

C O L L E G E A N D U N I V E R S I T Y
DIALOGUE

English • French • Portuguese • Spanish



**Intelligent design
and its critics**

**Love or infatuation?
Telling the difference**

**The rainbow
is all in your head**

**Postmodern Bible critics
and recent archaeology**

The Da Vinci Code

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Volume 18

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EDITORIAL

A letter read by all

A few decades ago, sociologists predicted that religion, at least in the West, was on the verge of extinction. It would be displaced, they said, by vastly improved education and scientific breakthroughs. It's clear, though, that despite high-profile scandals and an ever-shrinking membership in mainline Christian churches, religion as a whole has refused to disappear. In fact, the strong migratory currents active in today's world have brought to the West many followers of Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism who have in turn found new followers. Even as many made these dire predictions, a variety of new spiritual expressions began and flourish. The fact is, our Creator God has designed us to be spiritual creatures. Although often confused and misguided, most of us reach out to connect with the Divine.

Religious seeking and revival are alive and well on university campuses. A recent survey of 100,000 first-year university students in the United States showed 48 percent thought that it was "essential" or "very important" that educational institutions encourage personal expression of spirituality. Stanford University spent almost \$3 million dollars renovating a large hall as a religious meeting place to which Christians will bring their own ritual accoutrements—Muslims their prayer rugs, Hindus their shrines, and so on. With the purpose of promoting interfaith dialogue, Johns Hopkins University bought and refurbished a former Methodist church where worship activities are to be held.

This kaleidoscopic scene brings to mind the diversity of faiths and ideas characteristic of the world in which the apostle Paul preached and early Christians lived. Given this reality, how will you, as a Seventh-day Adventist, relate? In the face of such plurality, will you keep quiet, slink away, or abandon your friendship with Jesus Christ and your commitment to the Bible? Instead, let me encourage you to:


Know what you believe. Dig deeper into your own faith, study the Bible on your own and with a group of Adventist friends. Read and think about Adventism's basic beliefs. Make time in your busy schedule to talk to God, both in ongoing conversation and through devotional reading and focused prayer. Your spirit will be refreshed and your faith nurtured as you face each day's challenges.

Live what you believe. Whether you realize it or not, your friends, professors, and many others are keen observers of your behavior. What convictions and values do your words, priorities, and lifestyle communicate to them? Society today respects integrity and transparency. Do they see coherence between your professed Christianity and your actions? If you have stumbled, ask God to forgive and to grant you strength to represent Him well wherever you go.

Share what you believe. In His great plan, God has brought you to your campus not only to obtain a degree and prepare for a profession, but also to stand tall as an ambassador of Jesus Christ. Remember, you may be the only one able to reach a fellow student or a teacher with the saving truth of Christ.

As Paul memorably said, "You are a letter from Christ..., written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God..., known and read by everybody" (2 Corinthians 3:3,2, NIV). What will your friends and teachers read in you?

For the past 15 years it has been my pleasure to serve as the managing editor of *Dialogue*. It is now time to pass on the baton, and as I bid farewell, I pray that God will bless you in your studies, your profession, and your life's mission. Until we meet again!



Julieta Rasi

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TRANSITION

Farewell and Welcome

The publication of an international journal such as *Dialogue* requires the involvement and cooperation of many individuals, most of whom are not known by the readers. The authors, of course, play a visible and irreplaceable role in our ministry. However, one of the key responsibilities for this journal is carried by the person that coordinates and supervises the flow of text and illustrations among the scores of individuals engaged in its production and distribution, ensuring accuracy and timeliness. These include editors, translators, copy editors, designers, proofreaders, printers, accountants, regional representatives, and many more.

For 15 years, Julieta Rasi has been performing this important task, using her broad editorial experience, superb organizational skill, and grace. After supervising the production of issues 3:2 through 18:1 and the distribution of more than one million copies of *Dialogue*, Julieta has decided to pass on her responsibilities to a younger managing editor and devote more time to her grandchildren, garden, reading, and travel.

Prof. Susana Schulz has assumed this key position beginning with this issue of *Dialogue*. She has lived, studied, and worked in countries such as Argentina, France, Brazil, and the United States. This has given her an international perspective, a deep understanding of the issues facing Adventist university students around the world, as well as fluency in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish—the four languages in which our journal is published. Before joining our editorial team, Prof. Schulz was a teacher and the director of the Adventist Colleges Abroad program at River Plate Adventist University.

We wish Susana Schulz much success and satisfaction in her new responsibilities and, for Julieta Rasi, the fulfillment of a job well done and the enjoyment of a deserved change of pace.



Julieta Rasi and Susana Schulz

The Editors



Loma Linda University

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BIOL or GEOL 475 4 quarter units

September 25 – December 15, 2006

Registration online August 28-September 18

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Professor of Biology and Paleontology

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The tuition charge covers 4 units of tuition plus the textbook, *Faith, Reason and Earth History*, by Leonard Brand. Scholarships are available, primarily for students outside of North America, to cover much of the usual LLU tuition charge. For further information on the course and the available scholarships contact Dr. Brand at lbrand@llu.edu.

Intelligent design and its critics

by John C. Walton

The debate raging around ID is an ideological one in which evolutionists are seeking to maintain the dominance of the humanist/atheist worldview.

Achievements of design—new and daring—are perhaps the most noted signature of our time. Molecules and matter are co-opted into the most elaborate and original designs ever conceived. Robotic production lines are designed to mass-produce vehicles efficiently and speedily. Travel into the third spatial dimension is finally kick-started with the design of awe-inspiring space vehicles sent to explore the Solar System. Designer drugs, anesthetics, and exquisite diagnostic tools have changed medicine forever. But perhaps the most awesome design achievements of all are the amazingly intricate silicon chip-based devices powering the global information highway.

Yet, it is ironic that whilst design-driven technologies are achieving wonders all around us, many, led by evolutionary biologists, are convinced that design had no part in the origin of complex structures in the biological and natural worlds. Although cells have been routinely called miniature factories, their emergence is said to owe nothing to design. DNA is universally referred to as a code, with its molecular translation machinery, but apparently no cryptographer was necessary. Brains are habitually described as computers, but neither programmers nor engineers were supposed to have featured in their development.

Of course, rapidly succeeding material changes have accustomed society to living with unexplained and counter-intuitive happenings. Lewis Carroll aptly summed up the looking-glass nature of modern living:

“Sometimes I’ve believed as many as six contradictory things before breakfast.”¹ However, the strangeness of the philosophical divergence between design-driven technology and chance-led evolutionary biology was bound to pique thoughtful minds.

Intelligent design: forgotten phantom of the cosmic opera?

Challenges to evolution have repeatedly erupted, and were brought sharply into focus in the early 1990s by Phillip Johnson, law professor at the University of California, Berkeley. His incisive re-examination of origins resulted in a rather convincing case that the full diversity of Darwinian evolution is not supported by compelling evidence from paleontology or by empirical data from biology.² Johnson’s crucial point was that the Darwinian edifice is mainly buttressed by its materialist assumption of philosophical naturalism.³ Origins scientists insist that only chance and the laws of nature may be admitted as acceptable explanatory tools. Any interpretation departing from this narrow arena is automatically rejected as non-science or dubbed as superstition.

The challenge intensified with the publication of Lehigh University biochemist Michael Behe’s book *Darwin’s Black Box*.⁴ Bio-systems like vision cascades, cellular cilia, and bacterial flagella require many complex and coordinated molecular working parts. Behe demonstrated that such “molecular machines” are “irreducibly complex.” He combed the literature in search of stepwise evolutionary scenarios to account for their origin, but found them few and far between and totally inadequate. He argued that biological machines are, in fact, powerful evidence of intelligent design in biology.

Is it possible to decide if something has really been designed or if only seems to be designed? Mathematician and philosopher William Dembski pointed out that detecting design is

already a well-established scientific activity in fields such as forensic science, archaeology, and cryptology. Methods employed with obvious success to distinguish criminal from accidental activity, to differentiate artifacts from natural objects, and to decode messages, should also be applicable to biological structures and to events in nature.

Dembski’s objective criterion for identifying design, and distinguishing it from the effects of natural causes, is called “specified complexity.”⁵ When applied to certain complex biological phenomena, the criterion agrees well with Behe’s conclusion that their origin implies intelligent design.⁶

The Intelligent Design (ID) movement that sprang from these insights is attracting interest worldwide. Information and ideas about ID are disseminated by the Discovery Institute’s Center for Science and Culture.⁷ The huge media coverage of the recent ID court case in Pennsylvania and the BBC TV prime-time screening of a documentary on ID in the United Kingdom have brought the issue much public exposure.⁸

Corrosive criticism of intelligent design

Predictably, scientists from evolutionary disciplines have vigorously opposed ID.

The old school of materialists oppose ID with every means their powerful establishment positions give them. For example, Oxford University chemistry professor Peter Atkins excoriated Behe’s book in a review,⁹ and a *Guardian* article by evolutionists Richard Dawkins and Jerry Coyne¹⁰ attacked ID with a rhetorical chain saw. Corrosive criticism is uncommon amongst heavyweight scientists, revealing the powerful ideological motivation of these authors. Many evolutionists are militant members of atheist and/or humanist organizations. For example, Dawkins’ emotional attach-

ment to atheism was prominently on display in his recent two-part TV series on religion as the “Root of all evil.”

Is intelligent design a religious conspiracy?

However, some coherent criticisms of ID have emerged. Some of these were voiced by Dawkins and Coyne in their *Guardian* article. They say, for example: “There is nothing new about ID. It is simply creationism camouflaged with a new name.” Others imply that ID is some kind of “religious conspiracy.” Proponents of ID regard it as a scientific research program that investigates the effects of intelligent causes. For Dembski, the purpose of ID is “to rehabilitate design as a mode of scientific explanation.” Meyer wrote, “The question that must be asked about the origin of life is not ‘which materialistic scenario seems most adequate?’ but ‘what actually caused life to arise on the earth?’”¹¹ The specified complexity criterion for detecting design makes no appeal to sacred books and is independent of religious authority. Religious connotations are inevitable for any enterprise delving into origins. For every charge of “religious agenda” aimed at ID science, an equal charge of “atheist agenda” could be leveled at evolutionary scenarios. Untestable evolutionary accounts of origins, lost in the miasma of pre-Cambrian time, are just as likely to be humanist wish fulfillment, as are religious accounts. Truth-seekers should ignore such charges as red herrings and carefully evaluate the real merits of the evidence from both sides.

Early in their article, Dawkins and Coyne say “So, why are we so sure that intelligent design is not a real scientific theory, worthy of ‘both sides’ treatment? Isn’t that just our personal opinion? It is an opinion shared by the vast majority of professional biologists.” “If ID really were a scientific theory, positive evidence for it, gathered through research, would fill peer-reviewed scientific journals. This doesn’t happen.

It isn’t that editors refuse to publish ID research.” As already mentioned, for material naturalists, “real science” admits only chance and necessity as valid causes. Dawkins and his evolutionary peers automatically rule out ID on these philosophical grounds and consider it a waste of time to evaluate the evidence. Many professional biologists work in institutes specifically named “Evolutionary Biology” or some variant of this. The research funding, the livelihoods, the careers, the professional reputations of all these scientists depend on adherence to evolutionary orthodoxy. Objectivity on foundational questions of origins is not an option for them in these circumstances. The majority scientific opinion is a radically unsafe yardstick for gauging the validity of ID.

It is totally unsurprising that ID research is not reported in mainline science journals. Contrary to Dawkins and Coyne’s assertion, editors routinely refuse to publish. When Dr. Richard Sternberg, editor of the *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington*, published a single paper by Cambridge-educated Stephen Meyer making the case for ID, he immediately became the subject of a closet campaign of ridicule and intimidation. “They were saying I accepted money under the table, that I was a crypto-priest, that I was a sleeper cell operative for the creationists,” said Sternberg. He was advised not to attend a biological society meeting because feelings were running so high, order couldn’t be guaranteed. An independent agency, the U.S. Office of Special Counsel, examined email traffic emanating from the Smithsonian Institution, where Sternberg held a fellowship, and noted that “retaliation came in many forms.... Misinformation was disseminated through the Smithsonian and to outside sources. The allegations against you were later determined to be false.”¹² Editors and reviewers are well aware of the intimidation and

harassment they will face, so it is small wonder they shy away from publishing articles favorable to ID.

It is ironic for Dawkins, of all people, to denigrate ID because, “Its advocates bypass normal scientific due process by appealing directly to the non-scientific public...” when this is exactly the method he adopts himself! His main contribution to science is the series of popular books expounding his brand of “blind watchmaker” evolution to the general public. In fact, Dawkins is following a long line of evolutionists, including Charles Darwin, Thomas Huxley, and Stephen Gould, all of whom have appealed directly to the non-scientific public in books and popular articles. Dawkins and Coyne’s belief that it is fine for evolutionists to appeal directly to the public, but wrong for those who disagree with them, is deeply revealing of their ultra-partisan approach.

Fears that intelligent design would destroy science

According to Dawkins and Coyne, ID scientists make unreasonable demands for evidence: “One side (Evolution) is required to produce evidence, every step of the way. The other side is never required to produce one iota of evidence, but is deemed to have won automatically, the moment the first side encounters a difficulty—the sort of difficulty that all sciences encounter every day, and go to work to solve, with relish.” For more than a century, scientists have been promising that laboratory science will soon discover convincing answers to key evolutionary puzzles such as the quantitative mechanism for evolutionary change; how life originated; how the genetic code and new genetic information arose; how single stereoisomers of peptides could originate; how complex biological organs like eyes, cilia, flagella, etc. originated; how new biological species developed from ancestral forms; and why the fossil record does not show

the “innumerable transitional forms” Darwin expected. ID scientists do not denigrate the huge progress that biologists have made in understanding how smaller changes have come about, or how new varieties of animals and plants are produced—i.e., microevolution in general. Evolutionists assert that the large steps to really new structures (macroevolution) are just an accumulation of smaller steps. It is very significant, however, that even after all this time, verifiable laboratory evidence is completely absent; the fossil record presents major problems; and only fanciful “scenarios” are offered. The point ID scientists are making is that the time has now come to examine alternative explanations in which design is evaluated alongside natural causes. The relish with which scientists work in solving origins problems could be pleasantly enhanced by adding the ID criterion to their arsenal of scientific tools.

Critics frequently express unease that ID science must involve continual appeals to miracles, and fear that it will stifle and destroy the true enquiring spirit of science. Past experience shows that this need cause no concern. The vast majority of science would continue exactly as at present. In research on the origin of complex biological organelles (and complex systems elsewhere in the Universe), the specified complexity filter would be used, along with current scientific tools, in the global enterprise of understanding living things, including human beings. Rather than stifling scientific enquiry, the existence of design in the Universe raises the expectation that phenomena are comprehensible and rational. If some “Designer did it,” even if “God did it,” then this promises that human intelligence can understand it, and human design can capitalize on it.

Design in nature does not imply that miracles continually occur, in the sense of arbitrary interventions breaking natural laws. In the design of a complex machine by human intelli-

gence, no natural laws are broken. The creation of a computer, for example, invokes a special ordering of matter, and inputs a particular amount of information, that brings about an arrangement whose probability would otherwise be extremely low.¹³ Designs in nature can be understood in the same way as organization events. Religious convictions and belief in a designer did not inhibit front-rank scientists of the past like Isaac Newton, Louis Pasteur, or James Clerk Maxwell, and do not hamper discoveries by the many modern believing scientists. Rather, this belief reinforces the idea that natural phenomena are intelligible and catalyses projects for putting them to use.

Is intelligent design unnecessary and refuted?

Critics have maintained that there is no need for ID science because, as Dawkins said in a recent BBC documentary,⁸ “Evolution explains 99% of what we know about biology.” Check out almost any life science textbook to see how wild an exaggeration this is, particularly at the hard end of biology where quantitative explanations are discussed. Peter Atkins recently published a textbook on *Physical Chemistry for the Life Sciences*.¹⁴ The theoretical expression of the laws and principles underpinning biology is found in this area of science. In fact, the textbook does not contain a single reference to evolution; an eloquent testimony to the real, rather than ideological, significance of evolution.

More specifically, Dawkins and Coyne assure us: “In fact, the bacterial flagellum is certainly not too complex to have evolved, nor is any other living structure that has ever been carefully studied. Biologists have located plausible series of intermediates, using ingredients to be found elsewhere in living systems,”¹⁰ but this is largely wishful thinking. When it comes to explaining the origin of the bacterial flagellum, and similarly complex, information-

rich biological organelles, evolutionary ingenuity has little to offer. Of course, some “plausible series of intermediates” may be “located” in imaginary, tentative, scenarios. Scientific imagination knows no limits! But the broad picture of this area of evolution is noteworthy because of its scarcity of ideas and their insubstantial character.

Kenneth Miller’s announcement of the “collapse of irreducible complexity”¹⁵ proved to be hollow hype, although this comforting concept was widely disseminated by evolutionary biologists. The contention was that although the flagellum, for example, was admittedly inaccessible by a direct Darwinian pathway, its component proteins may have been preserved by natural selection in smaller systems performing other functions. This scenario implied, therefore, that these specific (or very similar) proteins would be found dotted around in other biochemical systems accessible to the bacterium. Protein characterization is carried out on a huge scale, so if this scenario were sound, the same proteins would be easy to recognize in their alternative settings and the literature would be full of plausible evolutionary pathways for the flagellum and other biological machines. This is manifestly not the case.

Darwin’s ritual cheerleaders¹⁶

According to Dawkins and Coyne, “opposition to the fact of evolution is laughable to all who are acquainted with even a fraction of the published data. Evolution is a fact: as much a fact as plate tectonics or the heliocentric solar system.” The oft-repeated dictum, “evolution is fact,” has become a password ritually affirmed by orthodox Darwinians. In many contexts, “evolution” simply means change, and who would deny the existence of change in the natural world? There is indeed a large volume of evidence that

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Love or infatuation?

How to tell the difference

by Nancy Van Pelt

Infatuation wants to rush a relationship. True love can survive the test of time to make sure you are well suited for marriage.

“How can I know if I am really in love?” a reader wrote a newspaper columnist. Back came the reply: “If you have to ask, you aren’t.” The inadequacy of this response is appalling, yet many continue to think that when love hits, you’ll just know! The truth isn’t that easy.

Studies show that most people tend to consider past relationships as infatuation and present ones as real love. Another survey found that the average person experiences infatuation six or seven times and real love once or twice. You may already have experienced a portion of your allotted romances. But the big question is, How can you tell if it’s real love or only infatuation?

Infatuation is a strange mixture of sex and emotions. One dictionary defines the word as “completely carried away by unreasoning passion or attraction.” The word *infatuation* derives from a Latin root that means “silly or foolish”—a graphic description of some people’s behavior.

Love and infatuation share similar symptoms

Love and infatuation do have one thing in common—strong feelings of affection for someone—which complicates the matter of sorting out the differences because many of the symptoms overlap each other. The most

passionate and blind infatuation may contain a portion of true love, and true love may include several symptoms found in infatuation. The differences between love and infatuation, then, are often found in *degree* rather than in definition. Therefore, one must examine all evidence with extreme caution.

Love and infatuation share three symptoms: passion, a desire to be close, and strange emotions.

Passion. Passion may be present without true love. It is entirely possible, particularly for the male, to feel passion or strong sexual feelings for a woman he has never met. Necking and petting increase the urgency of erotic feelings until sex dominates the relationship. Passion alone is no indicator of true love. Sexual attraction can be as urgent in infatuation as in true love, and at times may even be dominating. Love must be based on more than sexual attraction or passion.

Furthermore, no one can maintain such fierce passion for long, although they vow they will. If all a couple has going for them is passion, the relationship will likely end within a few months. Should a couple marry based on this initial rush of sexual attraction, they will learn that when passion dies, there is nothing left to hold them together.

Desire to be close. The desire to be near one another constantly can be just as overwhelming in infatuation as in true love. You may wish to be together all the time, dreading the time when you must part. You may feel empty and lonely when your loved one is not with you, but this does not necessarily indicate real love. The desire to be near can be just as strong in infatuation as in true love.

Strange emotions. Research confirms that we experience distinct physical symptoms at the onset of infatuation. Symptoms like walking on air when

everything goes well and feeling sick when things go wrong; icy fingers racing up and down the spine, the inability to concentrate, feeling sick to your stomach or unable to eat are all common. But strange emotions occurs just as frequently with infatuation as with real love, although “funny feelings” and strange emotions are more indicative of infatuation. True love encompasses more than a mixture of funny feelings and continues long after strange feelings subside.

If you are lonely, bored, or getting over a broken romance, you are more likely to interpret a new romance as true love even though it is little more than infatuation. If you are insecure, or have low self-worth, you must also beware. Mature persons as well as those with high self-worth can be deceived by infatuation, but are more likely to recognize the condition for what it is.

Don’t get the impression that infatuation is all bad. It can be a pleasant and enjoyable experience as long as you recognize it for what it is—a brief interlude of romantic fantasy that will not last. Given enough time, it will pass or will develop into a real relationship that involves more than a rush of emotions. Remember also that some relationships that begin as infatuation develop into true love over time as they are tested.

True love differs from infatuation in that it provides time and space to recognize the good qualities as well as the shortcomings of your special friend. To commit to, to have sex with, to move in with, or marry someone on the basis of these early feelings, is sheer foolishness and will result in predictable, negative consequences.

Identifying the real thing

In the 1820s gold rush prospectors occasionally mistook pyrite for gold.

Pyrite, or fool's gold, as it is called, can be detected by popping it into a pan on a hot stove. While it sizzles and smokes, it sends out a strong stench. But heat will not damage real gold, nor will it produce a foul smell. Unfortunately, you cannot put your love relationship in a pan on a hot stove to see if it produces a stench, but you can test it against the following nine factors:

1. *Love develops slowly; infatuation rapidly.* Most people think that falling in love happens suddenly and intensely. Tyrone said, "I fell hard the minute I saw her yesterday. She looked just like I always pictured she would. I feel like I've known her all my life."

Tyrone's evaluation won't be valid until after a year of dating. Why? Because love grows, and growth takes time. It is impossible to know the real person after only a few dates. Early in a relationship, people put on their best behavior. Unpleasant traits are hidden and controlled. It takes months of seeing a person under varied circumstances before you know him or her really well. Many people successfully hide negative personality traits until after they are married.

Don't jump to conclusions. Allow your relationship to grow slowly. Begin as friends, and don't try to rush through the getting-to-know-you stage. Leisurely beginnings make for pleasurable dating relationships. Such friendships can lead to true love that resemble infatuation in intensity but are rooted in reality.

2. *Love relies on compatibility; infatuation on chemistry and appearance.* Steve got a "good feeling" when he met a good-looking girl. According to him, he felt instant chemistry. "You either feel it or you don't. I felt it the minute I saw her." Where did Steve get the idea that chemistry and love are the same thing? Movies, perhaps!

Relying on "chemistry" to guide you toward love is foolish and dangerous. Chemistry is based mostly on physical or sexual attraction. There needs to

be that spark between you that makes you feel more alive than ever before, but to base a marriage on this alone is ludicrous.

You may feel strongly attracted to someone you just met and like everything about that person. But there's still a long way to go before you love that person. True love includes chemistry, but springs from other factors as well, including character, personality, emotions, ideas, and attitudes. When you're in love you are interested in the way the other thinks and responds to situations, the values you hold in common. You look at your attitudes on religion, family, sex, money, and friends, as well as common interests, similar backgrounds, and courteousness. The more you have in common, the better your chances for true love.

3. *Love centers on one person; infatuation may involve several.* An infatuated person may think himself or herself "in love" with two or more persons at once. These persons often differ markedly in personality. Jan says she's in love with two guys and can't choose between them. Steve is mature, stable, and responsible, whereas Reggie is an irresponsible, fun-loving spender. Jan isn't "in love" with either. Something draws her to the fun-loving spender while her maturing instincts tell her the qualities of Steve hold more importance. She combines their qualities and thinks she is "in love" with both. True love focuses on one person whose character and personality possesses the essential qualities. You no longer combine people to form an ideal.

4. *Love produces security; infatuation insecurity.* While love works on the principle of trust, infatuation struggles with insecurity and may attempt to control the other through jealousy. This does not mean that when you are really in love you will never feel jealous. But jealousy is less frequent and severe. True love trusts. Some feel flattered by jealousy, thinking it indicative of true love. Jealousy, however, signifies

unhealthy emotions-insecurity and low self-worth as well as possessiveness. Real love doesn't act this way.

5. *Love recognizes realities; infatuation ignores them.* True love looks at problems squarely without minimizing their seriousness. Infatuation ignores differences in social, racial, educational, or religious backgrounds. Sometimes it grips someone who is already married. Infatuation argues that such things don't matter. A couple in love, however, face problems frankly. When a problem threatens their relationship, they discuss it openly and solve it intelligently. They negotiate solutions in advance.

6. *Love motivates positive behavior; infatuation has a destructive effect.* Love is constructive and brings out the best in you. It provides new energy, ambition, and interest in life. Love produces creativity and interest in personal growth, improvement, and worthy causes. It engenders self-worth, trust, and security and spurs you toward success. You study harder, plan more effectively, and save more diligently. Life takes on additional purpose and meaning. You may daydream, but you stay within the bounds of reality and function at your highest level.

Infatuation has a destructive, disorganizing effect. You'll be less effective, less efficient, and unable to reach your true potential. It thrives on unrealistic daydreams that cause you to forget the realities of life, work, study, responsibilities, and money.

7. *Love recognizes faults; infatuation ignores them.* Love recognizes the fine qualities in the other and idealizes to a degree, but does not consider the person faultless. Faults are admitted, but respect and admiration of their good qualities outweighs the bad. Infatuation blinds you from seeing anything wrong. You idealize to such a degree that you refuse to admit faults and defend your beloved against all critics. You admire one or two qualities so much that you fool yourself into believing they can outweigh the faults.

Love enables you to love in spite of these faults. It does not blind you to realities.

8. *Love controls physical contact; infatuation exploits it.* True love helps a couple hold back in expressing romantic intimacies. Both persons respect the other so much that they voluntarily limit their desire for intimacy. Infatuation demands intimacy much earlier. Furthermore, such intimacy makes up a smaller part of the relationship for a couple in love, in contrast to an infatuated couple. The reason for this is that infatuation depends largely on physical attraction, and the excitement leads to necking and petting. Persons experiencing this for the first time think this must be something special, and assume they are in love. They ignore the fact that their values, goals, and belief systems may be at odds. If they marry based on physical attraction alone, they'll wake up to find their sexual interest declining and disagreements escalating.

Although true love includes physical attraction, it springs from other factors as well. Physical contact for a couple in love usually has a deeper meaning than sheer pleasure. Physical contact for the infatuated often becomes an end in itself. Pleasure dominates the experience.

9. *Love brings the approval of family and friends; infatuation brings disapproval.* If parents or friends do not approve, beware! If they are convinced a bad choice is in the making, they are probably right. Marriages that lack the blessing of parents have a high failure rate. One researcher compared complaints by happily married persons with those of divorced persons. The divorced were almost four times as likely to complain their spouse had nothing in common with mutual friends. It was also found that happily married couples were far less likely to have problems with in-laws. If parents and friends object, take care. If they approve, take heart.

Give it time

If you have analyzed your relationship but still can't decide whether or not you have true love, allow yourself time. Infatuation wants to rush a relationship. Pulsating emotions overrule good sense and try to hurry you into commitments later regretted. True love can survive the test of time—two years of dating—to make sure you are well suited for marriage. Time gives experience and perspective.

Every year, thousands of couples stand at the altar, eyes radiant with joy, promising love and faithfulness forever, never anticipating they are making the greatest mistake of their lives. What will happen to their starry-eyed talks, tender promises, lingering looks, passionate kisses, and whispers of love?

Many fail to understand that you don't "fall" in love. You decide to love—to think about, spend time with, and have strong feelings for someone. "Falling" is the easy and fun part of love. The hard part, the commitment to love unconditionally an imperfect person, follows. Genuine love says, "I will love you unconditionally even when you fail to meet my needs, reject or ignore me, behave stupidly, make choices I wouldn't make, disagree with me, and treat me unfairly. And I will love you like this forever."

This kind of love is God's creative gift to us and can be enjoyed to its fullest only within the safety and security of marriage. We are only able to love because He first loved us. Anchor yourself to Him first, and then you will be less likely to be disappointed in love and more likely to find a satisfying love for your sojourn on earth.

Nancy L. Van Pelt, CFLE, is the author of many books, including *Smart Love: A Field Guide for Single Adults*, from which this article has been excerpted and adapted. You may contact Nancy at <http://www.heartnhome.com>.

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The rainbow is all in your head

by Leonard Brand and Ernest Schwab

Colors, sounds, and aromas are perceived and interpreted by an exquisitely designed mechanism of the brain.

If a tree falls in the forest and there is no one there to hear it, does it make any sound? The question may seem meaningless, but the answer can yield fascinating insights into the nature of sound, color, taste, beauty, love, and the Creator's inventive genius.

When the tree falls, its branches push the air aside and strike other trees, finally smacking the ground with force. All these collisions of object against object or object against the air generate trains of wave forms that move out through the air. These traveling vibrations of molecules, or sound waves, in the air are controlled by precisely measurable physical laws. The size and nature of the colliding objects and the force with which they collide, control the shape and complexity of the sound waves that move through the air at a constant speed, precisely controlled by physical law. So it could appear that sound is entirely controlled by the laws of physics. However, that is a premature conclusion, because so far all we have described are vibrations of air molecules. How do these vibrations become sound?

The ear

As the tree falls, a logger is working nearby. The sound waves, or vibrating air molecules, cause his eardrum to vibrate, and this vibration is conveyed to the inner ear, where a long row of receptors respond to the vibrations. The receptors at one end of the row respond to long-wavelength vibrations, perceived by us as low-pitched sound. At the opposite end are receptors

activated by short-wavelength vibrations, which humans perceive as high-pitched sounds. In between are many other receptors, each tuned to respond to a specific band of intermediate wavelengths; and each receptor is connected to the brain by a nerve, which sends signals to the brain. The brain interprets the signals for us, allowing us to perceive the sound.

What type of signal travels along each of the nerves connecting an inner ear receptor to the brain? Is it sound, carried along the nerve? No, each nerve transmits only an electrical impulse or signal. The electrical signals from a long-wavelength receptor and the signals from a short-wavelength receptor are physiologically the same. Each inner-ear receptor has its own nerve connection to the brain. The only way the brain can tell if a signal indicates a long or a short-wavelength is by which nerve the signal comes through. So far we still have no sound—only vibrations of air molecules, and movement of electrical impulses along nerves.

Since the connection between ear and brain consists only of electrical impulses, the origin of the sound of a falling tree must come from somewhere within the brain. There was no sound traveling along the nerves—only electricity. Somehow, the brain receives the incoming pulses of electricity from numerous nerves, and translates them into the conscious perception we call “sound.” What we perceive as sound is strictly a sensation generated by the brain. The physical and chemical laws of nature govern the vibrations of air molecules and the interactions between molecules to make life possible, but life is much more than those laws. Life results from an highly complex organism that is not defined by those laws, just like the shape of your car is not controlled by the laws of nature, but had to be invented. Only the brain is able to produce the sensation of sound.

To illustrate why sound cannot be

produced by those physical laws alone, compare the nerve connections from the ear with a computer keyboard. When we press a key with the letter M or G, an electrical signal is sent to the computer processor, where it is manipulated to produce the correct letter on the monitor. However, the letters M or G as they appear on the monitor are created inside the computer, and are controlled by the connections between keyboard and monitor. The electrical activity in a computer or in the brain would cease if it weren't for physical laws, but the shape of the letters and which key they connect to are not controlled by any natural law—they were designed by an engineer. Thus a computer expert can easily change the connections so that pressing the M key results in a G appearing on the monitor.

In the same way, physical laws can't determine which sound comes from which nerve; that is determined by arbitrary nerve connections from the ear. If we could reach into the brain and unplug the nerve cord from the ear to the brain, turn it around, and plug it in backwards, long-wavelength vibrations would be heard by us as high-pitched sounds, because that part of the brain that generates the sensation of high-pitched sound is being stimulated as a result of our having changed the wiring. A piccolo would sound like a tuba, and a tuba would be perceived as giving out piccolo sounds.

Vision: the eyes

Now we will move from the ears to the eyes. Light rays from the Sun bounce off all the objects around us. Some of those rays reach the light receptors in the back of our eyes, on the retina. The leaves on a tree absorb much of the light that strikes them, but the green light is reflected back. Those rays strike the retina, and we see the leaf as green. A red dress reflects the red rays, and our eyes are dazzled by the beauty of the bright red color, along with the beauty of the friend in

the dress.

When a light receptor is triggered by a light ray, it sends a message to the brain. What type of message is that? It is an electrical impulse, of the same type as the electrical impulses sent by the ear in response to the vibrations it received. So if the same electrical impulses carry information about sound waves and light rays, why doesn't our brain get confused? It isn't confused for the same reason a computer knows the difference between a signal from the M key and a signal from the G key—the wires from those two keys go to different places in the computer. In the same fashion, nerves from the eye go to a specific place in the brain, a specific nerve for each visual signal. All the information from these nerves reaches the brain as electrical impulses, and the brain interprets the information as a visual image.

But because both long-wavelength and short-wavelength light rays communicate to the brain via the same type of electrical signals, the brain's mode of interpreting those signals is the result of instructions (like computer software) in the brain, programmed to interpret the electrical signals from each part of the optical nerve and produce the correct visual image. In other words, our perception of red or green colors is the result of an information-processing system. Nothing in the laws of physics defines the characteristics of that system; it had to be invented by an intelligent designer.

You may object, stating that the wavelengths of light that produce various colors are well understood by physicists, and it is very predictable which wavelengths will be seen as each specific color. Yes, that is true, partly. The spectrum of visible light wavelengths is the result of precise physical laws, and the way in which those wavelengths are selectively reflected by different substances is a very consistent feature of nature. It is also true that we can predict which wavelength of light will be seen by us as green—usu-

ally. But the exceptions are a key to unraveling this puzzle. The fact that most of us see green in response to the same wavelength only confirms that the brain is very reliably programmed; we can count on it to see green the same way all the time. But it is not that way for everyone. Some people are color blind; they cannot tell the difference between red and green. When those individuals' eyes are stimulated by light, do the laws of physics change? Of course not; the wavelengths of light reflected from tree leaves are still the same. The difference is in the interpretation occurring in their brains and optical systems, caused by defective instructions for interpreting red and green wavelengths.

Fortunately, color blindness is not a common problem, and in the majority of cases is limited to red and green. This tells us that the light-interpreting center in the brain is usually extremely stable and reliable, but it still appears to be dependent on the organization of the brain. In other words, the colors we perceive are not controlled by the laws of nature, but are the result of the way the Creator designed our brains. Color, as we perceive it, only exists in animal species whose brain generates those perceptions of color. Thus, the rainbow is all in our heads. If we invented a light-detecting instrument, it could measure only the wavelength of light, it would have no way of knowing what colors humans will perceive when their brains interpret those wave-lengths.

Now, remember the experiment we discussed before: unplugging the nerve cord from the ear and turning it around. However, this time, imagine we could unplug two nerve cords, one from the ear and one from the eye, and exchange them. Now the sound processor in the brain would receive electrical signals from the eye, and the visual processor would get its electrical signals from the ear. What would we see and hear? We would "hear light" and "see sound"! It would no doubt

be very confusing, because the visual processor doesn't have the right software to interpret sound information. However, we would see some type of pattern generated from the sound signals. We would also hear strange sounds!

The feeling of love

Think back to a memorable moment when you were standing hand in hand with someone you love, taking in the sounds and colors of a beautiful mountain scene. The feelings of love and companionship made the colors and sounds more vivid. Where did they come from? What laws of nature controlled those feelings, and the experiences, memories, and thoughts in your brain that were the foundation of those loving feelings? The tender touch of your loved one's hand only stimulated touch receptors and sent electrical signals to specific places in the brain. Doesn't sound very romantic, does it?

If that is where we stop, we understand physics and chemistry, but not love and romance. That experience of love cannot be described by the laws of physics or chemistry. True, laws of nature hold together the molecules that make up our body, making life possible. But only your brain was able to know the meaning of that *particular* touch, and to generate a unique feeling, different from what would have been produced in response to some other soft touch. Friendship, companionship, and love are a beautiful system of relationships that depend on the information analysis system invented by the Creator and placed in our brains, just like the brain centers that control our perception of sound and color.

We believe love exists because the Creator loves us and wanted us to experience relationships that go way beyond mere physics and chemistry; relationships that bring to us the kind of joy and romance that only a personal God understands and can share with

us to brighten our lives. Love is an invention from God, programmed into our brains. Love, like the rainbow, is all in our heads.

The genius of our sensory world

Our entire sensory world of sounds, sights, colors, and smells (yes, smell involves the same concept) and the magic of love are produced by the information in a brain, not by the laws of sound or light waves. Next time you attend an orchestra concert, or sit at the edge of a forest in the evening, listening to the chorus of bird songs and watching the changing colors of the sunset blazing across the sky, think about the source of all this captivating sensory input. The varied instruments in the orchestra and the different types of bird songs are vibrating the air each in their unique way, and the sunset is reflecting light rays of varying wavelengths. That is all fascinating physics in its own right, but it doesn't produce a symphony or make a gorgeous sunset! The captivating sound of the symphony and intoxicating colors of the sunset are produced only by a brain. They are gifts the Creator gave to us by way of the instructions and connections He programmed into our brain, which the brain uses to take coldly precise vibrations of air and translate them into something we perceive as exquisitely beautiful, an experience we want to share with someone we love.

If a tree falls in the forest, and there is no one there to hear it, does it make any sound? No, it vibrates the air, but sound is produced only inside a brain.

What does it all mean?

How did creatures come to have this sound, vision, smell, and romance-generating equipment in their heads? For more than a hundred years, science has been explaining this as the result of mutation and natural selection—purely impersonal natural processes. In this article, we suggested a different interpretation, one that yields fascinating insights into the nature of

sound, color, taste, beauty, love, and the Creator's inventive genius that produced them. How can we be so sure we see the Creator's hand at work? Actually we can't prove it, just as no one can disprove it, but we believe it is a perfectly reasonable philosophical choice.

Science can contribute much toward understanding how our brains and other natural systems work and how organisms change. There is abundant evidence for microevolution and the emergence of new species, but there is a serious lack of convincing evidence for a genetic mechanism that could produce a new organ system or change one basic type of animal into another.* We cannot prove that a brain could not evolve without an intelligent designer, but naturalistic science carries the heavy burden of convincing us that it could happen. Even the very best science lacks the evidence to over-ride, for many of us, the sense that the marvels of the human brain, for instance, would never appear without a wise designer who understands and invented such a sophisticated and exquisitely capable organ—an organ able to generate a symphony of sound and sight and of romance that delights us and makes life beautiful.

In the modern scientific worldview, the impersonal laws of chemistry and physics are the ultimate reality. But we believe God is a personal being, and in His universe personal relationships are of ultimate importance. God is the inventor of the laws of nature and is the master of those laws, and uses them consistently to run the universe. But they are not His ultimate reason for creating, or His most valued creation. To God, personal relationships, and the ability of friends to share their appreciation of the esthetic wonders of His created universe, are of more significance than natural law. The laws of nature are only His servants, to provide a universe to support the more important realm—living, reasoning beings who can experience relation-

ships and respond to God's love.

Humans can never comprehend God until we understand and accept His nature as a personal being to whom natural law is merely a means to support His highest priority in the universe—loving relationships between beings who can share those trusting relationships because they freely choose to do so.

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* See L. R. Brand, *Faith, Reason, and Earth History* (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1997), and *Beginnings: Are Science and Scripture Partners in the Search for Origins?* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 2006). See also L. Spetner, *Not by Chance! Shattering the Modern Theory of Evolution* (Brooklyn, New York: The Judaica Press, 1998).

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Postmodern Bible critics and recent archaeology

by Michael Hasel

Biblical scholars and historians facing the challenges of postmodernism are increasingly turning to archaeology as the primary source of information about biblical history.

Since the dawn of archaeological research in the ancient Near East in 1799,¹ no other discipline has provided more new data and insights on the people, places, and events of the Bible. The scope of archaeology spans the globe and seeks to understand ancient cultures and life-ways through a study of the material remains of the past, impacting both our understanding of origins and ultimately what we have become today. This bridge between who we were and what we have become continues to fascinate thinking individuals around the world with the penetrating questions: Who am I? Where did I come from? Why am I here? Today, after the demise of modernism, postmodernism has become *the* major basis for forming new worldviews.² Although by its very philosophical premise it defies definition, Os Guinness has offered this summary: “Where modernism was a manifesto of human self-confidence and self-congratulation, postmodernism is a confession of modesty, if not despair. There is no truth, only truths. There is no grand reason; only reasons. There is no privileged civilization (or culture, belief, norm and style); only a multiplicity of cultures, beliefs, norms and styles. There is no universal justice; only interests and the competition

of interest groups.”³

In the end, writes Oxford theologian Alister McGrath, “this disillusionment with the modernism of the Enlightenment” has led to a philosophy where “the truth is that there is no truth.”⁴ This major premise has led to a radical reinterpretation of the Bible, resulting in a new level of critique on biblical history.

Niels-Peter Lemche of the University of Copenhagen writes that genuine “historical recollections of Israel’s early history are not to be found in the Old Testament historical narrative,” therefore “we cannot save the biblical history of early Israel.”⁵ In another recently published collection of essays entitled *Can A “History of Israel” Be Written?*, Hans M. Barstad concludes: “If historical (verifiable) truth should be our only concern, the history of Israel should not only be very short (written on ten pages or so), but it would also be utterly boring.”⁶

One might dismiss these discussions to the ivory tower of scholarship and wonder what kind of direct impact it has had on popular thinking. But these reinterpretations have received major headlines in the popular press. One article from *U.S. News and World Report* is entitled, “The Fight for History.”⁷ According to one popular book available in major bookstores, *The Bible Unearthed*, by Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, the new vision of ancient Israel tells us that “the historical saga contained in the Bible—from Abraham’s encounter with God... to the rise and fall of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah—was not a miraculous revelation, but a brilliant product of the human imagination.”⁸ Many who read these accounts are faced with major questions that strike at the very core of issues surrounding the reliability of the Bible.⁹ Or as one recent bestseller’s title queries, *Is the*

*Bible True?*¹⁰ For the postmodernist, these questions are becoming increasingly relevant, and for Christianity, they are essential in its claim for viability in a rapidly changing world.

William G. Dever, one of America’s foremost Near Eastern archaeologists, addresses these attacks in a recent book entitled, *What Did the Biblical Writers Know and When Did They Know It?* “The irony is that the most deadly attack on the Bible and its veracity, in either the historical or the theological meaning, has come recently not from its traditional enemies—atheists, skeptics, or even those ‘Godless Communists’ feared by Bible-believing people until recently—but from the Bible’s well-meaning friends.”¹¹

Archaeology is one of the major disciplines that allow us to defend ourselves against postmodern revisionism as hundreds of archaeologists work every year to uncover the past. Recent discoveries in the past 15 years have given cogent answers backed up by factual evidence against postmodern criticism. In this short essay we will look at a few of these areas.

People: David and Goliath

The story of David and Goliath has captured the imagination of Bible students through the ages. It is the story of the faith of an unprotected small boy withstanding an armored Philistine champion. It is the story of an Israelite army cowering in the Valley of Elah while the Philistines taunt them and their God. Five stones against iron shields, helmets, and sword. But what is the history behind the story? Was there a Goliath and a David?

In 1992 Philip Davies, professor of biblical studies at the University of Sheffield, appealing to archaeology, wrote, “The biblical ‘empire’ of David and Solomon has not the faintest

echo in the archaeological record—as yet.”¹² He concluded that David and Solomon were no more historical than King Arthur of the Round Table. But his argument is one from silence. In the view of Davies and other postmodern scholars, the characters and stories of the Bible must have a historical (archaeological) counterpart. “Unless this is done, there can be no real basis for claiming that biblical ‘Israel’ has any particular relationship to history.”¹³ The Bible is guilty until proven innocent.¹⁴ But such arguments from silence are dangerous in any discipline. In archaeology, with hundreds of archaeologists working in the Middle East today, it can be devastating.

In 1993, archaeologists at Tel Dan in northern Israel uncovered a remarkable find. Outside the gate to the city, a basalt stone was found reused in a wall. Upon the volunteer turning over the stone, noticed a written inscription. The excavator and a linguist later published the text, which mentioned a victory by the Aramean King Ben-Hadad who boasts of defeating the “house of David” and the “house of Israel.” The inscription is dated on the basis of the writing to 850 B.C. The significance of the inscription is that it mentions for the first time the name *David*. It is used here in the context of referring to “the house of David,” the dynastic name for Judah also used in the Bible (1 Kings 12:26; 14:8; 2 Kings 17:21). The point is that there is no reason to name a dynasty after someone who did not exist.

Just this past summer, an exciting archaeological discovery was made that sheds additional new light on the story of David and Goliath. According to the Bible, Goliath came from Gath (1 Samuel 17:4), one of the five cities of the Philistines. Modern excavations at Gath (Tel es-Safi) directed by Aren Maier of Bar-Ilan University in Tel Aviv, uncovered a broken piece of pottery with an inscription during the 2005 season. According to Dr. Maier in his presentation to the

American Schools of Oriental Research in Philadelphia in November 2005,¹⁵ the letters are written in a proto-Canaanite script (in Semitic letters). The letters written without vowels are: ALWT and WLT. However, while the script is Semitic, the language it is written in is Indo-European. The names could thus be constructed as “Wylattes or Alyattes.” In the hearing of an Israelite it might sound like this Wylattes/WLT/Goliath. That the names are written in Indo-European in a Semitic script is significant. Indo-European points to an Aegean (Greek) origin, which is the same place that the Bible describes as the origin of the Philistines (Genesis 10:14; Jeremiah 47:4; Amos 9:7). Its writing in a Semitic script indicates some adaptation of the language in written form to the local Canaanite environment where the Philistines settled.

Where was this inscription found? As archaeologists uncover the ancient cities layer by layer, they can date artifacts within those layers. This inscription was found below the massive destruction of the city, which archaeologists have identified with the military campaign of Hazael of Syria (2 Kings 12:17). The inscription is thus sealed in a stratigraphic context and can be dated to the 10th to ninth centuries B.C., around 950 B.C. to no later than 880 B.C. The context is important, because it establishes that the name Goliath was known at Philistine Gath about 70 years *after* the event between David and Goliath was recorded in 1 Samuel 17. Dr. Maier, a well-respected archaeologist who is currently director of the Institute of Archaeology at Bar-Ilan University, concludes that while the inscription probably does not name the biblical Goliath directly, it does point to “a Goliath or rather two Goliath-like names.” This affirms that these names were used at Philistine Gath some years after the Bible records the conflict between David and Goliath.

Places/Cities: Hazor, Gezer, and the United Monarchy

According to 1 Kings 9:15, 16, Solomon refortified the cities of Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, and Jerusalem. What is the archaeological evidence of this refortification? In the 1950s when archaeologists were working at Hazor, they uncovered a monumental gate that dated to the time of Solomon. Yigael Yadin, the excavator from Hebrew University, predicted that similar gates would be found at the other sites mentioned in the biblical text. His hypothesis proved to be right. In the late 1960s, excavations at Gezer revealed a gate with the same architecture, and it was dated by archaeologists to the 10th century, the time of Solomon. Texts found at the two sites confirm that the identification with Hazor and Gezer. But postmodern scholars began to question this correlation with Solomon’s activities, stating that the gate should be dated later in history.¹⁶

In 1990, I was privileged to participate in the renewed excavations at Gezer. During that season, working with Professor William G. Dever of the University of Arizona, we uncovered the evidence needed to firmly place the gate in the 10th century.¹⁷ Recently, for the past three summers (2004-2006), Southern Adventist University has been involved with the renewed excavations at Hazor, the largest Old Testament site in Israel.¹⁸ These two sites have produced impressive evidence for the period of Solomon. The gates of these cities and their associated areas produced 10th century red-slipped and burnished pottery. The architecture of both gates consisted of finely hewn ashlar stones that are reminiscent of the biblical account’s description of skilled Phoenician workers that were hired by Solomon to complete the work. Today, archaeologists continue to unearth evidence that confirm the biblical descriptions of the 10th century.

Polities/Cultures: Canaan and Philistia

Niels-Peter Lemche has boldly stated that Canaan and the Canaanites were not well defined in the second millennium B.C. In his book *The Canaanites and Their Land*, he writes: "Evidently the inhabitants of the supposed Canaanite territory in Western Asia had no clear idea of the actual size of this Canaan, nor did they know exactly where Canaan was situated."¹⁹ In essence, "the Canaanites of the ancient Near East did not know that they were themselves Canaanites."²⁰ Lemche's conclusions have been challenged,²¹ but he has maintained his interpretation of historical sources, which he calls "imprecise" and "ambiguous."

This revisionist history of Canaan and the Canaanites simply cannot be supported by the archaeological evidence at hand. The term *Canaan* appears for the first time in ancient Near Eastern texts, and it is from this evidence that most scholars have defined the region. Texts from the ancient city of Ebla located in Syria (circa 2400 B.C.) mention Canaan for the first time where it is to be understood as a land or region. Archives of ancient cuneiform texts from Alalakh and Mari also indicate that people from this region were known as Canaanites, and clear distinctions are made between these and other groups. The Amarna letters found at Egypt provide the most helpful documentation of the political organization of Canaan around 1400 B.C. Here, phrases like "all of Canaan," "the cities of Canaan," "the lands of Canaan," and "the land of Canaan" express a geographical and territorial entity with certain mentioned boundaries that constitute the Egyptian province in western Asia.²²

The Egyptians refer to Canaan and Canaanites 15 times in records of military campaigns into the region. In these descriptions, the inhabitants are not only described but also pictured in reliefs on temple walls in Egypt.

The consistent portrayal of these reliefs indicates that Canaan was a territory filled with cities and inhabitants that stretched from Gaza in the south to the southern areas of modern Lebanon.²³ Certainly from the texts excavated by archaeologists there is much to illuminate this ancient territory referred to in Scripture.

The Bible describes the Philistines as a group originating from Caphtor or Crete (Genesis 10:14; Jeremiah 47:4; Amos 9:7). In 1992, Thomas L. Thompson wrote, "that the 'Philistines' are to be understood as representing a foreign population intrusive to *Palestine* must certainly be denied."²⁴ He claimed that the archaeological evidence was "superficial" and stated that "'Philistine' pottery does not simply reflect Philistine people. Nor is there any justification for seeing these potters themselves as immigrants or as descendants of immigrants . . . rather the pottery reflects a synthesis of ceramic traditions of more than one population group."²⁵ Unfortunately, there is no development of this hypothesis in respect to the pottery and other material culture, leaving the archaeologist wondering what Thompson meant. The fact is that archaeology has vividly illuminated the biblical Philistines in the past 20 years.

Based on Egyptian texts and pottery (painted with the same motifs as Mycenaean and other Aegean wares), the Philistines have been traditionally viewed not as an indigenous group of people but coming either as invading conquerors or as a migrating group from the Aegean world. The Egyptian reliefs of Ramses III at Medinet Habu depict these "Sea Peoples" arriving on ships and overland in carts. Papyrus Harris I claims that the Egyptian saying "Philistines were made ashes" referred to their demise at the military might of Egypt.²⁶

The archaeological record can be cited in support of this reconstruction. The devastation of sites throughout the southern Palestine during the

period of the Late Bronze - Early Iron Age transition has been attributed to these desperate groups of "Sea Peoples" from the Aegean (Greek) world. The pottery assemblages at Philistine cities such as Ashkelon, Ashdod, Tel Miqne-Ekron, and Tel Qasile produced remarkably new wares with Aegean influences following these destructions²⁷ and Neutron Activation Analysis has confirmed that this pottery was made locally rather than imported. New types of architecture indicating Aegean influences include (1) hearth rooms at Ekron and Qasile with parallels in Pylos, Mycenae, and Tiryns, Greece; and (2) features of the Aegean megaron building evident at Ekron. Furthermore, cultic influences are attributed to the "Ashdoda" figurine with parallels from Mycenae. Excavations at these and other sites indicate that Philistine culture was sophisticated and advanced compared to the contemporary Israelites.²⁸ It is no wonder Samson was tempted to go down to the Philistines (Judges 14:1).

Conclusion

Archaeology represents one of the few disciplines that deals exclusively with the *realia*—artifacts, buildings, cities, and lands—those tangible, three-dimensional facts that, although covered with the sands of time, bear testimony to the people, places, and events of the past. As these monuments continue to be uncovered year after year, the biblical world emerges more fully, providing us with glimpses of its rich and varied scope.

There is a growing need for careful archaeological research in the Middle East. Biblical scholars and historians now faced with the challenges of post-modernism are increasingly turning to the field of archaeology as the primary source of information about biblical history. Although the discipline is still in its infancy, archaeology is beginning to fill in the details of the grand biblical story from its earliest beginnings. In that quest, the revisionist claims of

Continued on page 33

OPEN FORUM

Christians and political elections

There will soon be elections in my country and, as young adult, I will participate with my vote for the first time in my life. The political slogans and conflicting statements of various candidates are not helping me to decide who is the best qualified or trustworthy. I am required by law to participate in the election, and some of my Christian friends tell me that I should cast a blank vote and let God carry out His sovereign will since, according to the Bible, "He sets up kings and deposes them" (Daniel 2:21, NIV). Any counsel?

I respect your friends' thinking, but I don't believe a blank ballot will smooth the way for "God's will in the political arena," if there is such a thing. If nothing can hinder God's will, a vote for any candidate would be the same as a blank one, don't you think? I don't believe God works in a vacuum, but intervenes in history and in the world, through human beings, just as evil does. The only difference is that evil has never lacked for helpers.

Unfortunately, on many occasions the result of an election has little to do with the will of God. In Hosea 8:4 the Lord says: "They set up kings, but not by Me; They made princes, and I did not acknowledge it. From their silver and their gold they made idols for themselves" (NKJV).

In most electoral systems blank ballots end up favoring the candidate with the most votes. You are fortunate to live in a country that holds elections in which you have the privilege of voting. Remember that even "the worst democracy is better than the best dictatorship." Your vote counts.

Jesus indicated that we human beings have certain responsibilities

to fulfill toward God and toward the authorities who exercise the power of governing a society (Matthew 22:21; see also Acts 5:29). For that reason, and in spite of the imperfections of any political or electoral system, consider a few questions to use in evaluating each candidate and preparing to cast your vote:

What record is there, if any, of his or her political activity in the past? What initiatives has he or she taken and carried out? Have they been faithful to campaign promises or have they been pliable to special interests? How have they administered public funds? What is the platform of the party that supports the candidate? To what extent do its planks agree with Christian ethical principles? Who are their team and advisors?

Have you read their formal statements? Are their proposals realistic or are they simply worded to get the popular vote? Is there reason to believe that they will be transparent if elected to office? Can they be expected to respect and enforce respect for the independent functioning of the legislative and judicial branches of government? Is it reasonable to believe they will protect the freedom of conscience of all citizens?

As far as can be known, is his or her personal conduct a worthy example to be imitated? Will their family and private life be an asset or a hindrance to community leadership?

I recognize that, in an imperfect world, some of these questions are difficult to answer with certainty. Nevertheless, this exercise will develop muscle tissue on your body frame as a useful citizen. I also know that frequently one ends up voting for the candidate that musters the basic

requirements and is the least objectionable with relation to our convictions. As a Christian, you are responsible for evaluating, deciding, and exercising your rights as a citizen. Pray for the future of your country and cast your ballot with a clear conscience.

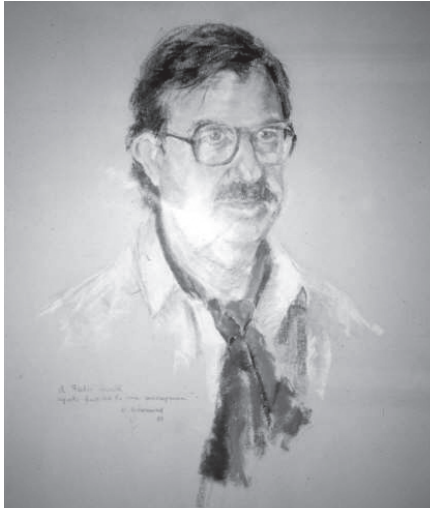
Hugo A. Cotro is completing his doctoral studies at Andrews University. This question and answer have been adapted from his book *¿Qué dice la Biblia? Respuestas bíblicas para sus interrogaciones* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Asociación Casa Editora Sudamericana, 2005).

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PROFILES



Rafael Falcó Güell was born near Barcelona, Spain. When he was 12, both his parents died, leaving him to the care of relatives. From his earliest childhood he loved to draw and paint, and for several decades has never turned back from that first love.

At 22, spurred by a scholarship, he went to Madrid to study art. There he visited regularly the Sorolla Museum, where he spent hours

Rafael Falcó Güell

Dialogue with an Adventist painter in Spain

studying the great masterpieces, especially the light and the brilliant colors of the Valencian impressionist master, Joaquín Sorolla. Under the artist's influence he painted many beach scenes, with children playing in the sun. His paintings reveal a fascination for the reflection of colors on the moving waters, which would become one of his favorite subjects through his professional life.

Back in Barcelona, the young artist was admitted to the impressionist school of Rafael Benet, and soon became an outstanding student. He also became acquainted with many artists, and in 1965 shared a studio with the famous painter Gabino Rey. In 1968, Falcó Güell participated in his first collective exhibition of art in Barcelona. And two years later, he presented his first individual exhibition in the prestigious Sala Jaimes (James Hall), with his favorite subjects: children playing on the beach and landscapes depicting the seaside of the beautiful Costa Brava, on the Mediterranean. He spent the whole of 1970 in Paris, painting diverse local subjects for several exhibitions in Barcelona and other cities in Catalonia. Five years later, the American art expert Herbert Arnot (Arnot Gallery in New York) got so interested in Falcó Güell's work that he bought almost all his production of several years.

From 1985 to 1994, the artist joined the Rusc Art School of Blanes in Barcelona to teach art skills to the young and the aspiring, and to share with them his passion for painting. (Falcó's portrait, above left, was painted by one of his students,

Cristina Jeremías, who dedicated it to him.) During this period, he visited Venice many times, producing some 400 works that reflected the colors and scenes the city was historically noted for. The Venetian motif underscored his successful art exhibition in numerous art galleries in the United States as well as in France, Switzerland, Germany, and Italy. His 1992 exhibition during the Barcelona Olympics won him accolades from art critics throughout Europe.

Rafael Falcó Güell and his wife are members of the Urgell Adventist Church in Barcelona.

■ *When did you start painting, and who gave you the initial encouragement?*

When I was just seven years old, my father gave me a box of watercolors. That was the first step, and I have never stopped painting since then. I liked visiting art galleries and museums, and there I discovered what beauty is all about. I found within me lying dormant the desire to paint. Later I saw in that desire a gift that God has given—only to be developed, to let it blossom.

■ *What has been the hardest thing in your career?*

As a youth I worked as a mechanic, but in leisure time I found my joy in painting. As a painter, the first challenge I encountered was economical. No one wants to buy a painting from an unknown painter! It takes time to become and to be known as a professional painter. Little by little, I climbed that hill, and one day that moment

arrived to surprise me. My first exhibition was off to a good start, and since then I had no problem making a living as a painter.

■ *What are your favorite themes?*

Mostly landscapes. The sea, the beach, and the little villages on the mountains always attracted me. But I also paint life in the big cities. I specially like Venice and Barcelona. Life is interesting for me in all its forms. But I find that nature allows me a greater freedom, working with colors and playing with light.

■ *How would you define your style?*

I have not tried to stick to a particular style. Style comes by itself. The experts call my style “new impressionism.” I do not disagree.

■ *You have been a successful artist. What would you say is the secret of your success?*

For me, success is not a question of money but of satisfaction. Real success comes from the quality of work done and being fully satisfied with the final product. The way I depict light and colors is liked by many. The secret rests on a certain balance between honesty and competence.

■ *What makes you happy as an artist?*

To be happy in a fallen world such as ours is not an absolute possibility. We need to find happiness in doing best whatever we are gifted and called to do. My happiness is to reflect in my painting the great beauty that I see every day, in many places, in God’s glorious creation. Having completed a painting, whether commissioned or not, and then place it in the hands of an owner brings both satisfaction and suffering. The satisfaction comes when we know that our work will make someone happy, and will add beauty to a home or an office. The suffering comes from the realization that I will never possess that work again. But a contented painter will learn to deal with both aspects of his or her profes-

sion.

■ *Does your faith affect your view of art? Do you intend to convey a particular message in your work?*

Certainly so. One’s view of life affects one’s work, and this is particularly so in painting. I see God in His work all the time, and it is with that thought I take my brush and approach my canvass. However, I never try to convey some hidden message. Let the beauty of art speak for itself. When I paint I just give away what I have received, what I see, and what I feel. I like to think of myself as a copyist, an imitator, or a transcriber and a worshiper of God, and I convey God’s gift through my work.

■ *How does your family life affect your work?*

My family is very much a part of my work. Without a happy and supportive family, one cannot concentrate on one’s work, and this is specially so in such a sensitive art as painting. Although I do not like some of the criticisms that my relatives share with me about some of my paintings, very often on second thought I have to accept them, because they are right and quite positive.

■ *How did you become acquainted with Seventh-day Adventists?*

After my military service, I became reacquainted with an Adventist family in Barcelona. I particularly liked their daughter, who led me to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We got married and she has been my faithful companion all these years.

■ *Do you feel supported by your church in what you do?*

Generally, yes. Some of my church friends have encouraged me and appreciated my work. But I have to confess that many in the church do not have cultivated interest in art and painting.

■ *What would your counsel be to young Adventists aspiring to be painters?*

To decide to become a painter is a very personal matter. A gift is something received from God. To be an artist is a serious matter involving talents and gifts, but also convictions and a lot of determination. If some one feels gifted along this line, go for it!

Interview by Roberto Badenas

Roberto Badenas (Ph.D., Andrews University) is the director of the Education Department and *Dialogue* representative for the Euro-Africa Division. His email address: roberto.badenas@euroafrica.org. Rafael Falcó Güell may be contacted through email: rfalcoquell@hotmail.com.

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PROFILES



Born in Chicago and brought up in Keene, Texas, where her father teaches mathematics at Southwestern Adventist University, Michelle Chin has had an interest in current affairs and politics all through her life. As a child of immigrants, Michelle's earliest memory of the United States government was the long wait at the immigration office in Fort Worth while her parents took their citizenship oath. She graduated with a B.S. in political economy from Andrews University in 1990.

From 1990-1994, Michelle worked as a congressional staffer in Washington, D.C., for U.S. Representative Joe Barton, a Republican from Texas. She left Washington to begin graduate studies in political science at Texas

Michelle Chin

Dialogue with an Adventist specialist in political science

A&M University, and completed her M.A. in 1997 and Ph.D. in 2001. Currently Michelle serves as assistant professor of political science at Arizona State University. She has published articles on various aspects of the United States political system in professional journals, and is working on a book on Congressional access decisions. Michelle is a member of the Camelback Seventh-day Adventist Church in Phoenix, Arizona.

■ *Michelle, your academic career is in political science, something unusual for an Adventist. What attracted you to this field of study?*

As a teenager, I was interested in current affairs and government. I had initially planned to be a journalist, but a controversial governor's race in my home state of Texas sparked my interest in campaign politics. When the time came to go to college, I found out that there were only two Adventist colleges that had any type of political science program: Pacific Union College offered a history/political science degree, and Andrews University offered a degree in political economy. I chose Andrews, but only after finishing my freshman year at home, in Southwestern Adventist University.

One summer I worked as an intern in Washington, D.C., for my congressman, U.S. Representative Joe Barton (R-Texas). After graduation, I worked for him full-time. While I enjoyed my experiences as a congressional staffer, I was often frustrated by a sense that I couldn't fully comprehend the legislative/policy process. So I decided to go for graduate studies in political science. I was accepted at Texas A&M

University, where I completed both my master's and doctoral degrees. Once I wanted to do law, but now I'm delighted I didn't go to law school, because being a political scientist gives me the tools to study how government institutions affect and influence the policy process and individual-level political behavior and decisions.

■ *You now serve as faculty member at Arizona State University. What challenges do you as a young, Adventist, single, female encounter when teaching in a public institution?*

The biggest challenge in teaching at a large secular university is trying to remember all the names of my students! Given my undergraduate experience at Andrews University, I am used to small classes where my professors knew us all by first name. At that time, I didn't realize what a positive effect that type of student-teacher interaction can have on one's academic and personal development. I also remember that in many classes, my professors would pray before we took our exams. Those moments made an impression on me. Although I am not able to do that for my students, I try to connect with my students in other ways—from giving opportunities to work in small groups, to learning all of their names, to encouraging them to take some time to "rest" from their cares and worries.

In general, the professional challenges that a single, Adventist female academic faces at a public university are no different from what any other woman would face; they range from concerns about promotion and tenure, to healthcare coverage. However, I do

find that I often face decisions about Sabbath; for example, should I participate in graduation ceremonies, and should I attend or present academic papers at conference panels that are scheduled during Sabbath hours?

■ *Besides teaching, what other career opportunities might young people have if specializing in political science?*

Most political science majors I meet plan to go to law school. I was one of them too! But in reality, the critical analytical skills that a political science degree provides are easily transferable to many other careers. The most obvious relate to government, public administration, and politics. The U.S. Foreign Service is another field that attracts many political science majors. There are other options as well; for example, one of my former students is in film school at the University of Southern California, another is a lobbyist for a county supervisors' association, another is a minister, several students are working for various state/local (mayors, city council, governors) and national policymakers (members of Congress).

■ *There are only about a dozen Adventists with doctoral degrees in political science in North America. Why do you think this field has not attracted more Adventists in the past? And is the pattern changing?*

Traditionally, the church has minimized the value of public government/political service by arguing that it is a distraction from our spiritual commission and a violation of the separation of church and state. I remember that shortly after I graduated from college and took my first job with the congressman, a family friend and sincere Adventist suggested that the U.S. Congress was too sinful a place for a nice Adventist girl to work.

Recently, I read an article about Adventist pioneer John N. Andrews which said that he gave up a future in politics to become a missionary.

Not surprisingly, there have been only a few members of our church who have actually entered politics. Yet, the church also has a great interest in defending itself against government action that threatens the wall of separation. So, we have invested a lot of resources to protect religious liberty; for example, by hiring lawyers to represent the church's interests. But I think that young Adventists are beginning to realize that it's not enough to be present at the lawsuit, when we have opportunities to shape the law in the first place.

As to your question about Adventists seeking graduate degrees in political science, I'm just going to speculate. As more Adventists have been seeking graduate training and are willing to accept non-denominational employment, it would not be surprising to see the number of political scientists increase. I think this represents a positive change because the secular universities offer a unique mission ground for any Christian.

■ *In addition to teaching, you have been active in research and publication. What is your primary area of specialization and focus?*

My primary research interests focus on the study of political institutions, congressional decision making, interest groups, and the role of money in politics. Some of my research has been published in *The Journal of Politics*, *Electoral Studies*, and *American Politics Research*.

■ *In what ways can you actually make a difference in U.S. governance?*

The best way is to help train students who are thoughtful and honorable public servants, who know how to participate and influence the policy process to represent the people's best interests, and who respect the contributions of a richly, diverse citizenry.

■ *And how do you keep your faith burning in your soul when working in a*

public setting?

One of my favorite Scriptures is Proverbs 3:5, 6: "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." I know I trust God, but it's very easy to become self-reliant and in so doing, get a big head. For example, if I get good reviews of my research or my teaching, it's easy to believe that's the result of *my* own hard work and talent; likewise, when the bad reviews and publishers' rejection letters arrive, it's also easy to believe that's because *my* research is stupid. So I've learned to be trusting and humble!

What God has planned is much bigger than what I could have imagined for myself. Sometimes, a failure or setback is necessary, not because it's good for my character, but because it's a course-correction. It's only recently that I've come to this realization, but it's made me feel much more calm about my future and my career. Keeping faith alive is a personal responsibility, but it also helps to have friends and family who are supportive and encouraging.

Interview by Jane Sabes

Jane Sabes (Ph.D., Auburn University) teaches courses in political science at Andrews University. Her mailing address: Berrien Springs, Michigan 49104; U. S. A.

Michelle Chin's email address: Michelle.Chin@asu.edu.

How to fear God and be unafraid

by Ervin K. Thomsen

“Fear God and give glory to Him” (Revelation 14:7 NKJV).¹

When God created us, He also built into our lives an alarm system to protect us from danger and hurt. One of the primary sensors of this alarm system is the emotion of fear, which serves as a warning light similar to the instrument panel of an automobile. But an enemy has tampered with this internal alarm system so that many are unable to distinguish “good fears” (healthy fears) from “bad fears” (unhealthy fears). When our alarm system continually rings, we lose the ability to filter out false alarms. Satan takes full advantage of this malfunction by imprisoning us with distortions of our sense of reality through the many bogus fears he has implanted in our lives: anxiety, nervousness, foreboding, worry, dismay, fright, dread, panic, terror. No wonder the Bible in more than 300 places implores us to “fear not.” But how are we to understand the biblical injunctions to “fear God” and to “fear not”? Here are some perspectives that can resolve this paradox.

The “fear of God” is a good fear

Consider these Scriptures:

- “And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from me. Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will assuredly plant them in this land, with all My heart and with all My soul” (Jeremiah 32:40, 41).

- “Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!” (Deuteronomy 5:29).

- “I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. . . . Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him. . . . Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord” (Psalm 34:4, 9, 11).

- At Mount Sinai, God speaking through Moses, said, “Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin” (Exodus 20:20).

Consider also the following texts:

- “Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1).

- “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10:31).

- “Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men” (2 Corinthians 5:11).

Living with a paradox

Would you be willing to live with a paradox, in which two apparently mutually exclusive statements are still true? Mike Yaconelli, the late founder of the Christian ministry, *Youth Specialties*, seemed to understand something about this paradox when he wrote the following about the two sides of fear:

“The tragedy of modern faith is that

we no longer are capable of being terrified. We aren’t afraid of God, we aren’t afraid of Jesus, we aren’t afraid of the Holy Spirit. As a result, we have ended up with a need-centered gospel that attracts thousands. . . but transforms no one. . . . I would like to suggest that the church become a place of terror again; a place where God continually has to tell us, ‘Fear not;’ a place where our relationship with God is not a simple belief or a doctrine or theology, but it is God’s burning presence in our lives. I am suggesting that the tame God of relevance be replaced by the God whose very presence shatters our egos into dust, burns our sin into ashes, and strips us naked to reveal the real person within. . . . The church needs to become a gloriously dangerous place where nothing is safe in God’s presence except us. Nothing—including our plans, our agendas, our priorities, our politics, our money, our security, our comfort, our possessions, our needs. . . . Our world is longing to see people whose God is big and holy and frightening and gentle and tender as ours; a God whose love frightens us into His strong and powerful arms where He longs to whisper those terrifying words, ‘I love you.’”²

The fear of God is an integral part of the grace of God. John Newton, author of the song “Amazing Grace,” captured the reality of this when he wrote, “*It was grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.*”

The “fear of God” protects us from unhealthy fears

To slow down after witnessing a horrific automobile accident is certainly a normal response. But it is not the Creator’s design that we should live in a state of perpetual worry and fear as our primary protection against danger. Through grace, God wants to repair our internal alarm system so that, in the words of Oswald Chambers, we will know that when “you fear God, you fear nothing else, whereas if you

do not fear God you fear everything else.”³

Living under the canopy of God’s grace enables us to discern all false alarms. One of those false alarms is the fear and foreboding of last-day events, the time of trouble (Mark 13:19; Luke 21:25). If up to this point you have believed, perhaps unwittingly, that fear of the impending time of trouble is one of your primary weapons of defense against last-day deceptions, then Satan has truly tricked you. If we fear anything other than God, we are deceived. God is the only one in the universe worthy of fear.

Unhealthy fear binds us up in chains, holds us down, holds us back, and prevents us from being able to move forward, to grow, and become the person that God created us to be. What losses are produced in our lives because of fear! Indeed, suspicious and fearful people are more likely to be deceived than trusting people, for what you fear controls you.

Satan uses unhealthy fears to unsettle faith in God

Satan is continually looking for opportunities whereby he can take advantage of the fears we may experience. In every fear he is trying to cause us to take our eyes off our heavenly Father, suggesting that God is not good enough, powerful enough or adequate enough to handle our specific situation. Then he will suggest that we take matters into our own hands, because we cannot, after all, trust God since He is not doing a good job.

When we do not fear God, we will fear everything else. By giving in to such fears:

- We testify that we do not believe that God is bigger than our circumstances.
- We reject the fact that God is bigger than Satan.
- We give up the belief that Jesus is always with us.
- We give Satan great delight.
- We dishonor God by our lack of

faith.

- We abandon the belief that Jesus is sufficient to meet our deepest needs.
- We see the world through human eyes.
- We open the door for false gods of our own making.

John Ortberg describes unhealthy fear: “Fear whispers to us that God is not really big enough to take care of us. It tells us we are not really safe in His hands. It causes us to distort the way we think about Him. . . . Fear has created more practicing heretics than bad theology ever has, for it makes us live as though we serve a limited, finite, partially present, semi-competent God.”⁴

When our fears become too big for God to handle, we have laid the foundation for idolatry, which is the making of false gods to handle our problems and inadequacies rather than turning to God. Therefore, the healthy fear of God as a response to His everlasting gospel is one of God’s primary antidotes against all the last-day deceptions of the enemy.

The fear of God enables us to have a heart to heart relationship of close and intimate communion with our Maker. As we worship and adore Him, we will discover that He wants to take away all our burdens, soothe all our fears, and give us unspeakable peace and rest. “But as for me, I will come into Your house in the multitude of Your mercy; in fear of You I will worship toward Your holy temple” (Psalm 5:7).

So the next time you fear, remember what the psalmist says: “Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. . . . In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?” (Psalm 56:3, 11).

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Announcing... European Field Conference on Faith and Science

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VIEWPOINT

The Da Vinci Code: fact or fiction?

by Maxine Bingham and Ron Bingham

Dan Brown's novel, *The Da Vinci Code*¹ has sold more than 40 million copies and has been made into a blockbuster movie.² The publicity generated has been extraordinary. The Vatican and the Archbishop of Canterbury have condemned it,³ and author Dan Brown was unsuccessfully sued for plagiarism by the writers of another fictional but similar book, *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*.⁴ The resultant massive media attention raises three questions: What is the appeal of the book? Why such a strong reaction to it? Why should we care?

Summary of the plot

To answer these questions, let us first look at the novel's plot line. Robert Langdon, a Harvard University professor of "Symbology,"⁵ is called in by the Paris police to solve the grotesque murder of Jacques Saunière, curator at the Louvre Museum in Paris. The action takes place over a contemporary 24-hour time period, starting with mysterious codes and symbols written by the murdered man while he is dying. We then follow a murderous member of private Catholic prelature, Opus Dei, seemingly one step ahead of our hero, Robert Langdon; and heroine, Sophie Neveu, a French cryptologist and granddaughter of the murdered curator. Robert and Sophie's adventures lead them to seek the advice of the mysterious and wealthy Sir Leigh Teabing, a "scholarly expert" in Christian relics and history, such as the Holy Grail, which Teabing has made his life's work to acquire. Teabing reveals to a

stunned Robert and Sophie, "historical facts" that, if made public, Teabings asserts would undermine the faith of Christians, by disproving the divinity of Christ and the accuracy and historicity of Scripture. Teabing avers that the Vatican has suppressed the "sacred feminine" through an almost 2,000-year-old conspiracy starting with Emperor Constantine in the fourth century A.D., and continued by Popes and the Vatican to this day.

The main secret, which Teabing unveils, is that the true Holy Grail⁶ was not Christ's cup or chalice from the Last Supper, but, was, in fact, Mary Magdalene, who as wife to Jesus and mother to their daughter, Sarah, was the carrier of Jesus' bloodline to the Merovingian kings of France, as well as the person the mortal Jesus deputized as the leader of His church. Clues that Mary Magdalene is the Holy Grail are hidden in *The Last Supper* and other paintings of Leonardo da Vinci, a Priory of Sion "grand master," as listed in *Les Dossiers Secrets* in the National Library of France.

The novel comes to a dramatic end when Teabing is revealed as the mastermind behind the killings, and Sophie is revealed as the descendent of Mary Magdalene and Jesus, thus embodying the "true" Holy Grail. The novel ends with a newly enlightened Robert Langdon making dramatic obeisance to Mary Magdalene's bones that are secretly lying beneath the 1986 I. M. Pei-designed pyramid glass entrance⁷ to the Louvre.

What is the appeal of this fantastic tale?

What is the appeal? First, the novel is a fast-paced mystery, with tantalizing clues, codes, and word plays, along with heroes and villains and a damsel (Sophie) in distress. Second, the book is based on conspiracy theories and anti-religious authority polemics, especially against the Roman Catholic Church, which has recently been rocked by scandals. Third, the book makes use of real persons and events, from Emperor Constantine and the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. to Leonardo da Vinci's painting of *The Last Supper*, that supposedly represents Mary Magdalene and not John the Beloved as one of the 12 disciples (in which case, where is the 13th person?). According to Dan Brown, the Council of Nicea, "officially declared" Jesus divine by a "close vote" in a patriarchal power play that also fixed the New Testament canon. Teabing asserts Christians up to that point believed Jesus was a mere mortal and believed other gospels. Fourthly, the book appeals to New Age adherents and some feminists who have abandoned monotheism and crafted their own romanticized pagan-based "divine feminine" and "goddess" religion and rituals.

Why should Christians care?

Not only are non-Christians being misled, but even some Christians have been influenced by the pseudo-scholarly nature of the book. Dan Brown goes to great lengths to make his novel appear to be based on hundreds of facts that are being hidden by the Church. For example, the prologue begins thus:

"FACT:

The Priory of Sion—a European secret society founded in 1099—is a real organization.⁸ In 1975 Paris's Bibliothèque Nationale⁹ discovered parchments known as *Les Dossiers Secrets*, identifying numerous members

of the Priory of Sion, including Sir Isaac Newton, Botticelli, Victor Hugo, and Leonard da Vinci. The Vatican prelature known as Opus Dei is a deeply devout Catholic sect that has been the topic of recent controversy due to reports of brain washing, coercion, and a dangerous practice known as “corporal mortification.” Opus Dei has just completed construction of a \$47 million National Headquarters at 243 Lexington Avenue in New York City.¹⁰ *All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents, and secret rituals in this novel are accurate.* [emphasis supplied]

It is these claims that have caused an outcry of dismay from Christians of all denominations, as well as journalists¹¹ in the mainstream media, and highly-regarded theologians and historians, both Christian and secular.¹²

Refuting the claims in *The Da Vinci Code*

Virtually every so-called fact or personage mentioned in this work is either the product of the author’s imagination, is misrepresented, or is based on previous novels that Brown’s character Teabing notes were “international bestsellers” including *The Templar Revelation*, *The Woman With the Alabaster Jar*, *The Goddess in the Gospels* and *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*.¹³

The upside to all of this is that organizations, such as Opus Dei (a private Catholic prelature but not the organized crime offshoot of the Vatican as portrayed in the novel),¹⁴ are taking advantage of the book’s popularity and publicity to reach out to the public. Many churches are holding seminars, and pastors are addressing the book’s claims in sermons. Thus, the publicity storm around this novel and movie provides a unique opportunity for Christians to learn about the origins of our faith, and to share the underpinnings of our beliefs with a wider audience.

It was encountering this confusion about fact and fiction and truth and

error among our own friends, relatives and co-workers, that led us to develop a seminar series entitled, “*The Da Vinci CODE or Da Vinci CON: Are the Facts Stranger Than Fiction?*” for non-doctrinal, educational outreach.¹⁵ This article is based on some of the hundreds of hours of research we spent in order to refute the more than 500¹⁶ errors and misrepresentations in this novel, although we can share but a few from that effort.

We found the following topics of interest: Historicity of Scripture, Christ’s Divinity, and Was Jesus Married to Mary Magdalene?

Historicity of Scripture and Jesus’ Divinity

Dan Brown alludes in *The Da Vinci Code* on page 231 to “80 other gospels” that were suppressed in favor of the “less-reliable” New Testament Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John that were actually included in the canon. Modern scholars¹⁷ agree that the earliest Gospel was by Mark (65 A.D.), followed by Matthew and Luke/Acts (80-85 A.D.), and finally John (ca. 90 A.D.). One of the first-known lists of the 27 books in our New Testament is a letter from Athanasius of Alexandria in 367 A.D.

This is after the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. The Council of Nicea was not called by the Emperor Constantine to “rubber stamp” the fact that Jesus was divine, which had been settled long before, but to deliberate whether He was co-eternal with God or a created being, as Arius of Alexandria claimed. This council put an end to the Arian heresy.

Although Brown does not use the term “Gnostic Gospels,” we can assume that it is these writings to which his fictional “expert” Teabing alludes as being earlier than our New Testament, and “ruthlessly suppressed” by male church leaders as well. Written from the second to fifth centuries A.D., they are ancient forgeries purportedly written by New Testament

authors.¹⁸

Interestingly, Gnosticism (from the Greek *gnosis*—or knowledge, in the sense of special knowledge) portrays Jesus not as a mortal, as Dan Brown would have us believe, but as pure spirit. This docetic (from the Greek meaning “to appear”) view of Jesus meant that Gnostics sought salvation not from a fully divine and fully human Jesus, but from their own divine spark. Jesus just came to impart the knowledge on how to get out of this mortal realm if one had the spark. Accordingly, His death on the cross had no relevance to one’s salvation.

One of the biggest “howlers” in *The Da Vinci Code* is Brown’s opposite characterization of the Gnostic gospel view of the nature of Jesus, so that he can “prove” Jesus was a mere mortal married to Mary Magdalene. While Brown attempts to use these texts to prove his claim of Jesus’ humanity, in fact, the Gnostics rejected Jesus’ humanity in favor of pure divinity!

Evidence for belief in Christ’s divinity

Evidence for the belief in Christ’s divinity can be found in The New Testament, extra-biblical references, as well as in first to fourth century A.D. inscriptions and art in the Christian Roman catacombs.¹⁹

In addition to the many references that Christ and others in the New Testament make about His divinity (including His statement that “before Abraham was, I AM,” in John 8:58, KJV), for a figure of antiquity who died an ignoble death, there are a remarkable number of extra-biblical references to Him. These include mentions by the Jewish historian Josephus (37-100 A.D.) of both Jesus and His brother James,²⁰ as well as critical mentions of Jesus in the Jewish Babylonian Talmud²¹ as a sorcerer, along with mentions of Christ or Christians in letters by various Romans critical of Christians and Christianity, such as Pliny the Younger.²²

The earliest symbol for Christianity was the fish. The fish in Greek is *ichthys*—an acrostic for “Jesus Christ God’s Son Savior” (*Iesous Christos Theou Yios Soter*²³). The burials in the catacombs of Rome (first to fourth century A.D.) show through inscriptions and art motifs (Jonah, Daniel in the lion’s den, loaves and fishes), Judean burial style and burials within a family tomb of non-family Christians of all social strata, that the Roman Christians believed in the resurrection and life to come with Jesus, held a shared tradition with Judaism, and were demonstrating that, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28, RSV).

Was Jesus married to Mary Magdalene?

While it is difficult to argue from silence, one can safely assume that any marriage of Jesus would have been recorded. Since the New Testament records that some of His disciples were married (such as Peter²⁴), it would be expected that any marriage of Jesus would be recorded. Genealogy was, and continues to be, a matter of great importance in Near Eastern religion and rule. Both Matthew and Luke take the time to give Jesus’ genealogy.

Mary Magdalene or Miriam of Magdala (in the Galilee) is mentioned some 14 times in the New Testament, and always with her name. Because she is only called “of Magdala,” and we know that she traveled with Jesus and helped to support Him, she may have been a widow or unmarried woman of some means. Jesus delivered her of seven demons, she was one of the very few to stay with Jesus at the Cross, and was the first to see the risen Christ. Possibly because of the gift of being the first to see the resurrected Jesus, early Church Fathers thought that she must have been of great virtue and referred to her as the “Apostle to the Apostles.”²⁵

Mary Magdalene was not associated with prostitution until a sermon by Pope Gregory in the fifth century A.D. merged her with some of the other New Testament Marys and women whom we associate as repentant sinners from a life of prostitution. From that time on, Mary Magdalene has been shown in art with an alabaster jar, which comes from the story in Matthew 26:7, Mark 14:3, and Luke 7:37. This is really all that we have about Miriam of Magdala, until medieval romances take up the story, which we see embellished by Dan Brown in *The Da Vinci Code*.

Conclusion

Although Dan Brown’s novel, *The Da Vinci Code*, has enjoyed great popularity, its claims of fact about early church beliefs and the nature of Christ are easy to refute, but require a foundation in early church history and knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Judean culture. This novel and film have given us all the opportunity “to make a defense to everyone that asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15, NASB).

Ron Bingham and Maxine Bingham hold graduate degrees, respectively, in physics and in Near Eastern Studies. They also lead in an Adventist ministry, Agora International Seminars, for reaching people with evidence of Bible truth. This article is based on a seminar they have developed to expose the errors in *The Da Vinci Code*. Contact them at davincicon@agorapr.com.

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

A Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of music

Music is a dominant feature of every culture. We can't escape it, because its varied melodies and rhythms follow us wherever we go. In addition, the music idiom has experienced considerable change during the past 40 years. And within Christian circles, the role of music as part of worship is also evolving. At times, this has led to arguments and even divisions within congregations. As Bible-believing Christians, what principles should inform our decisions and guide our choices in music?

During the 2004 Annual Council of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, world leaders considered this question and approved an official statement on music that includes guidelines. The text of this document is offered here for the benefit of our readers.

Guidelines

God has woven music into the very fabric of His creation. When He made all things the morning stars sang together and the angels shouted for joy (Job 38:7). The book of Revelation portrays heaven as a place of ceaseless praise, with songs of adoration to God and the Lamb resounding from all (Revelation 4:9-11; 5:9-13; 7:10-12; 12:10-12; 14:1-3; 15:2-4; 19:1-8).

Because God made humans in His image, we share a love and appreciation for music with all His created beings. In fact, music can touch and move us with a power that goes beyond words or most other types of communication.¹ At its purest and best, music lifts our beings into the very presence of God where angels and

unfallen beings worship Him in song.

But sin has cast blight over the Creation. The divine image has been marred and well-nigh obliterated; in all aspects this world and God's gifts come to us with a mingling of good and evil. Music is not morally and spiritually neutral. Some may move us to the most exalted human experience, some may be used by the prince of evil to debase and degrade us, to stir up lust, passion, despair, anger, and hatred.

The Lord's messenger, Ellen G. White, continually counsels us to raise our sights in music. She tells us, "Music, when not abused, is a great blessing; but when it is put to a wrong use, it is a terrible curse."² "Rightly employed, . . . [music] is a precious gift of God, designed to uplift the thoughts to high and noble themes, to inspire and elevate the souls."³

Of the power of song, she writes: "It is one of the most effective means of impressing the heart with spiritual truth. How often to the soul hard-pressed and ready to despair, memory recalls some word of God's, the long-forgotten burden of a childhood song, and temptations lose their power, life takes on new meaning and new purpose, and courage and gladness are imparted to other souls! . . . As a part of religious service, singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer. Indeed, many a song is prayer. . . . As our Redeemer leads us to the threshold of the Infinite, flushed with the glory of God, we may catch the themes of praise and thanksgiving from the heavenly choir round about the throne; and as the echo of the angels song is

awakened in our earthly homes, hearts will be drawn closer to the heavenly singers. Heaven's communion begins on earth. We learn here the keynote of its praise"⁴

As Seventh-day Adventists, we believe and preach that Jesus is coming again soon. In our worldwide proclamation of the three angels messages of Revelation 14:6-12 we call all peoples to accept the everlasting gospel, to worship God the Creator, and to prepare to meet our soon-returning Lord. We challenge all to choose the good and not the bad, to "say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:12, 13).

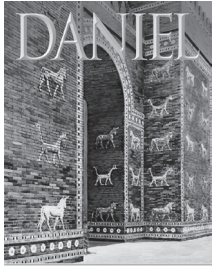
We believe that the gospel impacts all areas of life. We therefore hold that, given the vast potential of music for good or ill, we cannot be indifferent to it. While realizing that tastes in music vary greatly from individual to individual, we believe that the Scriptures and the writings of Ellen G. White suggest principles that can inform our choices.

In this document the phrase "sacred music"—sometimes referred to as religious music—designates music that focuses on God and on biblical and Christian themes. In most cases, it is music composed and intended for worship service, evangelistic meetings, or private devotion and may be both vocal and instrumental music. However, not all sacred/religious music may be acceptable for an Adventist. Sacred music should not evoke secular associations or invite conformity to worldly behavioral patterns of thinking or acting.

Secular music is music composed for settings other than the worship service or private devotion. It speaks

Continued on page 35

BOOKS



WILLIAM H. SHEA

Daniel: A Reader's Guide,
by William H. Shea (Nampa, Idaho:
Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 2005; 287
pp.; soft cover).

Reviewed by Humberto R. Treiyer

William H. Shea has had a distinguished international career as a missionary doctor, professor of Near Eastern Studies, researcher, and author of many scholarly articles and several books. He holds degrees from Loma Linda University and Harvard University.

As the title of this book suggests—*Daniel: A Reader's Guide*—Shea has not attempted to write a scholarly work, but a guide for the general reader. Nevertheless, there are scholarly touches on almost every page, thus captivating the theologian and enhancing the value for the common reader.

After the Preface and the Introduction, 13 chapters follow: 1. Interpreting History; 2. Exiled (Daniel 1); 3. Fallen Kings (Daniel 4, 5); 4. Kingly Persecution (Daniel 3, 6); 5. Fallen Kingdoms (Daniel 2, 7); 6. Interpreting Prophecy; 7. Christ as Sacrifice (Daniel 9); 8. Christ as Priest (Daniel 9); 9. Christ as King (Daniel 9 and 7); 10. Summary of Daniel 7-9; 11. The Final Message, Part 1 (Daniel 10 to 12); 12. The Final Message, Part 2 (Daniel 10 to 12); and 13. Daniel's Walk With God.

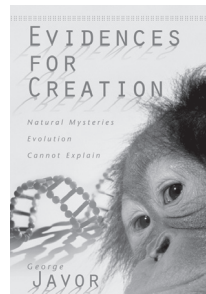
The author does not approach his study of the book of Daniel in the usual chapter sequence, but in a thematic way because he believes that it is “more meaningful if viewed in this order” (p. 9) Two fundamental questions provide the basis for the organization of the first chapter: (1). “Does God interact with human history, or has He gone off to some other portion of His universe, leaving Earth to go along on its own?” (2). “With what period of history does Daniel's book deal?” (p. 17). Then Shea reaches one of the most important conclusions of the whole book: “If the historical accuracy of the book can be impugned, its prophecies need not be taken seriously.... If we can demonstrate that Daniel's historical sections are accurate and dependable, then we must take seriously what he says in the prophecies” (p. 21).

Most of the book excels both in terms of organization and explanation. The analysis of Daniel 1:1 through 11:20 is presented with knowledge, confidence, and authority. However, the reader senses a marked change as the text deals with Daniel 11:21-45 (especially on pages 248-268), where the author becomes tentative, and candidly admits:

“Although these verses contain a vast amount of historical detail, the interpretation is often problematical.... The detail and the interpretative difficulties increase in the second section of chapter 11” (pp. 250, 251). And again: “Daniel 11:40-45 is the most difficult passage to interpret.... It is difficult to be definite about the interpretation of Daniel 11:23-30.... There are at least five different possible interpretations” (p. 254).

In spite of these difficulties and varied possible interpretations of the second part of Daniel chapter 11—which this reviewer has proposed in other contexts—the author has done a commendable work in making the book of Daniel come alive and its message ever relevant to God's people, particularly as they go through the end times predicted by the prophet. It is recommended to any reader interested in understanding the remarkable prophecies of Daniel.

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Evidences for Creation,
by George Javor (Hagerstown,
Maryland: Review and Herald Publ.
Assn., 2005; 141 pp.; paperback).

Reviewed by Raúl Esperante

This book deals with a long-debated subject between supporters of evolution and believers on special creation: whether chemical evolution can explain the origin of life and biological information. The author is a specialist in biochemistry and professor at Loma Linda University School of Medicine. For many years, he has lectured on the flaws of the evolutionary theory in explaining the origin of life and chemical evolution.

Evolutionists claim that chemical reactions in the primitive oceans or in the atmosphere originated the first organic molecules, which successfully organized into more complex molecules, and, eventually, into cells and higher structures. Thus, with the appropriate chemical and environmental conditions, life would have originated spontaneously by the

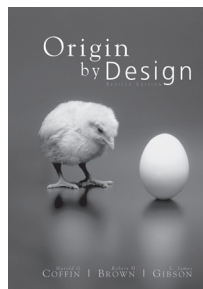
unguided forces and laws of nature. The main purpose of the book is to show that evolutionists have not been able to demonstrate that life has originated on Earth or other planets by abiotic processes.

The book is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the search for life or organic compounds on other planets (Venus and Mars) and its significance for the origin of life on Earth. Since the possibility of primitive life on other planets fits well into the evolutionary models, scientists have undertaken enormous efforts to demonstrate that the origin of life is possible by unguided processes. Dr. Javor documents why this quest has been fruitless. He also describes how the evolutionary community is ignoring the mounting amount of scientific evidence indicating that the earth's early atmosphere was unsuitable for the chemical origin of life.

The second and third sections deal with the complexity of biological information stored into cells and the models that attempt to explain the origin of such complexity. The author argues that an abiotic origin in the primordial ocean and subsequent evolution by chance mutation cannot account for the extremely complex biochemical mechanism of the cells. Drawing examples from the Human Genome Project and his own studies on bacteria, Javor concludes that it is not possible to have living cells emerge by themselves from any environment, under any conditions. For him, the only viable explanation for the origin and function of the biological information is that a Designer created it.

Because this book is a collection of essays, repetitions of some ideas and examples occur, which nonetheless need not disturb the reader. However, additional editorial work would have reduced the redundancy on some subjects and improved the organization of the material. Teachers and college undergraduate students will benefit from reading this non-technical book.

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Origin by Design,
by Harold G. Coffin with Robert H. Brown and R. James Gibson, revised edition (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publ. Assn.; 2005; 464 pp.; hardbound).

Reviewed by Henry Zuill

The 2005 revision of *Origin by Design* brings a classic book, now revitalized, back into circulation. First published in 1969 as *Creation: Accident or Design?* it was updated in 1983 as *Origin by Design*, and now again revised under the same name. All authors were or are connected with the Geoscience Research Institute.

For many years, I coordinated an origins course using the 1983 edition as a textbook. In time, however, we became aware of new and exciting discoveries missed by both the 1969 and 1983 editions; revision was indicated. In this latest edition at least 42 percent of citations, and probably more, are new.

I was happy to note two new citations: Art Chadwick and Clyde Webster. The former deals with paleocurrents, the latter with chemical fingerprints in Yellowstone's volcanic deposits around the fossil forest at Specimen Creek. Both findings compellingly suggest rapid geological processes. And both are far-reaching, although space won't permit details here (see pp.101, 240).

Divided into five sections, *Origin by Design* presents first biblical creation and flood accounts with the biblical perspective on the age of the Earth. The next three sections treat geology and paleontology with Genesis in view, while again considering Earth's age, but from a geological perspective. The last section, "Biological Change," includes chapters on evidence for design as well as changes and implications of changes that have occurred in plants and animals since creation. Altogether there are 33 reorganized chapters, plus a glossary and index. The glossary will be especially valuable for readers lacking background in geology and biology, but who are interested in origins issues.

While not easy reading, especially for the uninitiated, *Origin by Design* is nonetheless valuable reading, and an important contribution to understanding creationism. Bible-believing students in public institutions of higher learning may encounter courses challenging belief in creation. Under such circumstances, faith is pre-eminently important, and the detailed coverage in *Origin by Design* should help by providing specific faith-bolstering answers. It will be an excellent reference.

In the origins course I taught in a Christian college, I started by asking students to write of their beliefs in creation. Not infrequently, they responded by claiming belief in creation, but sometimes also said they did not know why. I understood this to mean they believed in creation, but did not understand how it fits into the broader scheme of things. Consequently, *Origin by Design* will doubtless even find a niche among students in faith-fostering environments.

Throughout, the book emphasizes a young creation. Much evidence comes from geology and paleontology. Yet, this evidence is presented in a balanced manner. Not just *any* evidence is used simply because it agrees with a young-earth hypothesis. A case in point is the supposed juxtaposed fossil human and dinosaur trackways in the Paluxy River bed in Texas. Of these, the author notes (pp. 317, 318): “As much as I would like to say the tracks are truly human, I cannot use fallacious information that could reflect back unfavorably upon the cause of creationism.” Care and caution are vital.

The word *design* in the title nowadays suggests something too lightly touched—intelligent design (ID). When the title, *Origin by Design*, was first used in 1983, ID had not yet become the potent force it is today, and *design* then had a considerably less-developed focus. Now, *design* anticipates ID. Moreover, when ID is linked with evidence for a young creation, the two together comprise a potentially powerful combination. Consequently, I would like to have seen more on ID in this book. Overall, however, I give *Origin By Design* very high marks.

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Intelligent design...

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microevolution happens. Essentially, everyone will agree that finch beak evolution is fact, or that the evolution of resistance amongst bacteria is fact.

For more than 100 years, science has striven mightily to explain the origins of everything in terms of only chance, allied with the laws of nature. Despite this enormous and sustained effort, evolutionary scenarios for the origins of life, of genetic information, of the genetic code, and of the origin of irreducibly complex structures remain highly speculative and are manifestly not established fact. That they are light years away from being validated, in the same way as the heliocentric solar system or the laws of enzyme kinetics, is one of the principal reasons why a large section of the public remains skeptical of unlimited evolution.

The debate raging around ID is not one of scientific fact versus religious faith. The real clash is an ideological one in which scientists are seeking to maintain the intellectual and cultural dominance of the humanist/atheist worldview. The prime objective of the ID enterprise is to establish design as a basic cause, along with chance and natural law, and hence to advance understanding of how complex biological and other structures originated. There are hopeful signs that a new generation, skeptical of Darwinian slogans and scenarios, is recognizing ID as a logically sound, rational, and reasonable program.

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CAMPUS LIFE

How to approach a Jehovah's Witness

by Daniel Belvedere

Have you ever met a Jehovah's Witness? If you have, one thing you can be sure of: They know what they believe, and they are ready to share it with you by persuasion if possible and by argument if necessary. They are absolutely convinced that they know the truth. The only way you can dialogue with them and approach them with what you, as a Seventh-day Adventist, consider truth is to be of sure of what you believe. You must know your Bible well, to recognize what they believe and how they differ from biblical teaching, and try to be as cordial as possible. No argument can win a friend.

This article will deal with three significant areas in which Jehovah's Witnesses depart from plain biblical doctrine, and suggest what you should know about these important areas.

The divinity of Jesus Christ

One doctrine that emerges early in any conversation with Jehovah's Witnesses is their understanding of the personality and nature of Jesus Christ. For example, they quote Revelation 3:14, where Jesus is referred as "the beginning of the creation of God" (KJV) to maintain that Jesus is not God but the first being created by God. However, the original Greek word for "beginning" in this verse is *arché*, which other translations render as "the ruler of God's creation" (NIV) or "the primeval source of God's creation" (The Living Bible). This, of course, matches the teaching of the rest of the Scriptures, where Jesus is presented as the Creator God (John 1:1-4;

Colossians 1:15-17). The same Greek word is used by John in another passage of Revelation, where Jesus states, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning [*arché*] and the End" (Revelation 22:13, NIV). Since in Revelation 1:8 we find the same quality of eternity applied to the Almighty God, it is clear that Jesus is not a created Being but the Almighty God Himself, as the Father is (see Revelation 22:16, 20; Isaiah 44:6). John further states a biblical truth that only God is worthy of worship (Revelation 19:10; 22:8, 9). And his recording the fact that Jesus, the Lamb, is worshipped in heaven (Revelation 5:6-10) is proof enough that the apostle regarded Jesus as God.

It is also helpful to review with Jehovah's Witnesses the teaching of Scripture regarding the existence of Jesus before, during, and after His incarnation. In the Old Testament, one finds the promise that in Bethlehem would be born the Ruler whose origins come from eternity (Micah 5:2) and that the Child to be born in Galilee would be called "mighty God" (Isaiah 9:6). Jesus Himself referred to "the glory I had... before the world began" (John 17:5, NIV). And John, under inspiration, declares that Jesus existed from the beginning with God and was God (John 1:1, 2).

During His earthly ministry, Jesus was "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). As the "last Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:45), "[he] made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" (Philippians 2:7, NIV; Colossians 2:9), and "was in all

points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15, NKJV). "He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death" (Philippians 2:8, NRSV) in order to achieve our salvation.

The New Testament also teaches that after His ascension, Jesus returned to the position He had before the incarnation; which is inherent to His nature (Philippians 2:9-11). Now He is seated to the right hand of God the Father (Mark 16:19) and intercedes for us (Hebrews 7:22-26). His authority as God stands forever (Hebrews 1:6-8); Christ "is God over all" forever (Romans 9:5, NIV).

A unipersonal God?

As suggested in their name, Jehovah's Witnesses believe in a unipersonal God. And although the Bible does not use the word *Trinity*, a plain reading of the Old and New Testaments shows that the Godhead consists of three co-eternal Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (See, for example, Isaiah 48:16; Matthew 3:16, 17; 28:19, 20; Mark 1:10, 11; Luke 3:22; Acts 20:28; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 2:18; 1 Peter 1:2; Jude 20, 21.)

The very first verse of the Bible suggests the plurality of Godhead: "In the beginning God [*Elohim*=God, plural] created [third person, singular] the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1, KJV). And a few verses later we find again the same concept: "Then God [plural in the original Hebrew] said, 'Let us make [third person, singular] man in our image, in our likeness'" (Genesis 1:26, NIV).

The Bible also presents all three Persons as involved in the creation of this planet and of life: God (Exodus 20:11; Isaiah 45:18), the Son (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2), and the Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:1, 2).

Some time ago I visited a lady who had studied with Jehovah's Witnesses.

She asked them to be present during my Bible study to clarify several questions she had. At the beginning of our dialogue, I said that Jesus had promised to send the Holy Spirit to teach and to remind us of all things He had taught us (John 14:26), and also to guide us into all truth (John 16:13). Then I asked one of them to pray to the Father (John 14:13, 14), in the name of the Son (John 16:24), to send us the Holy Spirit (John 14:16) to help us understand God's Word. They refused, stating, "We cannot do it because we do not believe in the Trinity."

I told them that the Bible itself, which we were about to open, was inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:16) who would help us understand the truths of God (1 Corinthians 2:11). After some tense moments, we did pray. The lady, who was initially confused, was guided by the Spirit to understand the truth of God as taught in the Scriptures, and made her decision.

Predicting the time of Christ's second coming

The Jehovah's Witnesses started as a religious movement under the leadership of Charles T. Russell (1852-1916), a sincere Presbyterian lay person. He later became a Congregationalist and explored several Oriental religions. Finally, he became fascinated with the idea of the imminent return of Christ to this earth and accepted Jonas Wendell's predictions about Christ's return by October of 1872. When these predictions failed, two years later he started to preach that Jesus really came in 1874, but in an invisible way. This was the beginning of a series of widely announced but mistaken predictions that Russell and his followers made through the years regarding the second coming of Christ, the battle of Armageddon, the millennium, and the beginning of God's kingdom. Even in 1975, they predicted that this year marked

the end of the 6,000 years from the seventh day of the creation, and it was to be the beginning of the millennium of peace. As a result of these repeated disappointments and internal disagreements, one-third of the members abandoned the once-flourishing movement. And yet, one can still meet devoted Jehovah's Witnesses visiting homes, distributing their publications, and sharing their convictions.

These failed predictions and painful disappointments do not nullify the truth of the Second Coming. Failed predictions are to be located not in biblical truth, but in human speculations. When we turn to biblical truth, we can be sure of three great facts. First, Christ Himself promised to return: "I will come again" (John 14:3, KJV). The apostles and early Christians considered His return "the blessed hope" (Titus 2:13). Second, Christ's return will be personal, visible, audible, and glorious (Acts 1:11; Matthew 24:27; Revelation 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Matthew 16:27). Third, the date of Christ's second coming cannot be predicted with accuracy, but we must be always ready (Matthew 24:42; 25:13; Acts 1:7).

Conclusion

Several decades of meeting with Jehovah's Witnesses have convinced me that they are enthusiastic, persistent missionaries. They are willing to suffer rejection and persecution for their religious convictions. Most of them are sincere, but they don't understand that many of their doctrines are not based on the Bible.

As you speak to a Jehovah's Witness, make clear that you are willing to review all beliefs on the basis of specific teachings of the Scriptures. Of course, this will require that you know well what you believe and be prepared. (The resources listed under Further Reading may help you to be ready.) Agree that during the discussion you will not interrupt each other, but allow a certain amount of time for the

presentation of one Bible doctrine. Your ultimate goal is to bring them to accept the gracious salvation and lordship of Jesus Christ, who said, "I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6, NRSV).

Pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as you open the Bible. Be respectful, but firm. Take note of the main arguments presented. Insist that evidence for each point of doctrine be provided from the infallible Word of God. For it was Jesus Himself who pronounced these sobering words, "You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life" (John 5:39, NIV).

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Bible critics...

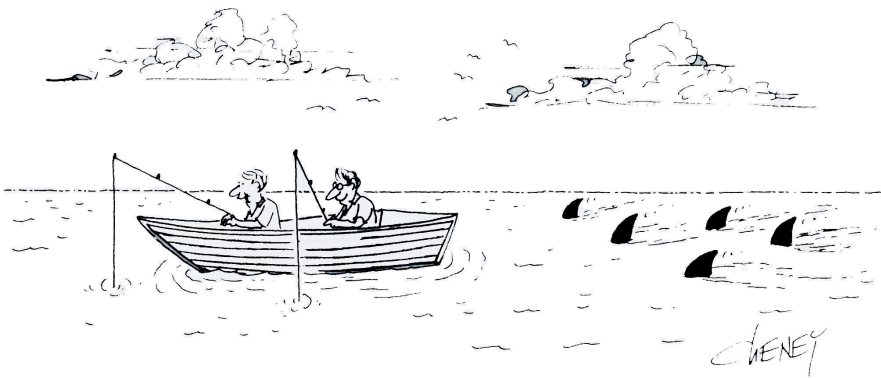
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postmodern scholarship continue to be challenged by the rock records of the Middle East.

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AAHHH, this is the life. No mid-terms, no classes, no book reports, no studying, no report cards, no finals...

FIRST PERSON

Miracles happen through prayer

by Caroline V. Katemba Tobing

Do you believe in prayer? Have you had the joy of answered prayers?

The Bible speaks much about prayer. Indeed its concept of life is one of reliance on the Creator—to converse with God, to wait for His answers, to rely upon His promises, and to walk with His enabling. A life without prayer is a life of instability. Says the apostle: “But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind” (James 1:6, NKJV).*

Monday, May 8, 2000. My husband, Joshua, and I were among the 65 students qualified to take the DATE (Doctoral Admission Test in Education) at the University of the Philippines. We sat waiting for the proctor to come and give instructions for the test procedures. Just before we were given the test papers, the proctor pointed us to the reality confronting us. “Look around,” he said. “There are 65 of you, but only 21 will be selected. So just see, who among you could be accepted!” A sigh of despair could be heard all around. Joshua looked at me, and all he could say was, “Lina, pray. Just pray!”

We both bowed our heads and quietly prayed. This was no moment to despair. This was the time to grasp God’s promise, “And I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you” (Luke 11:9). I prayed within my heart, but with a certainty as if I were speaking to God personally: “God, I am asking and knocking at your door. Please do open it for us. We beg you to grant us your mercy.”

Did not Jesus promise, “If you ask

anything in My name, I will do it” (John 14:14)? So I asked for knowledge and wisdom so that we would be able to answer the test well. I asked God to hold my hand and guide it in writing the correct answers. Yes, He was there helping both of us. When the result was announced, 16 out of the 65 applicants passed the test. Two of them were us.

Then came registration. I was shocked to see that all the major subjects and cognates were listed for Saturdays. I talked to the chairperson for a possibility of offering the subjects in the second semester on week days. “No” was his answer. For 10 years these courses had been offered on Saturdays, and such a tradition was beyond change. I begged him, but the more I begged, the more firm was his “No.” “I won’t be able to study at the university,” I said sorrowfully and left his office crying.

Joshua had a better way. “Don’t worry,” he said, “and let us take this matter to the Lord in prayer.” After much prayer, I wrote a formal request to the university and to the professors who taught those subjects. When the second semester schedule was posted, I was very happy to see that one professor had moved her Saturday class to weekdays. In the class she said, “Carol, your other professor (Dr. A) does not want to move her class to weekdays, so I don’t know what you will do.” Well, one step at a time. Back to prayer again. There’s not a mountain that prayer, springing out of faith in a living God, cannot move.

A few days later, a friend, brushing past me, said that she almost missed

Dr. A’s class. I was surprised. “But this is not Saturday, and Dr. A has her class only on Saturdays.” “I don’t know what happened,” my friend said. “At the last moment Dr. A. changed her class from Saturday to a weekday.” Of course I knew what had happened. My Lord must have spoken to her about my need. Is prayer not the most powerful tool in the hands of a believer?

As foreign students, we were required to pay what the university called an Education Development Fund (EDF) fee of US \$500.00 per student. That meant US \$1000.00 total, which was beyond our capacity to pay. Imagine our dismay when we were told that this is a fee due at the beginning of each semester—seven to eight semesters in all! Again we prayed, and wrote a letter for a waiver. Our request was rooted in faith in the Lord who promised, “But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you” (John 11:22); “Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them” (Mark 11:24). Living faith makes the mountains of hardship disappear or at least easy enough to bear. One day after we submitted our petition, the university granted us the waiver, and this happened each semester until we graduated.

A couple of weeks after enrolling, we realized that each of us needed a computer to do our research. Our sponsoring policy permitted only one computer for both, but it seemed inadequate to accommodate our assignments. We worked out a tentative arrangement: I used the computer from 6:00 p.m. till 12:30 a.m., then Joshua had his turn till 6:00 a.m. This went on for three months. We realized that this schedule was not working. It was hurting our health. So the only way we knew was to take our problem to the Great Problem Solver. Doesn’t Matthew 21:22 say, “And all things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive”?

Joshua then sent an email to his friends. An old friend, having not seen him since college days back in 1985, responded the next day and said, "A laptop is on its way. A friend leaving for the Philippines is carrying it, and you will get it in three days."

One important lesson that I learned studying at a public university is that we can't chart our path without absolute dependence on God. Without prayer, we are cut off from the central source of strength and supply and power. My experience taught me that God is always there to lift me up when I am down. He always opens the way for me whenever I encounter problems. Through many such miracles, my husband and I were able to complete our doctoral programs. Our life and ministry is an open testimony to the power of prayer and of faith in a living, never-failing God.

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* Bible texts in this article are quoted from the New King James Version.

Music...

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to the common issues of life and basic human emotions. It comes out of our very being, expressing the human spirit's reaction to life, love, and the world in which the Lord has placed us. It can be morally uplifting or degrading. Although it does not directly praise and adore God, nevertheless it could have a legitimate place in the life of the Christian. In its selection the

principles discussed in this document should be followed.

Principles to guide the Christian

The music that Christians enjoy should be regulated by the following principles:

1. All music the Christian listens to, performs or composes, whether sacred or secular, will glorify God: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). This is the overriding biblical principle. Anything that cannot meet this high standard will weaken our experience with the Lord.

2. All music the Christian listens to, performs or composes, whether sacred or secular, should be the noblest and the best: "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is pure, whatever is right, whatever is admirable if anything is excellent or praiseworthy think about such things" (Philippians 4:8). As followers of Jesus Christ who hope and expect to join the heavenly choirs, we view life on this earth as a preparation for, and foretaste of, the life to come.

On these two foundations glorifying God in all things and choosing the noblest and the best depend the other principles listed below for the selection of music by Christians.

3. It is characterized by quality, balance, appropriateness, and authenticity. Music fosters our spiritual, psychological, and social sensitivity, and our intellectual growth.

4. It appeals to both the intellect and the emotions and impacts the body in a positive way. It is wholistic.

5. Music reveals creativity in that it draws from quality melodies. If harmonized,⁵ it uses harmonies in an interesting and artistic way, and employs rhythm that complements them.

6. Vocal music employs lyrics that positively stimulate intellectual abilities as well as our emotions and our will power. Good lyrics are creative, rich in content, and of good composition.

They focus on the positive and reflect moral values; they educate and uplift; and they correspond with sound biblical theology.

7. Musical and lyrical elements should work together harmoniously to influence thinking and behavior in harmony with biblical values.

8. It maintains a judicious balance of spiritual, intellectual, and emotional elements.

9. We should recognize and acknowledge the contribution of different cultures in worshiping God. Musical forms and instruments vary greatly in the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist family, and music drawn from one culture may sound strange to someone from a different culture.

Seventh-day Adventist music-making means to choose the best and above all to draw close to our Creator and Lord and glorify Him. Let us rise to the challenge of a viable alternative musical vision and, as part of our wholistic and prophetic message, make a unique Adventist musical contribution as a witness to the world regarding a people awaiting Christ's soon coming.

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1. "It [music] is one of the most effective means of impressing the heart with spiritual truth" (*Education*, p. 168).
2. *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 497. She also states that in the future, "just before the close of probation," "there will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing". The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time" (*Selected Messages*, vol. 2, p. 36).
3. *Education*, p. 167.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
5. We acknowledge that in some cultures harmonies are not as important as in other cultures.



**Adventist
Professionals'
Network**

Join Us!



Good news! The steady growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its institutions has created a demand for qualified personnel who can support its worldwide mission with their talents and education.

In response to this need, the General Conference has launched the Adventist Professionals' Network (APN)—an electronic global registry of Adventists who hold a degree in any field and have an email address. APN assists Adventist institutions and agencies in locating candidates for positions in areas such as teaching, ministry, health care, management, administration, and research as well as consultants and personnel for mission service.

Once registered, APN members can find job opportunities in Adventist organizations, join one of many Adventist professional associations, and network with thousands of Adventist professionals around the world. Members are protected from solicitations and unwanted mail.

Enter your professional information directly in the APN secure website, free:

<http://apn.adventist.org>

Encourage other degreed Adventists to join APN and enjoy its many benefits.

For questions and comments on APN, contact us through apn@gc.adventist.org



“Balcony in Monells” (46 x 55 cm.) This is the balcony of the house where I live when I visit Monells, a charming village in northeastern Spain. My studio and art gallery are located on the lower floor. ▲

A Rafael Falcó Güell Portfolio

(All paintings, oil on canvass)



◀ **“The Old Harbor” (81 x 65 cm.)** Before its last renovation, this massive building was the cotton market on the port of Barcelona. I have painted this scene many times, always attracted by the changing reflections of light on the water. I like the contrast between the young rowers and the old structure.



“Sunrise at the Canal” (73 x 92 cm.) The real protagonist of this painting is the joyous dance of light on water at this early hour. ◀

“Venetian Garden” (54 x 73 cm.) A single lotus flower surrounded by papyruses captures the enchantment of this well-tended pond. ►



“Gondoliers at Lanzolo” (92 x 73 cm.) Venice is one of my preferred cities, and this is one of my favorite places. I like to include human beings in my compositions because they add life and action to the scene. ▲



“The Gran Canal of Venice” (73 x 60 cm.) I usually develop my compositions on the basis of black-and-white photographs I take myself. While at the scene, I record on paper the colors I want to give to the various elements in the painting. Then I get to work in my studio. ▲

“Monells” (55 x 38 cm.) This part of the old village of Monells, dominated by the church tower, was separated in the past from the main section of town by the Risc Brook. When the water is high, it reaches the foundations of the ancient walls. ▶

“A Corner in Venice” (54 x 65 cm.) Capturing the reflections of light and shadows on moving waters has always attracted me. ▼



“Monell’s Main Square” (73 x 60 cm.) This area of town is where the grain market was held during the Middle Ages. It is now a favorite place for children playing on their bicycles, two of my favorite subjects. ▼



“St. Zacharias Zanipolo” (60 x 73 cm.) The combination of an old church, a bridge, the water of the canal, and real people taking in the views is how I remember Venice. ◀



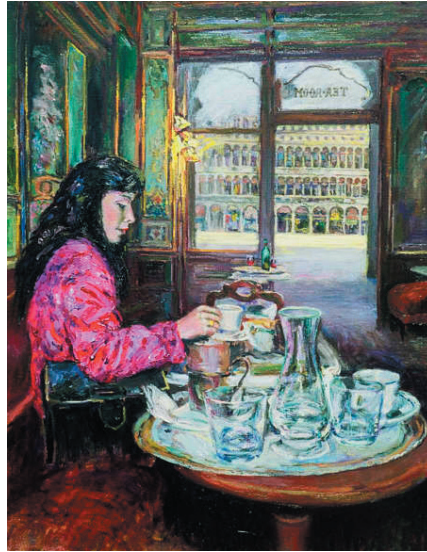
“Watery Shadows in Monells” (73 x 60 cm.) The people of this village like to keep their plants green, and frequently the water runs onto the street. This creates an interesting effect that is much appreciated by my clients. ▲



“Motorcycles at Rest” (55 x 33 cm.) I noticed these motorcycles parked in a row near Barcelona’s old harbor. The difficulty in depicting the play of light and shadows challenged me. ▲

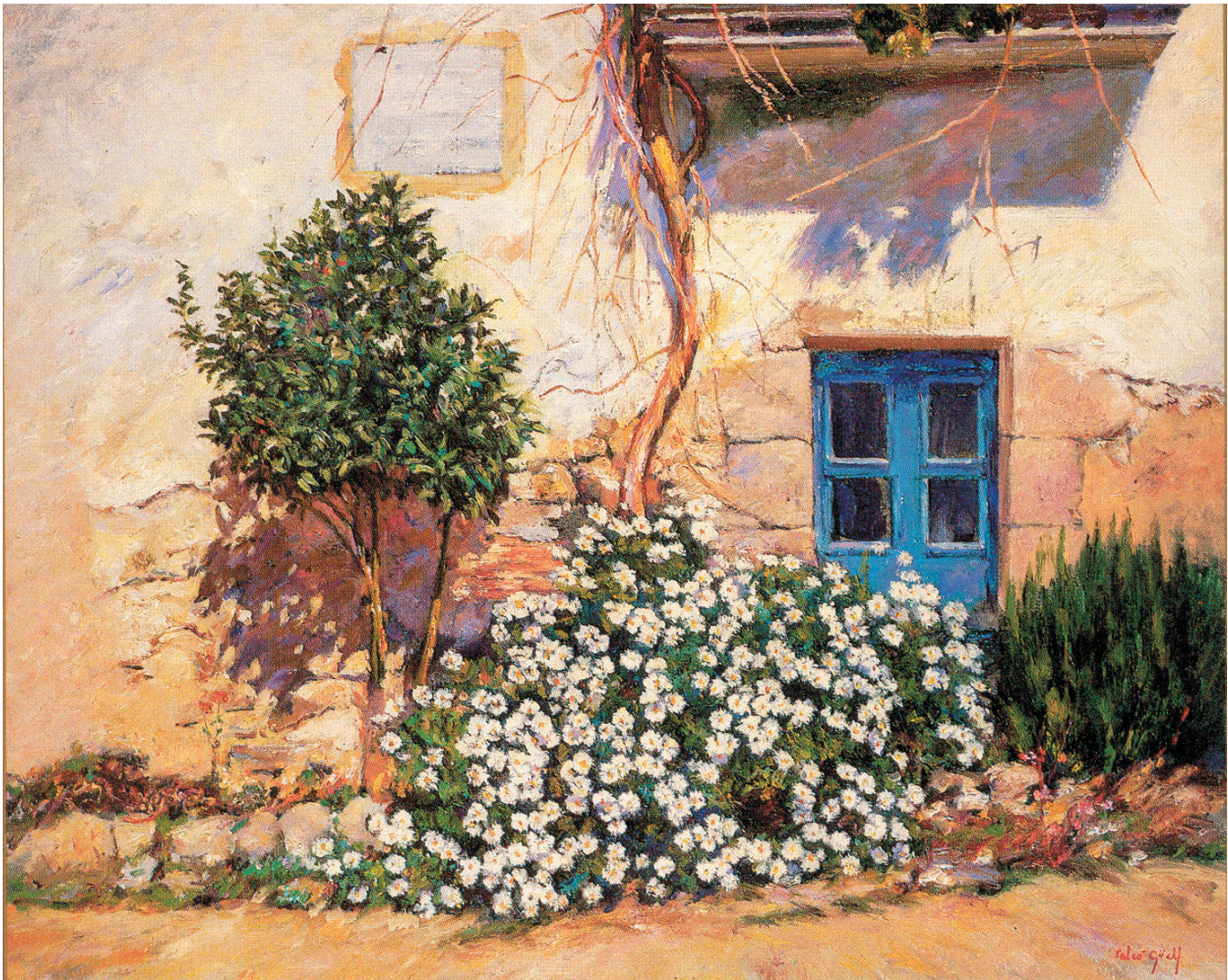
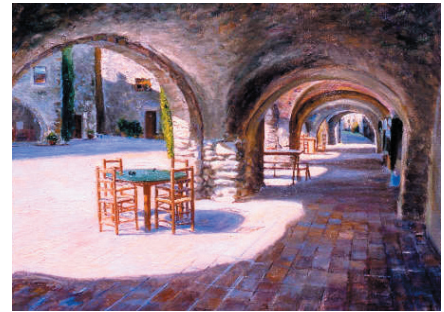
“Venetian Lady” (65 x 81 cm.)

The first time I visited this city, I took a picture of this young woman having tea. But what fascinated me was the effect of light on the crystals and the successive planes from the nearby table to the distant cathedral. ►



“Under the Arches” (73 x 60 cm.)

As in many old European towns, these arches surrounding the main square were built to protect the grain sellers and the customers from the elements. The tables and chairs of the restaurant suggest life as it is lived today. ▼



“White Wall Under the Sun” (73 x 60 cm.) The blue window gives a touch of freshness to this typical Mediterranean scene. The dry vine, the wild daisies, the small laurel tree, and the rosemary bush frame the simple charm of this sunny moment. ▲