stop drumming into my friends and acquaintances!

Don't let anyone make excuses like these: "I'm too busy with politics." "I've got this or that public duty to fulfill." "I'm a skilled worker. I must get on with my job." "I've a wife and children to feed; I must provide for my family." In other words, "I'm a layman; it's not my business to read the Bible. I'll leave that to professional Christians like monks, nuns, priests and theology students."

What on earth are you saying? It's "not your business to read the Bible" because you've got too many other things to bother about? But that's the very reason why you need to read the Bible! The more worries you have, the more you need the Bible to keep you going! People like monks and nuns who have left the troubles of the world behind are quite safe; they are like ships sailing on a calm sea, or moored in a quiet harbour. But you

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are in the middle of this godless world's stormy sea, and so you need spiritual help and sustenance far more urgently. They live far from the battlefield, out of the sound of gunfire; but you are in the front line, face to face with the enemy, and you are bound to suffer frequent blows and be severely wounded. So you need the medicine chest close at hand.

Your wife irritates you, you worry about your children, your enemies are waiting to catch you out, someone you thought was your friend is jealous of you, your neighbour spreads rumours about you or picks quarrels with you, your colleague acts behind your back, someone sues you, you suffer from poverty, you lose your nearest and dearest, success gives you a boost and then trouble brings you down to the depths again . . . Where can you find a suit of armour, or a castle from which to defend yourself? Where can you find ointment for your wounds, but in the Bible? . . .

Haven't you noticed how a smith, mason or carpenter, or any other craftsman, however much his back is against the wall, will never sell or pawn the tools of his trade? If he did, how could he earn his living? That is how we should think of the Bible. Just as mallets, hammers, saws, chisels, axes and hatchets are the tools of the craftsman's trade, so the books of the prophets and the apostles, and all scripture inspired by the Holy Spirit, are the tools of our salvation.

From the sermon "On Lazarus." John Chrysostom, a fourth century church leader in Antioch and Constantinople, emphasized the "plain meaning of Scripture." He was known as the greatest preacher of the early church, and for that reason was given the nickname Chrysostom, meaning "golden-mouthed."

This article was taken from the Bible Advocate Magazine.



Nothing We Can't Handle

*No matter what distressing times I face,
When rain and storms replace the sunny weather,
When things I counted on fail to sustain me,
There's nothing we can't handle, Lord, together.*

*If those I thought were friends act more like foes,
If I start to lose the things I hold most dear,
I know that I can tell it all to You;
You want to listen to me and to hear.*

*When my earthly world dissolves before my eyes,
When problems seem too great for me to bear,
You'll always be there for me, Lord, I know;
I can come to you on bended knees in prayer.*

*It's such a comfort, Lord, to realize,
You'll always be my King, my Lord, my Friend;
To share my burdens, worries, and my cares,
You'll love me and support me to the end.*

By Joanna Fuchs



The Youth Section

Old Testament Places Word Search Game

This Bible word search game has 28 answers.

S	Y	D	O	R	B	D	B	A	B	Y	L	O	N	R
H	G	A	Z	A	D	E	E	I	A	C	X	E	E	U
E	X	M	Z	A	C	N	T	R	O	T	Y	I	D	H
C	N	A	S	E	M	O	H	Y	M	A	M	O	E	A
H	O	S	I	D	O	N	E	S	R	D	N	U	B	V
E	R	C	N	M	Z	U	L	S	P	E	D	Y	W	I
M	B	U	A	O	N	M	K	A	D	E	S	H	M	L
Q	E	S	I	P	W	O	E	T	H	I	O	P	I	A
O	H	C	I	R	E	J	Q	U	Q	O	W	Z	W	H
D	E	Q	U	G	O	J	E	R	U	S	A	L	E	M
D	G	C	J	O	P	P	A	E	H	A	R	Z	O	B
I	Y	M	D	O	E	X	A	N	L	E	A	R	S	I
G	P	X	Y	H	Y	Z	B	M	O	A	B	X	W	M
E	T	W	W	J	U	D	A	H	W	G	P	N	O	G
M	D	A	B	Z	Y	A	B	E	H	S	R	E	E	B

Eden - Havilah - Ethiopia - Ur - Babylon - Luz - Bethel - Assyria - Kadesh - Damascus - Sidon - Tyre -
 Megiddo - Shechem - Dor - Joppa - Jericho - Jerusalem - Hebron - Gaza - Beersheba - Sinai - Egypt -
 Edom - Moab - Israel - Judah - Bozrah



Insights From the Past



ADMIT IT AND GO ON

by Max Morrow

When God made Adam and Eve, they were good; however they made a frightful mistake. And repeatedly throughout the ages of time their descendants have spoken remorsefully of the wrong committed back then.

It is a sad thing that sin entered God's creation; however, if God did not choose to prevent it, surely weak humans can do nothing toward banishing its record. What has been done, has been done, and nothing can erase the fact except God's magnitude.

It is only weakening for one to pore over his or another's shortcomings. It tends to destroy his will power to do good. It causes his mind to be occupied to the extent that he cannot give himself wholly to the work of the Lord.

To recognize sins is essential in order to repent of them, but to brood over them is foolish. Nothing can really make up for them; only the blood of Christ can erase them; and, just sincere devotion can prevent them from occurring again.

The exhortation of the apostle Paul was, "Set your affection on thing above, not on things on the earth." Brooding over wrongdoing forces the attention to drop downward. Acknowledgment of and repentance for them will enable the person to lift his eyes upward, though the past may be smeared with many sins.

"Turn your eyes upon Jesus."

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The above editorial appeared in the October 26, 1959 issue of The Bible Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom.*



Easter : There's More to Be Said

Please send for the free booklet "Easter: There's More to Be Said" and find out the reasons why the Church of God (Seventh Day) doesn't observe Easter, but truly affirms the belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ!

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