

Communique'

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August 2024

Thank you Lord for the beautiful rains and cooler weather we got in July! But the dog days of August are here and its once again hot in San Antonio.

This month's **Communique'** leads off with the question, **Is religion really the cause of most wars?** NOT TRUE! Our first article gives us the facts dispelling this myth used by Satan to tear down God's truth.

Our second article gives you a sample of what you will see at this month's meeting when we explore how God's designs in cuttlefish have been used to design cameras, submarine camouflage and TV screens! See more of **"God's Designs in Nature"** on August 13th at our monthly SABBSA meeting.

This newsletter also has an article detailing the humanity of unborn babies and research showing they feel pain when aborted! Finally, our **Communique'** has an article showing how science supports the Bible's contention that all of us, and all of creation, are being held together by Christ's power!

Our **Genesis Commentary** covers **Genesis 31:1-22-55 where Laban pursues Jacob**. As always, we have a rundown of the creation education events coming up in our area. This year will include our "Answers for Life" series being presented to the home schoolers at Calvary Chapel Jesus is the Way. We pray these articles edify you and help you to evaluate this culture from a biblical worldview.

Aren't religions the cause of more wars and suffering than anything else in history?

Excerpted from articles by John D. Hosler and Adrian Helleman

No! However, that is the mantra from atheists and the false narrative we hear too often quoted as a fact.

George Carlin (an atheist comedian) was quoted as saying, "More people have been killed in the name of God than for any other reason." Carlin's comedy routine, entitled "Kill for God!" has received rave reviews by its viewers for being "brilliant" and "spot on," with one anonymous fan confirming that religion is "by far the single biggest cause of human deaths."

To be clear, it is not modern military historians who claim religion is the cause of most wars, but rather many prominent intellectuals, scientists, academics, and politicians, often with far greater influence over popular cultural assumptions than professional historians, who have popularized such claims.

In a 2006 interview, the neuroscientist and cultural commentator Sam Harris stated, "If I could wave a magic wand and get rid of either rape or religion, I would not hesitate to get rid of religion. I think more people are dying as a result of our religious myths than as a result of any other ideology." The Oxford University evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins claimed in 2003 that religion is the "principal label, and the most dangerous one," by which human divisions occur, contributing to "wars, murders and terrorist attacks."

The problem with these statements are that they simply are not true.

According to the Encyclopedia of Wars, there were 1,763 wars up until 2004. Less than 7% were religious wars, and 2/3 of that 7% were in the name of Islam. So, more than 93% of wars were for political reasons.

The truth of the matter is that atheists are responsible for more deaths through wars than religions. For example, to name a few: Stalin (an atheist) was responsible 60 million deaths. Mao Se Toung (an atheist)

killed 40 million people. Pol Pot, (an atheist) killed 1.7 million. Vladimir Lennin (an atheist) slaughtered 5 million. A deep belief imbedded in all of these men and their communist belief system was that man is just an animal produced by random chance evolution, like all other animals and not worthy of special honor as being in the image of God.

People who want to paint Christians as evil doers, bring up the subject of the Crusades. However, as you can see, deaths through Christian wars is minimal compared to atheists. I didn't even include all atheist leaders responsible for genocide such as Hitler.

To read more on this subject go to

<https://apholt.com/2023/01/03/the-myth-of-religion-as-the-cause-of-most-wars/#:~:text=If%20this%20is%20true%E2%80%94that%20it%20is%20essentially%20impossible.war%20and%2For%20the%20bloodiest%20type%20of%20human%20conflict.>

Editor's Note: How could such an erroneous myth be perpetuated and so easily accepted by society? It's because Satan through this lie is discrediting religion and the Father which those who reject God are all too eager to accept.



Yet Another Engineering Innovation from Cuttlefish by Daniel Witt

Last month, Cambridge University's science magazine, *Bluesci*, announced that researchers have developed a new camera based on cuttlefish eyes. Cuttlefish have unusual W-shaped pupils that allow them to see well in both dim and bright conditions as they navigate in deeper or shallower waters. The researchers successfully reverse-engineered the cuttlefish's eye structure to create a camera that works better in conditions of highly variable luminosity.



Cuttlefish are extraordinary creatures, and this is not the first time engineers have learned from them. In 2013, the *Washington Post* reported that the Office of Naval Research was funding a project to mimic the cuttlefish's color-changing skin, with potential application in submarine camouflage technology. In 2009, NBC reported that MIT scientists had studied cuttlefish skin to design a TV screen that used less than 1 percent of the power that other screens at the time used. The reverse-engineering opportunities just keep coming.

Usually, “reverse-engineering” implies that ... well, engineering took place beforehand, design, in other words. And, as it happens, the news from Cambridge explicitly refers to cuttlefish eyes as “finely-designed.”

It was probably a slip-up. No doubt the writer would defend this as a mere convention of speech — I doubt that he was trying to imply that actual design took place in the creation of cuttlefish eyes. But isn't it interesting that it's so difficult to talk about these things without invoking the language of design? (Editor's Note- Folks you have to work to not see the designs of God in nature!)

Caught in the Weeds

Maybe it doesn't seem so interesting. But that's only because we're so used to this reality. It can be easy to get caught in the weeds in the debate over whether Darwinian mechanisms are sufficient to explain life and forget the reason the debate is going on in the first place. The debate only exists because these implausibly intricate engineering marvels exist. It did not have to be so. The universe could have been otherwise. It was never a given that when scientists looked deeper into life, they would find such exquisite designs; but they did.

As we gain the ability to look deeper and deeper into the inner workings of life, we seem to be entering a new renaissance of collaboration between biologists and engineers. Physicist Brian Miller recently noted this trend in the developing field of systems biology:

“When you look at the design conversation, who controls it? It's people who don't have the expertise to really address it. They're not engineers. They've been trained to see the world through this materialist grid, so they assume on faith that there's no evidence of design, and then they find various reasons to justify that belief. In contrast, what you're seeing in biology is really a revolution that's at its early stages, because engineers are working more and more with biologists, and what you're seeing is, when they do that they use design language, they use design assumptions.”

An Engineering Marvel

As we all know, the prevailing theory insists that this appearance of design is mere illusion. But when engineers team up with biologists to learn how to copy the mechanisms of life, they aren't thinking about that. Whether a cuttlefish eye is designed, or merely in every way appears to be designed, is irrelevant. The point is that it is an engineering marvel, and engineers can learn from it.

This fact is important, not because it is in-and-of-itself proof of design, but because it tells us something practical about the competing theories and their respective productivity.

Proponents of the neo-Darwinian model are fond of asserting that the naysaying arguments of ID-supporters (regarding irreducible complexity, non-traversable fitness landscapes, the probabilistic inability of Darwinian mechanisms to make meaningful changes to life within the lifespan of earth, lack of any confirmed observation of constructive mutations, etc.) make little difference to the actual research underway in biology. That is to say: Life only makes sense “in the light of evolution,” and the critics of that framework are just flies buzzing in the background.

A Verbal Gloss

The truth is something close to the opposite. Assumptions of macroevolution almost never have any practical bearing on research in biology. Darwinian evolution is invoked as a verbal gloss, not as a vital presupposition. Chemist and National Academy of Sciences member Philip S. Skell famously asked 70 distinguished researchers whether they would have done their work differently if they had believed Darwin’s theory was false. They all answered no.

Dr. Skell isn’t the only one to point this out; it’s the reality of the field. An assumption of design, by contrast, is quite often an essential foundation to successful research projects in biology — whether the design language is expurgated from the final presentation or not.

Biologists will continue to debate whether this design is real or only apparent. But in the meanwhile, intelligent design-based research will keep moving forward, untroubled by those debates — as it always has.

Unborn babies perceive the world consciously. What does this mean for abortion?

by Jonathan Sarfati, CMI

A 2024 issue of New Scientist magazine had an intriguing article about babies before and after birth. The author is Claudia Passos-Ferrera, professor of bioethics at New York University. She documented that they can react to some surprising stimuli similarly to conscious adults.

For example, if we hear a repetitive sound, e.g., “be-be-be...”, we would expect the next sound to be the same, “be”. But if it is instead different, e.g., “bo”, it is startling—a “local oddball” reaction. The brain reacts with an electrical signal called the P300 wave. In fact, sleeping, unconscious, and even comatose adults can produce such a local oddball reaction

And if we hear a more complex pattern, e.g., “be-be-be-bo” several times, then we start expecting that whole pattern. So, if it deviates to “be-be-be-be”, we are again startled—a “global oddball” reaction. The brain again reacts with a P300 wave. In adults, a global oddball reaction occurs only when they are conscious. It is used to test consciousness in patients who can’t respond orally.

Amazing new research into human fetal development shows that ...



... by eight weeks, the human fetus has a sense of touch and is exploring the umbilical cord and uterine wall.

... by thirteen weeks, the human fetus has a sense of taste and prefers sweet over bitter.

... by seventeen weeks, the human fetus has a sense of hearing and after birth will recognize songs played during gestation.

... by twenty-five weeks, the human fetus has eyes that close for sleep and open and move freely during periods of wakefulness.

In the research that Passos-Ferreria refers to, neuroscientists discovered that newborn babies had both local and global oddball reactions. So did unborn babies at 35 weeks.

These results have implications for the care of babies. E.g., if they are conscious, they can feel pain, which means that they might need pain relief for some surgeries or difficult childbirths.

Implications for abortion

In adults, a global oddball P300 brain wave reaction occurs only when they are conscious. Newborn babies and unborn babies at 35 weeks had global oddball reactions.

While the article treated it as news, baby consciousness is hardly a new discovery. In fact, the same magazine back in 2010 proposed, "Unborn babies may 'be planning their future'". New Scientist is known for its Christophobia in the last few decades, so it's not surprising that both articles tried to dismiss the abortion connection.

Passos-Ferreria gave one wrong reason: the age of the baby. She is right that most abortions occur before 35 weeks, so she argues that this research is irrelevant to the abortion debate.

Not so. Actually, many politicians and activists demand abortion right up to birth for any reason, at taxpayer expense. One Virginia politician, Kathy Tran, proposed an abortion bill and was explicit about this. In response to a question: "So where it's obvious that a woman is about to give birth, she has physical signs that she's about to give birth, would that still be a point at which she could still request an abortion if she was so certified? [pause] She's dilating?"

Tran responded: "... My bill would allow that, yes." ... Later, Tran claimed she 'misspoke'. But her words were clear, and unfortunately, she is not alone in her views.

In truth, many soi-disant bioethicists support both late-term abortions and infanticide after birth. They reason from the true premise that the birth canal is not a magical device that transforms a clump of cells into a baby. Pro-lifers make the correct deduction from this premise that unborn babies have as much right to life as those already born. Such reasoning has convinced even secular people to become pro-life, e.g., the group Secular Pro-Life and Nat Henthoff (1925–2017). However, many 'bioethicists' make the horrifying opposite deduction: since we allow unborn babies to be chopped up, why not newborns as well since there is no difference?

But Passos-Ferreria was also right, but not for the reasons she thinks. Rather, even if babies were not conscious, it would be wrong to kill them. This is for the same reason it is wrong to kill an anesthetized

adult patient who lacked the global oddball reaction. That's because murder—intentionally killing innocent human beings—is wrong. That's true whether the human is an adult or unborn.

The same applies to arguments about unborn babies feeling pain: yes, they do, but even if not, it would be wrong to kill them. Once again, the same argument applies to anesthetized adults who can't feel pain.

Conclusion

This new evidence reinforces the overwhelming scientific evidence for the humanity of the unborn. Such evidence can show some people that unborn babies really are human beings, so they should be protected from murder. But others admit that babies are human beings, but don't care.

To read the full article go to

https://creation.com/unborn-babies-perceive-world-consciously?utm_campaign=infobytes_us&utm_content=New%20research%20shows%20unborn%20babies%20are%20conscious&utm_medium=email&utm_source=mailing.creation.com&utm_term=Fortnightly%20Digest%20-%202024.07.26

Editor's Note: That overwhelming evidence for a baby being a created human includes its own specific DNA, its predesigned release of hormones to control many parts of the growth and birth processes as well as its blood barrier separation from the mother in the womb. The current "right to choose" movement in most cases elevates to the right to murder, which both the Bible and man's law say is forbidden, to a human right. It is only through the selfishness of our own hearts today and a frenzied preoccupation with ourselves that this is even a discussion.

What holds the universe together?

From Tov Rose – via physicist Dr. Lambert Dolphin

Answer: Quantum Physics Proves It is Jesus?

Jesus and the Creation

Several separate passages in the New Testament make reference to the creation of the universe. John's gospel speaks of an earlier state of existence than is described in Verse 1 of Genesis,

In the beginning was the Word, [logos] and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; [before creation] all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory,

glory as of the only Son from the Father...No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known. (John 1: 1-17)

This passage of the New Testament teaches that Jesus was eternally existent with God the Father prior to the creation of all things. Further, this Word, the Son of God, was and is fully God in his own right. At a point late in the history of mankind the Son of God became a man and was born into the human race in order to solve the problem of death and to repair a broken universe. (See Philippians Chapter 2, and Hebrews Chapter 2).

Chapter One of Paul's Epistle to the Colossians gives a further description of the role of Jesus in creation, which is consistent with John,

[Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the first-born [*prototokos*] of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities [i.e., hierarchical angelic powers]---all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

The Holy Spirit, in giving us this inspired passage of Scripture, now explains that all things (both visible and invisible) in the entire universe were created through this same Jesus, the Eternal Word. We may think of the universe and its intricate design as being conceived in the mind of the Father then spoken into existence by the Son (who makes the invisible, visible). The Holy Spirit is the One who energizes and supplies life to the creation, not only at the time of creation but also moment by moment after that.

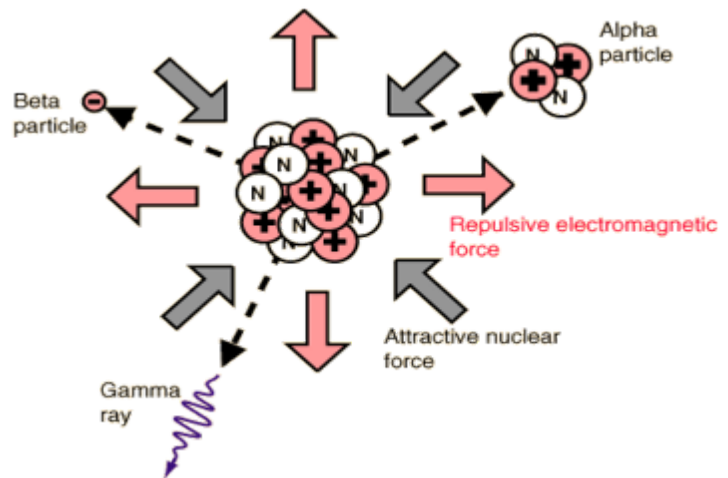
We are also told that all things were created for Jesus. He is "the heir of all things." That means that we are house guests in Someone Else's universe. There is a future accountability to be given by all of us---history is headed somewhere and at the end of road stands Jesus to whom all power and authority has already been given:

Jesus said, "The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment." (John 5:22-29)

One of the key words in the Colossians passage above ("...and in Christ all things hold together") is the Greek word *sunistemi* which means "to stand-together," "to be compacted together," "to cohere," "to be constituted with." This passage can be applied to the structure of the atom, for example. The nucleus of every atom is held together by what physicists call "weak" and "strong" forces. (Physicists today are familiar with four basic forces in the natural world: gravity, electrical forces, a "strong," and a "weak" nuclear force which act at very short ranges. The first two forces decrease in strength inversely with the square of the distance between two objects. Recently two additional close-range, weak gravitational forces have been suggested. These are thought to be quantum mechanical corrections to Newton's Law of Gravitation.)

The nucleus of the atom contains positively-charged and neutral particles--to use a simplistic model. Mutual electrostatic repulsion between the like-positive protons would drive the nucleus apart if it were not for the "strong force" which binds the nucleus together.

The third New Testament passage which talks about atomic structure and physics is 2 Peter:



"But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise and the elements (atoms) will be dissolved with fire and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up." (2 Peter 3:10)

The Greek word translated "elements" in this passage from Colossians is *stoicheion* which means the building blocks of the universe, or "the ordered arrangement of things." It can also mean the "atomic elements." The word translated "dissolved" is literally (in Greek) *luo*, meaning "unloosed." This suggests a further, future letting-go of the nuclear binding force that holds the nucleus together. This passage strongly suggests that the active power of God is behind the mysterious strong force that holds every atomic nucleus together. If this is so, all the other fundamental forces of nature are likewise forces that originate with Christ and His sustaining direction of the old creation.

If this is a correct view, were God to merely relax His grasp on the universe every atom would come apart "by fire" (that is, by nuclear fire). God dynamically sustains the universe, including the atoms themselves. They are "stable" only because force from the spiritual realm is being supplied into the physical nuclear binding fields. Whatever we may think of God and physics, the Bible leaves us with no room to doubt that God does care about the sparrow that falls to the ground, the widow, the orphan, and the homeless. He does not lose track of His children and watches over them with infinite, patient, intimate Fatherly care. He sustains the universe by His mighty word of power. He also alters the status quo and, in response to prayer, frequently changes the course of entire nations.

Another important claim of scripture about the old creation is that God is the present Sustainer of the universe. That is, He is not uninvolved, remote, detached and impersonal, leaving things to run by themselves by any means. Among secular scientists today there are many who acknowledge that God exists. But He is usually considered as only a First Cause---the One who brought the universe into existence and set it into motion. But most of these same scientists assume God was not involved after the initial act of creation. This is contrary to clear statements in the Bible that God is very much involved in every event that takes place in the on-going history of the entire universe:

"In many separate revelations---each of which set forth a portion of the Truth---and in different ways God spoke of old to [our] forefathers in and by the prophets, [But] in the last of these days He has spoken to us in [the person of a] Son, Whom He appointed Heir and lawful Owner of all things, also by and through Whom He created the worlds and the reaches of space and the ages of time---[that is] [He made, produced, built, operated, and arranged them in order]. He is the sole expression of the glory of God---[the Light-being, the out-raying or radiance of the divine],---and He is the perfect imprint and very image of [God's] nature, upholding and maintaining and guiding and propelling the universe by His mighty word of power..." (Hebrews 1:2-3) (Amplified Bible).

Again, the fact that Jesus is presently sustaining the universe from the realm of the spiritual raises the question whether there are inputs of energy as well as force into our physical world which ultimately show up as energy added "from the outside" of our physical world considered as a closed system. This is discussed in the next section.

Is Empty Space Empty?

Aristotle (384 - 322 BC) taught that the physical world was made up of four elements: air, earth, fire and water. Tying these all together so that the "elements" intercommunicated was a "subtle" medium, a fifth element: the aether--later to be known as the vacuum. (The Latin root *vacuus* means "empty"). In a sense the aether was the *substratum* of the material world. The Greeks believed that "nature abhors a vacuum" so they could not imagine space as being totally empty.

The Greeks believed the stars were suspended from, or attached to, a rotating crystalline shell at a fixed distance from the earth. When some of the "stars" (planets) were observed to be moving with respect to the "fixed" stars, a *series* of rotating crystal spheres was postulated. The earth was believed to be fixed, immovable, and at the center of the creation. Not until the 16th Century were these Greek (Ptolemaic) ideas challenged by the Copernican revolution. One of the most mysterious concepts in western physics since Aristotle's day is the concept of the vacuum. Until Galileo Galilei (1564 - 1642) challenged the notion, the velocity of light was assumed by most everyone to be infinite, so the nature of the space between the earth and the crystal spheres was not of great concern

Rene Descartes (1596-1640) championed the theory that the aether was a *plenum*, from the Greek word meaning "full." Because it was so difficult for the scientists of that era to

understand "action at a distance," Descartes imagined that a very dense medium of very small particles pervaded everything. This medium was capable of transmitting force from one object to another by collisions. The aether "particles" were in constant motion and there were no spaces between the particles. In a sense the aether was *more* solid than matter, yet invisible. Descartes universe was purely a "mechanical universe", and his theories were soon superseded.

Galileo's former secretary, Evangelista Torricelli filled a long glass tube with mercury in 1644. Inverting the tube into a dish of mercury he observed that the mercury dropped some 30 inches at the closed upper end of the tube, thereby creating what was obviously a vacuum. Blaise Pascal (1623 -1662) took this work even further and soon everyone was convinced that the vacuum of space was empty after all.

If light were corpuscular in nature as some believed, it was not difficult to image light "particles" (we now call them *photons*) could traverse a pure vacuum without the necessity of a real medium pervading all of space. But other experiments soon began to show that light was a wave phenomenon. Of course, waves could be traveling through the plenum aether by collisions, however at the time only compressional waves were imagined. [Sound waves or seismic waves are compressional in nature, for instance, but light waves proved to be transverse]. In parallel with all these growing controversies, the two-way velocity of light was finally measured by Olaf Roemer in 1675 and found to be finite, although the values he obtained were a few percent higher than the present value, 299,792.4358 km/sec.

By the time of Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) the aether was believed by many scientists to be "luminiferous." That is, the aether was said to be more fluid than solid, though it was elastic, and therefore it was a medium which would support waves. James Clerk Maxwell (1839 - 1879) enjoyed great success when he found a set of equations which beautifully described how light waves could travel through such a luminiferous aether. He showed that light waves are composed of oscillating electric and magnetic vectors in an x-y plane for a wave traveling in the z-direction. For waves to exist at all, it is natural to suppose that there is some sort of supporting medium. Such a medium must possess elasticity (a spring-like property) and also inertia, (a mass-like like property). In fact, the velocity of a wave in any medium is equal to the square root of the stiffness divided by the density of the medium.

In the case of electromagnetic waves (gamma rays, x-rays, radio waves, heat, and light of various wavelengths), Maxwell found that the aether possessed an electric-field scaling parameter, called "dielectric permittivity," and a magnetic-field scaling parameter, called permeability, such that the velocity of light was equal to one over the square root of permeability times permittivity. In support of the notion that the aether was a real medium it was observed that empty space behaved like a transmission line with a "characteristic impedance" of 377 ohms, (which is the ratio of permeability to permittivity for "free space.")

Editor's Note: Thus, there is excellent evidence that Christ is truly holding us and the very substance of all creation together through His power which imbeds all of us and

all of creation, just as scripture tells us! Science and scripture are not at odds on this, but in concert.

“Answers for Life” series at Calvary Chapel this coming year.

We thank all of those who joined us for the "Rocks Cry Out" Series at Calvary Chapel Jesus is the Way this past year.

We will be back starting the fourth Tuesday in September with our **"Answers for Life"** series.

Below is the schedule of live multimedia programs for 2024-2025



September 24, 2024 - **"Is there a God and Do I have a purpose?"**

October 22, 2024 - **"Why is there Pain and Suffering and Why Do bad Things happen to Good People?"**

January 2025 - **"Races, Racism, Babel & Did we Evolve from Apes?"**

February 2025 - **"Doesn't Distant Starlight prove the Bible Wrong?"**

March 2025 - **"What about Contradictions in the Bible?"**

April 2025 - **"The De-Faithing of America: Creation in the Courts"**

Calvary Chapel Jesus is the Way is located at 6615 S. Flores St. SA TX 78214



Genesis Commentary

Laban Pursues Jacob

22 On the third day Laban was told that Jacob had fled. 23 Taking his relatives with him, he pursued Jacob for seven days and caught up with him in the hill country of Gilead. 24 Then God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night and said to him, "Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad."

25 Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country of Gilead when Laban overtook him, and Laban and his relatives camped there too. 26 Then Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done? You've deceived me, and you've carried off my daughters like captives in war. 27 Why did you run off secretly and deceive me? Why didn't you tell me, so I could send you away with joy and singing to the music of timbrels and

harps? 28 You didn't even let me kiss my grandchildren and my daughters goodbye. You have done a foolish thing. 29 I have the power to harm you; but last night the God of your father said to me, 'Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.' 30 Now you have gone off because you longed to return to your father's household. But why did you steal my gods?"

At this point, Jacob was not far from the Jordan River and the Promised Land. This shows that he traveled quickly, and that Laban was determined to pursue him this far. The "teraphim" (idols) stolen by Rachel shows a sad comment on Laban for having false gods which can be stolen.

31 Jacob answered Laban, "I was afraid, because I thought you would take your daughters away from me by force. 32 But if you find anyone who has your gods, that person shall not live. In the presence of our relatives, see for yourself whether there is anything of yours here with me; and if so, take it." Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen the gods. Oh, what a tangled web we weave!

33 So Laban went into Jacob's tent and into Leah's tent and into the tent of the two female servants, but he found nothing. After he came out of Leah's tent, he entered Rachel's tent. 34 Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them inside her camel's saddle and was sitting on them. Laban searched through everything in the tent but found nothing.

35 Rachel said to her father, "Don't be angry, my lord, that I cannot stand up in your presence; I'm having my period." So, he searched but could not find the household gods.

36 Jacob was angry and took Laban to task. "What is my crime?" he asked Laban. "How have I wronged you that you hunt me down? 37 Now that you have searched through all my goods, what have you found that belongs to your household? Put it here in front of your relatives and mine, and let them judge between the two of us.

38 "I have been with you for twenty years now. Your sheep and goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten rams from your flocks. 39 I did not bring you animals torn by wild beasts; I bore the loss myself.

It was an ancient custom that a shepherd could bring the torn carcass of a sheep to his owner, as evidence that he was brave enough to not let the wolf devour it or take it away, and thus the shepherd would be excused. Jacob explained he didn't follow this custom, and every animal that was attacked or stolen, he replaced out of his own herd going above and beyond custom.

And you demanded payment from me for whatever was stolen by day or night. 40 This was my situation: The heat consumed me in the daytime and the cold at night, and sleep fled from my eyes. 41 It was like this for the twenty years I was in your household. I worked for you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flocks, and you changed my wages ten times. 42 If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been with me, you would surely have sent me away empty-handed. But God has seen my hardship and the toil of my hands, and last night he rebuked you."

It is clear Laban had not treated Jacob fairly and the resentment shows. Jacob's twenty years of faithful service proved his integrity. It was good that Jacob saw God's presence and protection in all this. Unfortunately, nowhere did Jacob claim God as his own; he referred to God as the Fear of his father Isaac and the God of his grandfather Abraham.

43 Laban answered Jacob, "The women are my daughters, the children are my children, and the flocks are my flocks. All you see is mine. Yet what can I do today about these daughters of mine, or about the children they have borne? 44 Come now, let's make a covenant, you and I, and let it serve as a witness between us."

45 So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. 46 He said to his relatives, "Gather some stones." So, they took stones and piled them in a heap, and they ate there by the heap. 47 Laban called it Jegar

Sahadutha, and Jacob called it Galeed. The Aramaic Jegar Sahadutha and the Hebrew Galeed both mean “witness heap.”

48 Laban said, “This heap is a witness between you and me today.” That is why it was called Galeed. 49 It was also called Mizpah, [Mizpah means “watchtower.”] because he said, “May the Lord keep watch between you and me when we are away from each other. 50 If you mistreat my daughters or if you take any wives besides my daughters, even though no one is with us, remember that God is a witness between you and me.”

In this covenant, Laban expressed how suspicious he was of Jacob. The idea of Mizpah (watch) is, “If you do wrong, God will see it and may He punish.” In effect, the pillar of Mizpah meant, ‘If you come over on my side of this line, the pact is void and I will kill you.’ The covenant breaker would need God to take care of him, because the other would “shoot to kill”. Mizpah was never meant to be a nice sentiment – despite what a Mizpah coin shared between two people might say.

51 Laban also said to Jacob, “Here is this heap, and here is this pillar I have set up between you and me. 52 This heap is a witness, and this pillar is a witness, that I will not go past this heap to your side to harm you and that you will not go past this heap and pillar to my side to harm me. 53 May the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us.”

So, Jacob took an oath in the name of the Fear of his father Isaac. 54 He offered a sacrifice there in the hill country and invited his relatives to a meal. After they had eaten, they spent the night there.

55 Early the next morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then he left and returned home. [In Hebrew texts this verse (31:55) is numbered 32:1.]

The best solution for Jacob’s in-law problems was for him to separate from Laban. Therefore, they set up a pillar to be a barrier between them. There is wisdom in having some separation from in-laws. The Bible says, “therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife” (Genesis 2:24). Laban and Jacob seemed to have more problems than most families, so their separation was extreme.

Then Laban departed and returned to his place: After a proper good-bye, Laban saw his daughters and grandchildren for the last time. Jacob took his family to Canaan and never returned to where Laban lived.

“This is the last we hear of Laban in the Bible, and it is good that this is the end of him. Laban is of the world, and Jacob needed to be freed from this world in order to live wholeheartedly for the God of his fathers.”

“Rather than seeking to follow the truth of God’s plan as witnessed by Jacob, he merely resented and coveted the blessing of God on Jacob. He finally ended up with neither. His life constitutes a sober warning to a great host of semireligious but fundamentally self-worshipping and self-seeking men and women today.”

Rachel and Leah were wrong to look to their father Laban for their portion or inheritance (Genesis 31:14) once they were married to Jacob. He now was their portion and inheritance. “Since you are saved and joined to Christ, appraise the world and ask, ‘Is there yet any portion for me?’ If you think there is, you are mistaken.” Christ is our portion! (Commentary from Gen. 31:25-55 excerpted from Enduring word Commentary at <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/genesis-31/>)

Coming to SABBSA on the second Tuesday of each month in 2024

August 2024 - "Designs from Nature that have led to discoveries which have changed Human History"

September 2024 - "The Rocks Cry Out - Lesson 15: The Missoula Flood"

October 2024 - "Lesson 16: The Miracle of Life"

November 2024 – Dave Nutting, Alpha Omega Institute



SABBSA on KSLR

Please join the **San Antonio Bible Based Science Association** "on the air" each Saturday afternoon with "**Believing the Bible!**" Join us **Saturday afternoons at 1:45 pm on radio station KSLR 630 AM in San Antonio and airing for 15-million people across the U.S. in thirteen major markets and internationally in 120 countries on WWCR.**

Here is our schedule of upcoming program topics

8/3 **The Heavens Declare**

8/10 **Scholars & Skeptics (Sir William Ramsey)**

8/17 **Caveman Language**

8/24 **Prosecutor for Evolution**

8/31 **God holds us Together**

9/7 **Islam vs. Christianity**



9/14 **Shema, Golden Rule + 10**

9/21 **Has Language Evolved?**

9/28 **Comb Jellies**

If you cannot tune in on Saturday afternoons or would like to sample our program or hear previous shows, they are available on podcast on the KSLR website (kslr.com). Click on the link below to go to the KSLR podcast page and scroll down till you find "**Believing the Bible.**"

"Believing the Bible" - SABBSA on KSLR Radio

Cartoon Corner



Thanks to Answers in Genesis, who provides many of these cartoons each month for our newsletter and our presentations. Please think about donating to them in gratitude for this and all the ministries they give us.

Prayer Needs and Praises!

- Pray for spiritual healing in our nation.
 - Pray for SABBSA's Public Seminars
 - Pray for our Radio Ministry
 - Pray for our effectiveness of monthly meetings and speakers
 - Pray for how we can get the gospel out better
 - Please pray for Mrs. Cindy Williams who is battling cancer.
-



Around Texas

Houston:

The **Greater Houston Creation Association (GHCA)** meet at Houston's First Baptist Church at 7 pm every first Thursday, in Room 143. Their meetings can be streamed live by going to www.ghcaonline.com.

Dallas-Ft Worth:

The Metroplex Institute of Origin Science (MIOS) meets at the Dr. Pepper Starcenter, 12700 N. Stemmons Fwy, Farmers Branch, TX, usually at 7:30 pm on the first Tuesday of each month. <http://dfw-mios.com/>

Greater San Antonio area: Listen to **Answers with Ken Ham** online at the address below.

<http://www.answersingenesis.org/media/audio/answers-daily> To hear creation audio programs from the **Institute for Creation Research**, listen online at this address. <http://www.icr.org/radio/> Also, tune in KHCB FM 88.5 (San Marcos) or KKER FM 88.7 (Kerrville) for **Back to Genesis** at 8:57 AM Mon-Fri, then **Science, Scripture and Salvation** at 1:30 AM, 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM on Saturdays.

Glen Rose:

Dr. Carl Baugh gives a "**Director's Lecture Series**" on the first Saturday of each month at the **Creation Evidence Museum** just outside Glen Rose, TX. This museum is a great and beneficial way to spend any day. Presentations are at 11 am and 2 pm. For more information, go to www.creationevidence.org

Dallas:

The Museum of Earth History uses the highest quality research replicas of dinosaurs, mammals, and authentic historical artifacts to not only lay out for the visitor a clear and easily understood connection between Genesis and Revelation but will do so in an entertaining and intellectually challenging way. Open M-F 9 to 6. <http://visitcreation.org/item/museum-of-earth-history-dallas-tx/>

ICR in Dallas:

Of course, the **ICR Discovery Center for Science and Earth History** is the foremost creation history museum in the Southwest. They are open from 10am to 5 pm Tuesdays through Saturdays. For more information on this exceptional facility go to <https://discoverycenter.icr.org/>

Abilene:

The Discovery Center is a creation museum/emporium that exists primarily to provide scientific and historic evidence for the truthfulness of God's word, especially as it relates to the creation/evolution issue. It also features some fascinating "Titanic Disaster" exhibits. <https://evidences.org>

Last Month at SABBSA "The Rocks Cry Out" #13 - "Missing Time"



SEARCH *for the* TRUTH _{for}

This video started the 3rd volume of Search for the Truth Ministries' **"The Rocks Cry Out"** Series. It gave us evidence for the rapid depositing of the Earth's rock layers during the Noahic flood.

If the layers in the Earth were laid down over millions of years, they should not be so perfectly uniform and parallel in the strata. There should be worm trails, ruts from erosion and many other surface details which by their absence shows these layers of rock were not laid down gradually, but quickly and catastrophically. In July we saw evidence detailing the truth of Earth's history!

Next SABBSA Meeting: Tuesday, August 13, 2024, at 7 pm

Coming to SABBSA in August

"The Rocks Cry Out" #14 - "God's Designs in Nature"

Designs from nature that have led to discoveries which have changed human history.

An exploding field of research and development today is the field of biomimicry, also called biomimetics. In this field, man is carefully studying designs in nature and copying them to produce new products, new medications and solve engineering problems we had no idea how to solve.

Please join us in August when we closely examine the Creator's handiwork in the world around us!

Please join us in August for creation science and biblical apologetics teaching you will find nowhere else in Bexar County. We meet at **Faith Lutheran Church** just **south of the corner of Jones Maltsberger and Thousand Oaks**. The address is 14819 Jones Maltsberger Rd., San Antonio, TX 78247.

GOD'S DESIGNS IN NATURE

- Examples large and small (Gen. 1:20-21,14)
- God's designs reveal about God (Rom. 1:20)
 - His eternal power
 - His divinity
- Seeing God's Creation should make us recognize and honor God (Rom. 1:18-23)