



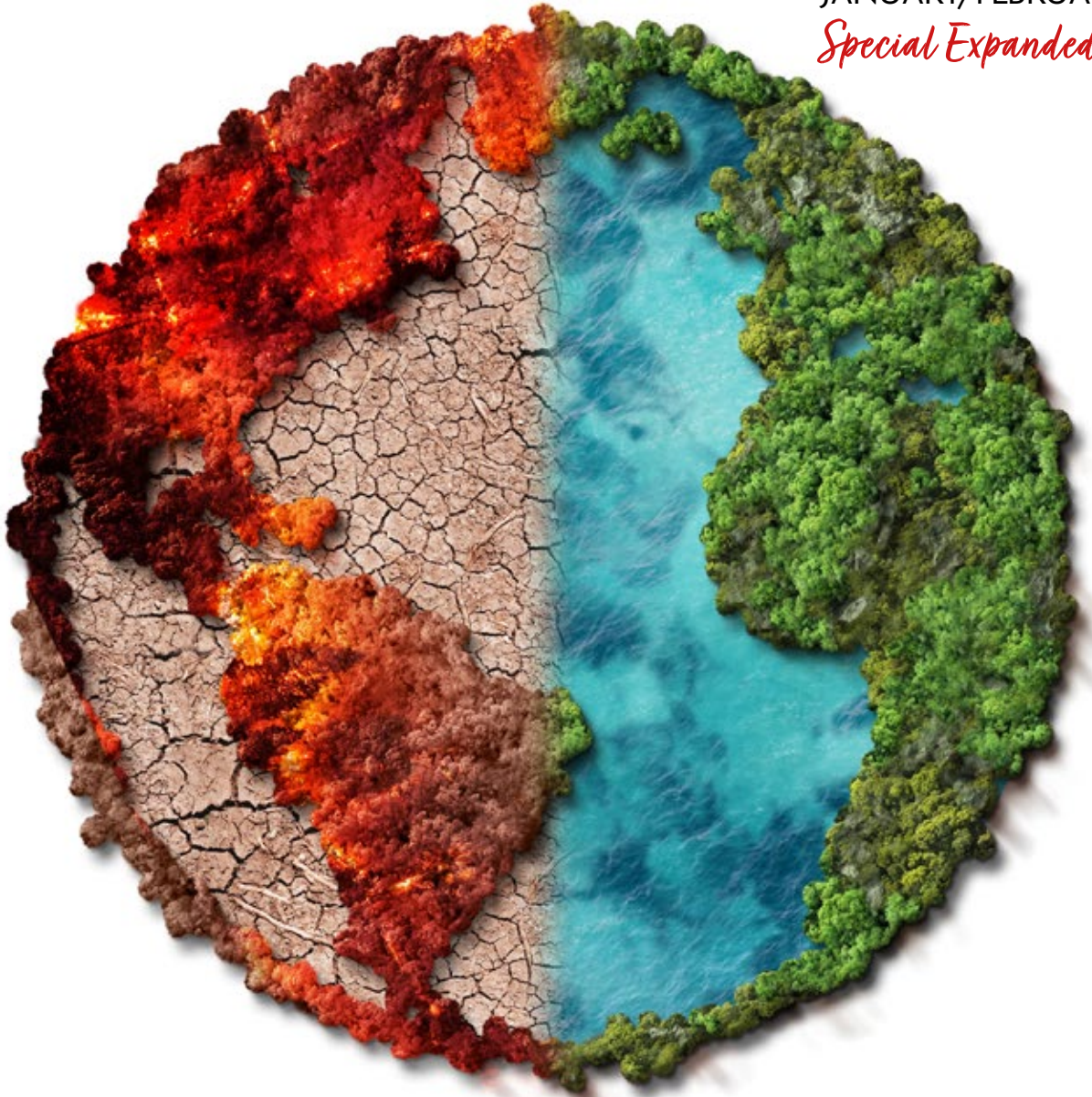
PROPHECY IS LIKE A LAMP SHINING IN A DARK PLACE. 2 PETER 1:19

# Lamplighter

LAMB & LION MINISTRIES  
a Non-Denominational Christian Media Ministry

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2023

*Special Expanded Issue!*



## NATURE AND NATURE'S GOD

*Discerning the Signs of the Times*

Lamplighter | Jan-Feb 2023  
A bi-monthly publication produced  
by  
Lamb & Lion Ministries

**Founder**

Dr. David R. Reagan

**Executive Editor**  
**CEO | Sr. Evangelist**  
Tim Moore

**Associate Editor**  
**Creative Designer**  
Jana Olivieri



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# FROM THE EDITOR

Moses said, “The secret things belong to God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever...” (Deuteronomy 29:29). Why did God foretell so much about Jesus’ first Advent and Second Coming? Clearly, He wanted those “with eyes to see” to have discernment and to keep their hearts attuned to the Messiah.

But insight is not automatic, and discernment eludes those whose hearts are not enlightened by the Holy Spirit. When Jesus ministered in the world, He typically taught through parables. Not only did His parables evoke word pictures that people would remember, but they also allowed Him to speak to His sheep while those outside His flock remained oblivious (Matthew 13:13).

God’s prophetic Word works like that. Many grope in the darkness because they reject the light, but we who are in Christ “are not of night or of darkness” (1 Thessalonians 5:5). Jesus expects us to recognize the signs of the times (Matthew 16:2-3). He has clearly chosen to give us enough signs to offer insight—if we have eyes to see.

That is not to say that prophetic signs flash before us in bright neon lights. They are often subtle. They require that our eyes adjust spiritually over time—just like night vision takes time to gain acuity. Nathan Jones offered an analogy at our recent streaming conference; he stated that like a puzzle that reveals its picture as pieces are added, our understanding of prophecy grows as the pieces fall into place.

Throughout 2022 we emphasized the imminence of the Rapture. The “Signs of the Times” are shouting the nearness of that glorious event. This edition of the



Lamplighter will focus on the signs of Nature. In the editions that follow in 2023, we will examine the signs of: Society, Spirituality, World Politics, Technology, and Israel.

Signs of nature are all around us. As King David observed long ago, “The heavens declare the glory of God, the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge” (Psalm 19:1-2). Sadly, even with an abundance of evidence and a cosmos filled with knowledge, many lack wisdom. Even within the Church, scoffers dismiss the magnitude and majesty of what God has revealed to us (2 Peter 3:3-7).

As we marvel at the Creation God has given us, we recognize the truth in Isaiah’s observation: “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God stands forever” (Isaiah 40:8).

God’s prophetic Word is converging all around us. Soon, the Bright Morning Star will pierce the darkness once again (Revelation 22:16). May this Lamplighter edition cause His light to shine in your heart even now (2 Peter 1:19).

*Tim Moore*

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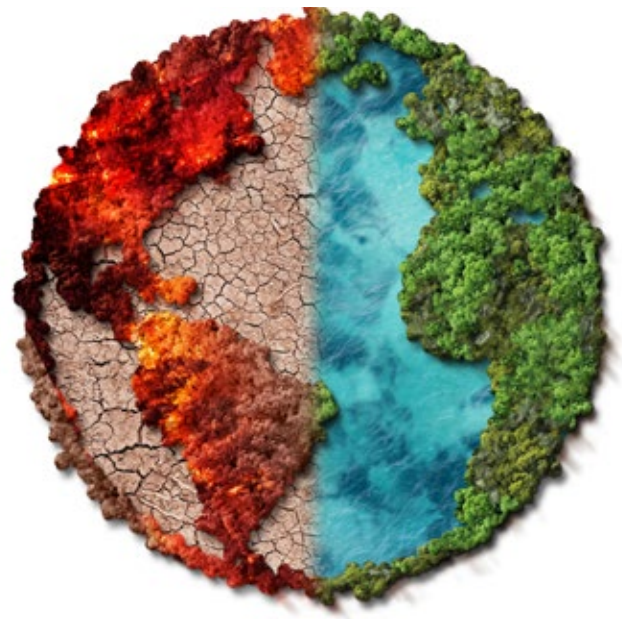
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TIM MOORE

# NATURE AND NATURE'S GOD

*Discerning the Signs of the Times*

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## IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776

THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION OF THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, WHEN IN THE COURSE OF HUMAN EVENTS, IT BECOMES NECESSARY FOR ONE PEOPLE TO DISSOLVE THE POLITICAL BANDS WHICH HAVE CONNECTED THEM WITH ANOTHER, AND TO ASSUME AMONG THE POWERS OF THE EARTH, THE SEPARATE AND EQUAL STATION TO WHICH THE LAWS OF NATURE AND OF NATURE'S GOD ENTITLE THEM...

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT, THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL, THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN UNALIENABLE RIGHTS, THAT AMONG THESE ARE LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.

**Cosmos – Greek word meaning  
“order” and “world” and  
reflective of perfect harmony**

**T**hose words once described a western respect for, and understanding of, the entire natural order. Nature exists—and we move about in a created order—but above all we see and observe is God.

He cannot be seen. No instrument can measure Him or comprehend His proportions. No mortal mind or artificial intelligence can comprehend His ways or fathom His thoughts.

By the power of His Word—spoken as revealed in Genesis 1—the cosmos began. The observable universe, more expansive than the mind of man can grasp, is thought to be only a small fraction of what actually exists beyond the confines of our own corner of space.

It is fitting and healthy for us to consider for a moment the immensity of God's creation before we turn our gaze back upon His highest creature.



*Then some of the scribes  
and Pharisees said to Him,  
“Teacher, we want to see a  
sign from You.”*

*Matthew 12:38*

But instead of acknowledging in their heart the clear authority of Jesus to work wonders and provide signs, the chief priests instead resolved to kill Jesus and Lazarus as well (John 11:43, 12:9-11).

What is the value of a sign that will not be seen or believed? Willful disbelief in the signs and wonders of God demonstrates a rejection of Him as God (Romans 1:18-20).

# Give Us a Sign

When Jesus was ministering on the earth, the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees frequently demanded that He show them a sign (Matthew 12:38, 16:1; Mark 8:11; Luke 11:16; John 2:18). They went so far as to ask, “What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?”

The narrative in John follows immediately on the heels of Jesus feeding thousands of people by multiplying five barley loaves and two fish. Matthew records this audacious demand after multiple miracles of healing and yet another miracle of feeding. Jesus was clearly exasperated that the supposed religious leaders could discern signs of weather and yet could not discern the signs of the times (Matthew 16:1-4).



Their refusal to acknowledge the multitude of signs Jesus performed reflected hardness of heart instead of inability to see. Rightly did Jesus assert in a parable that the hard of heart will not be “persuaded even if someone rises from the dead” (Luke 16:31). Jesus’ point was driven home dramatically in John 11 and 12. After He raised Lazarus from the dead, the Pharisees finally admitted that He was performing “many signs” (John 11:47). The Sadducees, who did not believe in resurrection in the first place, must have been truly perplexed (Acts 23:8).

## HERE’S YOUR SIGN

God has provided His Word as an infallible testimony to His Person, His power, and His plan. We need only believe Him, and like Abraham, we will be credited with righteousness. In other words, the full counsel of His Word points to Jesus (His Person), His resurrection (His power), and His Gospel (His plan).

He also extends grace and lovingkindness toward the creatures created in His own image. Because He is patient and gentle and does not “wish for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9), He also provides signs that point to His Person, His power, and His plan. Lamb & Lion Ministries has long categorized the signs of the End Times into signs of nature, society, spirituality, world politics, technology, and Israel.

God has frequently utilized signs of nature to confirm His calling and His will, to warn, and to judge individuals and nations. For example:

- ◆ The curse He placed on Creation was in response to Adam and Eve’s disobedience and sin (Genesis 3:17-19)
- ◆ The unprecedented—never-to-be-repeated—flood that covered the whole earth (Genesis 7)
- ◆ The fire that fell from heaven to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19)
- ◆ Isaac was conceived in fulfillment of a

promise of God, even though his mother was well past child-bearing age (Genesis 18:10-14)

- ♦ Ten plagues fell upon Egypt before Pharaoh relented and let the children of Israel go (Exodus 7-12)
- ♦ Gideon's affirmation from God, whereby dew fell alternatively on a fleece of wool and on the ground (Judges 6:36-40)
- ♦ The day unlike any other before or after, when the sun stopped in the middle of the sky while Israel routed its foe (Joshua 10:12-14)
- ♦ Tumors afflicting the Philistine men who had captured the Ark of the Covenant (1 Samuel 5-6)
- ♦ Elijah's pronouncement of a three-year drought (1 Kings 17:1, 18:1)
- ♦ The shadow cast by the sun moved backward ten steps to affirm Isaiah's prophetic word to Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:8-11)

As Ruler of Heaven and Earth, God can also raise up talking donkeys, great fish, and lowly worms to serve His purpose.

I love the detail included in the Word of God. When describing the last plague in Egypt that would lead to Pharaoh letting the sons of Israel go, the Lord said, "there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has never been before and such as shall never be again. But against any of the sons of Israel a dog will not even bark, whether against man or beast, that you may understand how the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel" (Exodus 11:6-7). This passage demonstrates that sometimes God's sovereignty over nature is manifest by His suppression of outcomes that would be entirely natural!



Taken as a whole, some of these signs might have naturalistic explanations. The world still experiences pestilence and locust infestations, hurricanes and tornados, earthquakes and tsunamis, and droughts and fires. These and other natural disasters are inherent to the post-Fall curse placed upon the world. But often, they result from a specific judgment of God.

When King David sinned against God by commanding a census to ascertain the strength of his army, the LORD sent Gad to call him out. Gad relayed a heartbreaking message: David could choose one of three punishments for his faithlessness—a seven-year famine, a three-month onslaught by a foreign enemy, or a three-day outbreak of pestilence (or disease). David was in "great distress" over such a choice and yielded to the mercy of God. But he never doubted that God had the power and the right to inflict any of those judgments upon him and upon Israel (2 Samuel 24:1-14).

David's realization is at the heart of any understanding of the signs of nature. Nature is not an autonomous mechanism; in the words of Thomas Jefferson, it is subject to Nature's God.

Again, sometimes God works through natural processes to fulfill His will. But often, even those natural processes demonstrate a miracle of timing—and convey the almighty power of God. For instance, fishermen made a living on the Sea of Galilee. But Peter realized the divine providence of God when Jesus told him to cast his net once more on the right side of the boat (John 21:3-11).

Similarly, while Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns at the midnight hour during their incarceration in Philippi, an earthquake shook the jail. All the prison doors were thrown open, and the chains were unfastened. A scoffer could dismiss that miraculous event as merely coincidental. But there are no coincidences with God—only miracles of timing.

## SIGNS OF THE MESSIAH

Clearly, the God of nature has authority over His creation. Through His prophets, He pronounced signs that would demonstrate His power and pro-



vision for His people. He also offered signs that would point to the ultimate demonstration of His mercy and grace: the Advent of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

Among the signs of nature that God foretold would surround the Messiah's birth:

- ♦ He would come through "the seed of woman," not through the natural process involving the seed of a man (Genesis 3:15)
- ♦ A star would signal His birth (Numbers 24:17; Isaiah 9:2)
- ♦ He would be born of a virgin who would name Him Immanuel—God with us (Isaiah 7:14)
- ♦ His lineage would flow through a particular branch of humanity—including many who would not be considered particularly righteous aside from their faith in God (Genesis 12:3, 17:21, 28:14, 49:8; Jeremiah 23:5)

During His ministry on earth, Jesus also demonstrated His authority over nature. In Peter's first sermon, he affirmed that the divine nature of Jesus the Nazarene was "attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and

signs which God performed through Him" (Acts 2:22). Those signs include:

- ♦ His first miracle—changing water into wine—manifested power over space, time, and material (John 2:1-11)
- ♦ He frequently healed people of physical maladies, even raising people from the dead (John 4:46-54; 5:1-8; 9:1-7; and 11:1-44)
- ♦ He walked on water and commanded a storm to cease (John 6:16-21 and Mark 4:35-41)
- ♦ He multiplied five loaves and two fish to feed thousands (Matthew 14:15-21)
- ♦ Through His own authority, He conquered death (Acts 2:22-28; 1 Corinthians 6:14)
- ♦ After His resurrection, He passed through doors and ascended into heaven (John 20:19; Luke 24:51)

Clearly, Jesus was the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the Messiah as foretold in the Old Testament. He was the Word made flesh. Even at His crucifixion, God was offering signs of His divinity and role as Messiah: the earth shook and rocks were split, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, darkness fell over the earth for three hours as the sun hid its face, and many dead saints were raised and appeared to many (Matthew 27:51-53 and Luke 23:44-45).

Witnessing all this, the grizzled centurion that supervised His execution praised God and exclaimed, "Truly this was the Son of God!" (Matthew 27:54 and Luke 23:47).

## SIGNS OF THINGS TO COME

David Reagan, the founder of Lamb & Lion Ministries, has documented over 300 prophecies in the Old Testament that point to Jesus' first Advent and earthly ministry—with 109 of them being unique. Many of those can be categorized as signs of nature.

More than 500 references in the Old Testament point to Jesus' glorious Second Coming. Jesus and the New Testament authors provide additional signs for us to discern in order to recognize the season of His return. Those that relate to signs of nature include:

- ♦ Famines and earthquakes (Matthew 24:7)
- ♦ Great earthquakes, plagues, famines, and terrors and great signs from heaven (Luke 21:11)
- ♦ Signs in the sun, moon, and stars (Luke 21:25)
- ♦ Roaring of the sea and the waves (Luke 21:25)
- ♦ Men will faint from fear when the powers of the heavens are shaken—thought by some to point to fear inspired by the threat of nuclear war (Luke 21:26)





*Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, and after getting into a boat, they started to cross the sea to Capernaum. It had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea began to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing. Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened. But He said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." (John 6:16-20)*

Even after the Church is taken out of the world (raptured), natural signs will continue and multiply. Those left behind will experience:

- ♦ Darkness as the sun and moon do not give light and stars fall from the sky (Matthew 24:29; Revelation 6:12-13)
- ♦ War-induced famine will lead to the death of ¼ of the world's population (Revelation 6:1-8)
- ♦ A great earthquake will move every mountain and island (Revelation 6:12-14)
- ♦ Hail and fire will fall upon the earth and burn up 1/3 of the trees and green grass (Revelation 8:7)
- ♦ Something "like a great mountain" will fall into the sea, corrupting 1/3 of the water and killing 1/3 of the sea creatures (Revelation 8:8-9)
- ♦ Another "great star" will fall from the sky and poison 1/3 of the fresh water on the earth (Revelation 8:10-11)
- ♦ People who accept the mark of the beast will be inflicted with loathsome and malignant sores (Revelation 16:2)
- ♦ The sun will then flare and scorch mankind (Revelation 16:8)

This is by no means a complete list but merely representative of the signs

of nature that await a rebellious world. Amazingly, those who are condemned to endure such punishment will recognize the Source of their suffering. The kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man will seek refuge among the rocks of the mountains and say, "fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb" (Revelation 6:15-16).

As John foresees the outpouring of six bowls of wrath, he records that men will "blaspheme the name of God who has the power over these plaques" (Revelation 16:9). Tragically, he foretells that "they [will] not repent so as to give Him glory"—and be saved.

## SHOW DISCERNMENT AND TAKE WARNING

In the end, that is the lesson of the signs of nature. God is the God of nature and has power over all of His creation. He rightfully uses natural and supernatural mechanisms to accomplish His will.

Nature yields to God because it must. Just as He spoke a word and the entirety of the cosmos was flung into ordered existence, His Word will never return void.

By His Word, Signs of Nature are multiplying before our eyes. Just as the wise men were able to recognize and follow the Star of Bethlehem that heralded His birth, those who have studied His Word and are anticipating Him will discern the season of His return. Others will merely scoff and go about their lives. Like the people who mocked Noah's preaching, they will be swept away when pronouncements of warning transition to an outpouring of wrath.

Do not delay! Take refuge in the Savior Who will rescue those who belong to Him before the coming storm—Jesus Christ, God's only Way, Truth, and Life. ♦

*As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so will My word which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.*

– Isaiah 55:10-11

*Tracking the Approaching Tribulation Storm*

# TRAJECTORY

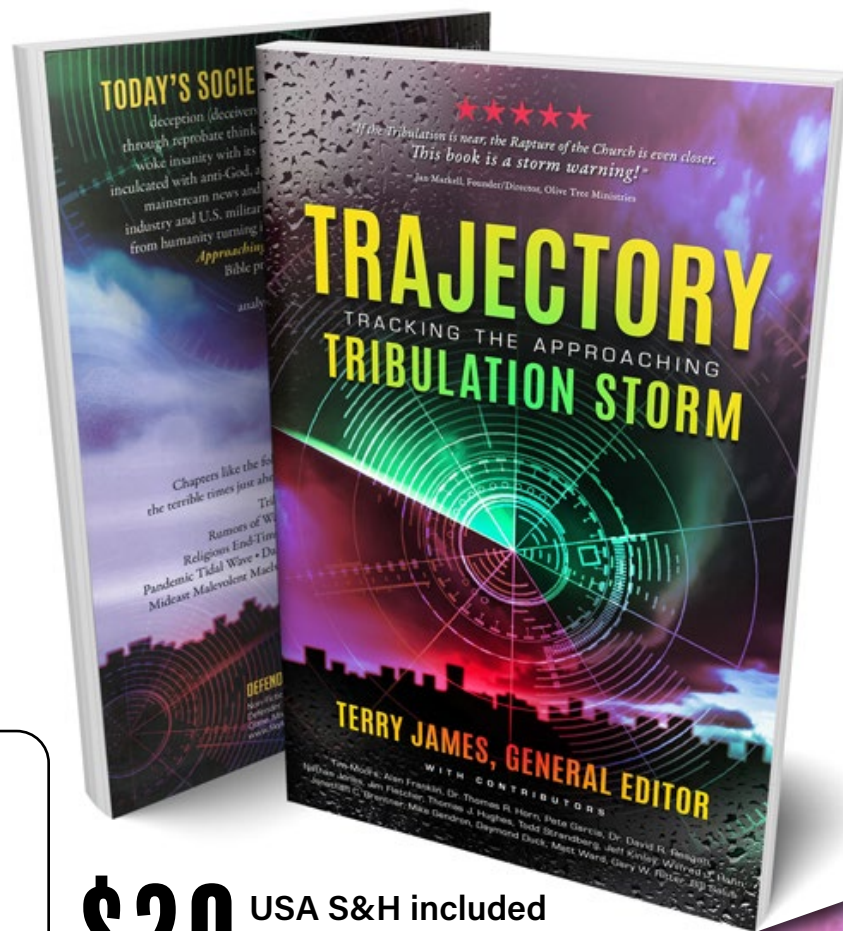
**WITH TIM MOORE, DAVID REAGAN, NATHAN JONES,**

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# NATURAL SIGNS OF JESUS' SOON RETURN

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**LIVE**

**H**eadlines like these are enough to make you think that all of nature is spiraling out of control. And that, in fact, is exactly what is happening from a human viewpoint. But spiritually, the Bible assures us that God is in control, and what we are witnessing is the fulfillment of end time prophecies.

Even secular writers have recognized the phenomenon. Author Alva Yaffe recently wrote in Living Magazine: "From birds flying South before a storm, to cracked snow before an avalanche, to lakes nearby volcanos, nature has its way of sending us signals that can either be taken seriously or ignored. And it comes down to make a life or death decision in many cases."

While those of us who specialize in the teaching of Bible prophecy do not attribute the Source of those signs merely to "nature," we would agree that discernment regarding the signs really does make the difference in life or death. That is because God uses signs of nature—along with five other categories of signs—to offer a prophetic warning to the world. The Bible tells us to watch for all the categories of signs in the end times.

The signs of nature are very important, and yet, they receive the least respect. There are two reasons for this—one that is conceptual, and the other that is philosophical.

## PROBLEMS WITH THE SIGNS OF NATURE

The *conceptual* problem resides in the fact that there have always been signs of nature. So, when confronted with the prophesied signs of nature, many people shrug their shoulders and ask, "What else is new? There have always been tornados, hurricanes, and earthquakes."

What they overlook is that Jesus said these signs would be like “birth pangs” (Matthew 24:8). That means they will increase in frequency and intensity the closer we get to the Lord’s return. And that is exactly what appears to be happening today.

The *philosophical* problem many people have with the signs of nature is due to the fact that we have been brainwashed by Western scientific rationalism into believing that for something to exist, you must be able to see it, measure it, weigh it and dissect it.

In contrast, the Bible teaches there is a whole realm of the supernatural that cannot normally be perceived by the senses. This realm includes angels, demons, and the operation of the Holy Spirit. It also includes God’s intervention into history from time to time through supernatural manifestations and natural disasters.

## God and Signs of Nature

Sometimes God uses signs of nature to underline the importance of major events. Thus, at the birth of Jesus, God

placed a special light in the heavens, probably a manifestation of His Shekinah glory. When Jesus was crucified, the earth experienced three hours of darkness and a major earthquake. And the Bible says that when Jesus returns, the world will experience the greatest earthquake in its history. Every island will be moved, valleys will be lifted, mountains will be lowered, and the city of Jerusalem will be lifted up like a jewel, possibly becoming the highest place on earth (Revelation 16:18-21 and Isaiah 40:3-5).

More often, God uses signs of nature as remedial judgments to call nations to repentance. Both the Bible and history attest to the fact that God has a pattern of dealing with nations. When a nation rebels against God, He responds first by raising up prophetic voices to call the nation to repentance. These are not necessarily people with supernatural knowledge of the future. They simply have the gift of discernment to see where a nation is missing God’s mark. To put it another way, they know how to apply the Scriptures to contemporary events.

If a nation refuses to listen to the prophetic voices, God will then send remedial judgments. These can take many forms. Deuteronomy 28 mentions economic failure, rebellion of youth, an epidemic of divorce, confusion in government, foreign domination, and military defeat. The chapter also mentions natural disasters like drought, crop failure and pestilence.

*There is no relief for your breakdown, your wound is incurable...*

**Nahum 3:19**

Finally, if a nation digs in against God and sets its jaw against His calls to repentance, a point of no return will be reached — often referred to as “when the wound becomes incurable” (Nahum 3:19, Jeremiah 30:12 and Micah 1:9). At this point, the Lord will deliver the nation from judgment to destruction. That destruction may occur quickly — as with Babylon and the Soviet Union — or it may occur gradually over a period of time, as with the Roman Empire.

## EXAMPLES OF REMEDIAL JUDGMENTS

There are many examples of remedial judgments in the Bible that involve natural disasters. Take, for example, the plagues with which God afflicted Egypt in order to convince Pharaoh that he should release the children of Israel from captivity. The Lord sent plagues of frogs, gnats, flies and locusts. In addition, He contaminated the nation’s water, afflicted the livestock with pestilence, struck the people with sores and boils, engulfed the land in a thick darkness and finally took the lives of the first born of both men and livestock.

When King Ahab led the Israelites into the worship of a pagan god, the Lord raised up the prophet Elijah to call the king and his people to repentance. When they ignored Elijah, the Lord put a remedial judgment on the land in the form of a severe three-and-a-half-year drought (1 Kings 17 & 18).





The book of Joel tells about a locust invasion that afflicted Judah. This was one of the worst calamities that could befall an agricultural society. It appears that people began bemoaning their “bad luck.” That’s when God sent the prophet Joel to inform them that the disaster had nothing to do with luck. Joel boldly proclaimed that the locusts had been sent by God to call the people to repentance. He warned that if they did not repent, the Lord would send something even worse — an enemy army. The people ignored Joel and the prophets who followed him, and God ultimately sent the army, delivering them from judgment to destruction.

Seventy years later, when the Babylonian captivity ended, the Jews who returned to Judah laid the foundation for a new temple and then quickly lost interest in the project. They turned their attention instead to the building of their personal homes. For 14 years, the foundation of the temple stood

vacant. Finally, God raised up an elderly, tough-talking prophet named Haggai. He confronted the people by asking them: “Have you noticed that when you plant your crops, they are destroyed by root rot? And when you replant them, they are destroyed again by hail? And when you replant, a windstorm comes? God is speaking to you! He is calling you to repent of your misplaced priorities and give attention to the rebuilding of His temple.” For once, the people listened, obeyed, and were blessed.

## THE NATURE OF GOD

God has continued throughout history to use signs of nature to call nations to repentance. Some people say, “Oh no, God doesn’t do that anymore because this is the ‘Age of Grace.’” The first problem with that statement is that it implies there was a previous time of no grace. In fact, there is only one means of salvation—namely, grace through faith (Joel 2:32).

Furthermore, the Bible says God is “the same yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). There is no such thing as the Old Testament God of wrath and the New Testament God of grace. God does not change (Malachi 3:6). He is immutable.

The Old Testament God of wrath is the One who showed grace toward the wicked city of Nineveh when its people repented in response to the message of Jonah. The New Testament God of grace is the One who warned the church at Thyatira that if it continued to tolerate a false prophetess, He would “cast her upon a bed of sickness and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation.” Further, He threatened to “kill her children with pestilence” (Revelation 2:22-23).

Our God is a God of grace, mercy, and love. But He is also a God of holiness, righteousness, and justice. The balanced view of God is presented by the prophet Nahum. Speaking of God's grace, he wrote: "The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him" (Nahum 1:7). But Nahum warned that the same God is One who is righteous and holy and who will not tolerate sin (Nahum 1:2-3):

**A jealous and avenging God is the LORD; The LORD is avenging and wrathful. The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves wrath for His enemies. The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.**

## THE ROLE OF SATAN

Some counter by trying to argue that natural calamities come from Satan and not God. But the Bible teaches that God is sovereign. Satan is not free to do anything he pleases. When he wanted to torment Job with natural afflictions, he had to ask God's permission. Even when he was granted permission, God laid down rules about what he could and could not do (Job 1:6-12).

The Bible says God does not tempt us (James 1:13). Yet Jesus taught us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation" (Matthew 6:13). How can these statements be reconciled? The answer is that although Satan is the tempter, he cannot do so unless God allows it.

Satan will endeavor to tempt us, but God is sovereign. So, nothing hap-

pens that He does not allow, either in His perfect will or His permissive will. That is the reason the Bible attributes all natural disasters to God.

## Crucial Questions

In a very real sense, all natural calamities are a product of Man's sin. The original creation was perfect. Natural calamities are a result of the curse that God placed on the creation in response to Man's sin. When Jesus returns, the curse will be lifted, and natural calamities will cease.

However, not all natural calamities represent remedial judgments of God. Most are natural byproducts of our weather systems.

Then how can we determine when a natural calamity is a remedial judgment? One important factor is the timing of the event as it relates to the sins of the nation. Another factor is the magnitude of the event. Remedial judgments are designed to capture people's attention and force them to think with an eternal perspective. The most important factor is God's Spirit witnessing to the spirits of those to whom He has given the gift of prophecy. They will be motivated to speak forth with a united voice.

## END TIME SIGNS OF NATURE

In Jesus' Olivet Discourse, delivered to His disciples on the Mount of Olives during the last week of His life, He specifically spoke of signs of nature to watch for in the end times.

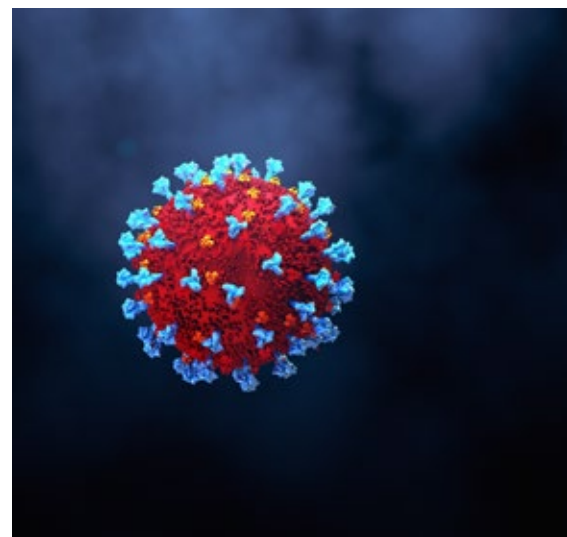
Matthew recorded Him saying, "... and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes . . ." (Matthew

24:7). Luke's account of that teaching is more detailed. He quotes Jesus as saying:

...there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven... There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea... (Luke 21:11, 25)

We are witnessing all these things today worldwide. All sorts of weather calamities are happening more frequently and causing greater damage — hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes, floods, and forest fires.

Additionally, famine continues to rage throughout Africa and other Third World areas. Plagues like AIDS, SARS, Ebola, COVID-19, and Monkey Pox





*The Church needs to wake up to the Signs of Nature and all the other signs that are converging for the first time ever. But for that to happen, our nation's pastors need to get serious about the fact that we are living in the season of the Lord's return, and they need to start proclaiming that fact from their pulpits.*

## Wake Up Church!

continue to challenge and perplex medical science. Even old diseases once thought to be under control are back with renewed virulence—due to the development of antibiotic-resistant strains.

And for the first time ever, we are living in a time when we can see incredible sights in outer space due to space telescopes and satellite probes that we have sent to other planets—all in fulfillment of Luke 21:25 which says that in the end times, “there will be signs in the sun, moon and stars...”

## The Birth Pangs Effect

With regard to natural calamities, some simply dismiss them in a cavalier manner by asking, “What else is new?” But as I have already mentioned, Jesus said that the signs in the end times would be like “birth pangs” (Matthew 24:8), meaning they will increase in frequency and intensity. And that is what has been happening.

Take earthquakes, for example. In the decade of the 1980s, there were a total of 1,085 earthquakes worldwide that measured 6.0 or greater in magnitude. In the 1990s, there were 1,492. In the first ten years of this century, the number jumped to 1,591. On top of that, monster quakes of 8.0 or greater have increased in frequency over each of the past several decades.

Instead of looking at natural disasters in isolated categories, it is instructive to consider them all grouped together. When you do that, the statistics show that they are rapidly increasing, from an average of 300 per year in the 1980s, to 490 per year in the 1990s, to almost 900 per year in the 21st Century.

### THE MESSAGE

It seems rather obvious that God is shouting at us through increasing natural disasters that “Jesus is coming soon!” And yet, few seem to be getting the message—even those in the Christian community.

Sadly, the world seems determined to dismiss or misdiagnose the signs of nature. Many years ago the secular alarmists decried an impending ice age. Then it was global warming. With both of those warnings debunked, they’ve switched tactics to warn of catastrophic “climate change.”

I feel compelled to point out that the Bible does prophesy that a super-hot time is coming when God will envelop the earth in fire to burn away the pollution of Satan’s last revolt, which will occur at the end of Jesus’ millennial reign. Out of that fiery inferno will come the New Earth, which will serve as the foundation for the New Jerusalem where the Redeemed will reside forever.

### CONCLUSION

So, true global warming is on its way!

But, more importantly, the Signs of the Times are screaming that we are on the threshold of the Tribulation. And that means, in turn, that Jesus is at the very gate of Heaven, ready to step out on a cloud and come for His Church.

Meanwhile, the Church needs to wake up to the Signs of Nature and all the other signs that are converging for the first time ever. But for that to happen, our nation’s pastors need to get serious about the fact that we are living in the season of the Lord’s return, and they need to start proclaiming that fact from their pulpits.

The Church needs to stop yawning and start yearning for the return of Jesus. Maranatha! ♦



### EDITOR'S COMMENTS:

*Dr. David Reagan is the Founder of Lamb & Lion Ministries. Since his retirement in 2020, he stays busy writing articles and books on Bible prophecy. Dave also occasionally makes an appearance on Christ in Prophecy, the Ministry's TV program.*

How then are they to call on Him in whom they have not believed? How are they to believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher?

Romans 10:14



# FOR THE SAKE OF THE CALL

TIM MOORE

From time to time, we will attempt to offer insight on what is happening with our sister ministries around the world. Through our own internet outreach and a network of ministry partners, Lamb & Lion is sharing the message that Jesus is coming soon on every continent.

This month, we will highlight Countdown to Christ (CTC) Ministries in Cape Town, South Africa. Headed by Marko Kiroglu with support from his wife Elzeth and another assistant, this dynamic ministry reaches throughout Africa and the Muslim

world—primarily because Marko is a former secular Muslim from Turkey. He reflects the beauty of 1 Corinthians 6:11. “Washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God,” Marko is an eager proclaimer of the Gospel and the soon return of our Lord.

Fluent in English and Afrikaans, Marko’s is the only ministry in South Africa that preaches and teaches about the Pre-Tribulation Rapture through weekly radio and television programming, and the internet. Countdown to Christ Ministries’ message is far-reaching, including Africa, Europe, and Israel. Overcoming the challenges of operating amidst chronic poverty, corruption, crime, and frequent black-outs, CTC has even launched a church (Die Kruis Huis – “The Cross House”) to shine as a beacon of hope in a dark place.

Marko Kiroglu is a living example of his favorite Bible passage: Saved by the grace of God and then called into accomplishing the good works God has prepared for him to do (Ephesians 2:8-10). Because we know how impactful CTC is, Lamb & Lion Ministries has provided additional resources from our budget to enable Marko to expand his outreach.

If you would like to contribute to Countdown to Christ Ministries—or any of our other sister ministries—please know that your entire designated contribution will flow to them.

Lamb & Lion Ministries considers it a privilege to be a conduit of the Lord’s blessing as He leads so many of our supporters to offer encouragement to our sister ministries. To God be the glory! ♦



# Extreme Weather in Prophecy

NATHAN E. JONES

*We live in a world where nature has been thrown into a great upheaval.*

According to Genesis 1, everything that God made in the beginning was originally perfect. Man's sin corrupted everything, so God placed a curse upon the world (Genesis 3). When Christ returns, all will be restored, for then "the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21).

Christians have long been waiting for that glorious day when Jesus Christ restores nature to its perfect state. But in the meantime, we live in a world where nature has been thrown into a great upheaval. That chaos is demonstrated by extreme weather.



## GOD'S USES FOR EXTREME WEATHER

To get man's attention, God often uses signs in nature to underline major events. For example, when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, Mount Sinai was covered in "thunderings and lightnings and a thick cloud" (Exodus 19:16-18). When Christ was crucified, three hours of darkness blotted out the daylight, and Jerusalem experienced a great earthquake

(Matthew 27:45,51). God used and still uses extreme weather to point to significant events in history.

At other times, God uses the signs of nature, such as extreme weather, as remedial judgments to call wicked nations to repentance. For example, Moses warned the Israelites that if they became exceedingly wicked, God's weather-related curses would "pursue and overtake you until you are destroyed because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 28: 18-30,45-46). Sure enough, once the Israelites had become steeped in sin, God inflicted them with remedial judgments through extreme weather.

Likewise, when the prophet Elijah called King Ahab and Israel to repent, Ahab flat-out refused; so God sent a drought that withered the crops for three-plus long years (1 Kings 17-18).

Another time, when Israel had become lethargic in their relation-

ship with their Heavenly Father, God cursed the land with a great locust swarm that quickly consumed all of Israel's crops. As God had desired, the Israelites repented (Joel 1-3).

Later, when the Jews returned from captivity in Babylon in order to rebuild the Temple, they stopped working after laying the foundation. God waited patiently for 14 long years before He decimated their crops with root rot and mildew and sent furious hailstorms to cut the remaining plants down. Again, as God had desired, the people recognized His judgment, repented, and began working to finish rebuilding the Temple (Haggai 1-2).

How do we know the difference between a natural disaster caused by a fallen world as opposed to one sent by God as a remedial judgment? Three points:

1. The timing of the event as it relates to the sin of a people, location, or nation
2. The magnitude of the event, meaning its ability to capture people's attention and force them to consider an eternal perspective
3. In Scripture, a legitimate prophet declaring on behalf of God, "this will happen to get you to repent."

So, we can know the difference based on the timing, the magnitude, and a biblical declaration regarding natural disasters.

## Pointing to Christ's Return

Some may be thinking, "That's the Old Testament! Aren't we living in the Age of Grace? God doesn't use signs of nature anymore, right?" Well, not according to Jesus Christ.

In the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24, Luke 21, Mark 13), Jesus provided



ten signs that would point to His soon return. He added that the signs would increase in frequency and intensity – like the birth pangs of a woman in labor – the closer we get to His return (Matthew 24:8).

In addition to an outbreak of wars, Jesus said, "there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places" (Matthew 24:7). Other signs would involve "fearful sights and great signs from heaven" (Luke 21:11). Likewise, "there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations...for the powers of the heavens will be shaken" (Luke 21:25-26).

Eventually, these signs will become exceedingly violent and frequent, and "then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Offering us insight and hope, Jesus said, "when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near" (Luke 21:27-28).

The Apostle Paul confirmed that Christians are meant to be able to discern the signs that point to Jesus' soon return so as not to be taken unaware (1 Thessalonians 5:1-5).



## TODAY'S EXTREME WEATHER

What are we witnessing happening all around the world today? All sorts of weather calamities: out-of-control hurricanes, record numbers of tornadoes, increasing earthquakes, devastating floods, and destructive forest fires. These disasters are occurring more and more frequently and causing greater and greater damage with each passing year. Nature has clearly been getting out of hand, and it's getting worse.

The disasters are not limited to North America alone. For instance, in recent years Australia suffered severe drought, historic bushfires, successive years of record-breaking floods, and six mass coral bleaching events accompanying the ongoing collapse of the Great Barrier Reef.



In addition to increasingly destructive weather, earthquakes have also plagued the world over the past few years. The annual number of “great” earthquakes has nearly tripled over the last decade. Between 2004 and 2014, 18 earthquakes with a magnitude of 8.0 or more rattled subduction zones around the globe—an increase of 265 percent over the average rate of the previous century. Leading news agencies warn that America itself might be overdue for a “Big One.”

## The World Gets It Wrong

What’s interesting is how scientists are interpreting extreme natural weather phenomena. The consistent explanation for natural disasters is “man-made global warming” or, more recently, “climate change.” The key point is that regardless of the secular world’s interpretation, there is agreement that natural disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity. It all sounds rather biblical, doesn’t it?

So, the world recognizes that natural disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity, but faults mankind’s pollution problems. However, Christians know better. We know that God alone is in control of the weather and not mankind.

Remember that God doesn’t wish that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). Therefore, God always warns before He executes His wrath. And, for thousands of years, God has chosen climactic and catastrophic weather to get our attention. Why? Because God controls the weather!

The Bible contains at least 47 different verses that declare that God is in control of the weather. Here are some examples:

- ♦ “What kind of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey Him” (Matthew 8:26-27)
- ♦ “Fire and hail, snow and clouds, stormy wind, fulfilling His word” (Psalm 148:8)
- ♦ “He did not leave Himself without witness, that He did good and gave you rains from heaven, and fruitful seasons” (Acts 14:17)
- ♦ “I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or in any tree” (Revelation 7:1)

So, again and again and again, the Bible says that God is in control of the weather. God is sovereign, and nothing happens that He does not allow, either in His perfect will or His permissive will. That is the reason the Bible

*The world recognizes that natural disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity, but faults mankind’s pollution problems. However, Christians know better. We know that God alone is in control of the weather and not mankind.*

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attributes all natural disasters to God.

Mankind’s pollutive tendencies might contribute to calamities, but God controls the weather. The fact that natural disasters plague mankind at all is due to the curse on the world. But God still utilizes freak weather in order to wake people up to their sins and need for a Savior.

## TRIBULATION JUDGMENTS

The ultimate climax to all of these weather signs occurs during the Tribulation. The signs of nature we are witnessing today—along with social, political, technological, economic, and other end times signs—will all increase in frequency and intensity leading up to the Rapture of the Church. Then God will unleash His wrath during a seven-year period of judgment called the Tribulation.

As bad as the weather has gotten today, nothing compares to the disasters foretold in the book of Revelation. In reading Revelation, one will marvel at how God’s weather-related judgments will devastate the world, for God will be pouring out His wrath on its corrupt people during the most horrific era the world will have ever endured (Matthew 24:21).

Our God is so merciful. He is pa-

tiently sending us one natural disaster wake-up call after another because He never pours out His wrath without warning.

## THE RESPONSE GOD WANTS

God's Word makes it crystal clear that when He sends discipline, the primary purpose is never to punish. Instead, the primary purpose is to call wayward mankind to repentance so that we might be saved. Here's how the prophet Isaiah expressed it, "For when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isaiah 26:9b).

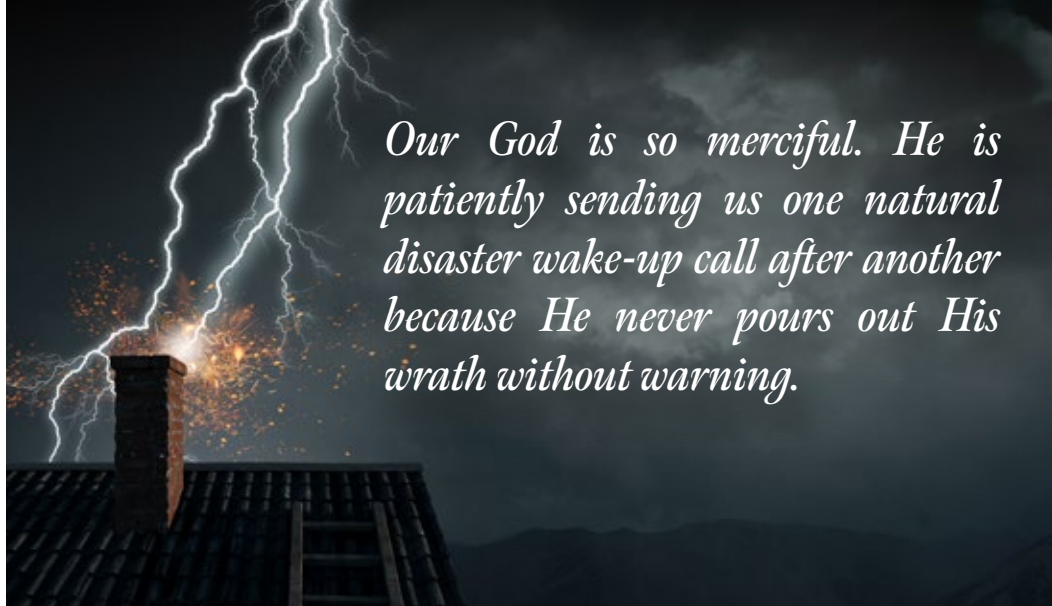
How does God want us to respond to these end times signs, particularly the sign of nature as it relates to extreme weather?

First, we each need to repent individually for our own rebellion and selfishness. God is calling each person to repent. So, respond in faith and repentance by surrendering to the Lord. Read the Bible so that we can be discerning.

**Four marks of true repentance are: acknowledgement of wrong, willingness to confess it, willingness to abandon it, and willingness to make restitution.**

CORRIE TEN BOOM

Second, we need to repent as a nation for removing God from our society, for idolatrous self-worship, for our 63 million murders in the womb, for our obsession with sexual promiscu-



*Our God is so merciful. He is patiently sending us one natural disaster wake-up call after another because He never pours out His wrath without warning.*

ity, for our fascination with the occult, and for our lack of support for Israel's right to exist, among a plethora of other sins. Every nation needs to live out the claim of "in God we trust," for that is the only way to receive God's mercy.

Once King Jesus finally returns, the curse on this earth will be lifted and

these natural disasters will cease to persist. Until that glorious day, we can live by this hope: "The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light" (Romans 13:12-14). ♦

## CONGRATULATIONS, DR. NATHAN JONES!



Lamb & Lion Ministries is pleased to congratulate our own Nathan Jones, who was recently awarded a Doctorate degree from Trinity Theological Seminary. Nathan's degree is in religious studies, with a specific focus on apologetics. His dissertation on Christ's Millennial Reign was so convincing that his advisor was moved to adopt his position on the Millennium. Great work, Dr. Jones! To God be the glory!!





# Why a Star?

Brock & Bodie Thoene

*O star of wonder, star of light,  
Star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding,  
Guide us to thy perfect Light.*

*“We Three Kings of Orient Are”  
John Henry Hopkins, Jr., 1857*

**N**ext to the Babe in the manger, the Star of Bethlehem is the most evocative symbol of the Christ Child’s birth. The Star is additional confirmation that the baby we celebrate at Christmas was no ordinary child. Apart from being acknowledged by angels and wondered at by shepherds, He was worshipped—that’s the word used in Scripture—by enigmatic men who traveled a great distance to reach Him.

Shepherds spent a lot of time “watching over their flocks by night,” and three thousand years ago the boy-and-future king, David, was no exception. No wonder he could ponder the majesty of God. If the universe is so vast and glorious, how much bigger and more powerful and more wondrous must the Creator of the Universe be? No wonder David could write, “The heavens declare the glory of God” (Psalm 19:1).

When I (Bodie) was a child looking up at the sky with my mother, the thought of the bigness of our heavenly Father and my own smallness sent a chill of awe through me. “Wow,” I exclaimed. “Yes, Wow,” she replied. “‘Wow God!’ is another way to say ‘Hallowed be Thy Name.’”

What’s so important about having a light in the sky as an announcement of Jesus’ birth? Let’s investigate the meaning of the word *star*.

## *A Glimpse of Wonder*

In Hebrew, the word for star is *kowkab*, spelled Kaf-Vav-Kaf-Bet. According to Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, *kowkab* is derived either from a word that means “rolling” (like rolling hills,

in reference to the way the stars seem to roll across the sky) or a word that means “burning or blisteringly hot.”

What do those definitions have to do with the Star of Bethlehem? And the birth of Jesus? Neither definition seems to have any spiritual significance. But when you break the word for star into two parts: Kaf-Vav and Kaf-Bet, then wonders come to light!

Kaf-Vav means “piercing, like a window pierces a wall, like an opening into a chamber by which what is outside the chamber may be seen.” The second half of the word, Kaf-Bet, appears related to a high, rounded or arched shape.

Now that makes better sense. *Kowkab* comes from two words that combine to mean “openings” in a high arch. Of course! A star represents a window into the arch of the sky. It’s an opening from our side of creation through which a glimpse of heaven may be gained.

And there’s much more...

**The heavens declare the  
glory of God;**

**The skies proclaim the  
work of His hands.**

**Day after day they pour  
forth speech;**

**Night after night they  
reveal knowledge.**

**There is no speech, they  
use no words;**

**No sound is heard from  
them.**

**Yet their voice goes out  
into all the earth,**

**Their words to the ends of  
the world.**

**Psalm 19:1-4 (NIV)**

From the time Adam and Eve went their own way, setting their wills in place of God's, humankind waited for a Redeemer who could repair the broken relationship. Abraham caught a glimpse of that future Deliverer when he was rewarded by God for his faithful obedience. Abraham was told, "I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky...and through your offspring all the nations on the earth will be blessed" (Genesis 22:17-18, NIV).

Later, the pagan prophet Balaam rightfully prophesied, "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a *star* shall come out of Jacob; and a scepter shall rise out of Israel" (Numbers 24:17, NIV).

So it's clear that a miraculous Star would relate to the coming of the Messiah of Israel.

## A HEAVENLY BEACON

Was the Star a completely miraculous occurrence? Some people believe so. To them, the Star is a never-to-be explained supernatural light that appeared only as a guide to the Magi.

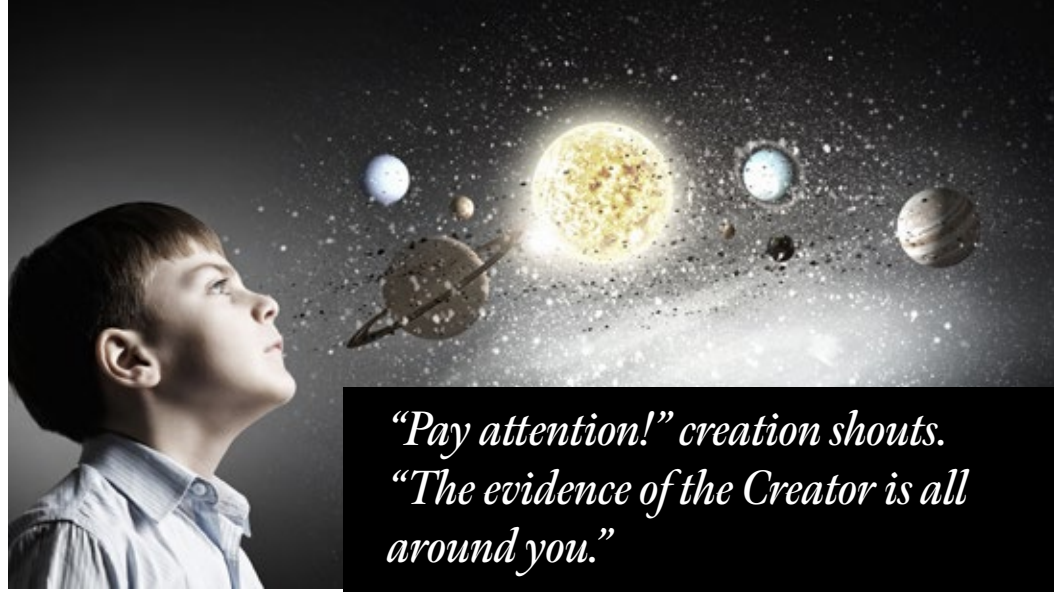
They may be right.

But it is also possible that the Star of Bethlehem had both a natural existence and a supernatural significance. Is it possible other observers saw the Star but did not recognize its meaning?

Does God always work through the supernatural? Or does He sometimes use nature to accomplish His divine purposes? The answer is an absolute Yes!

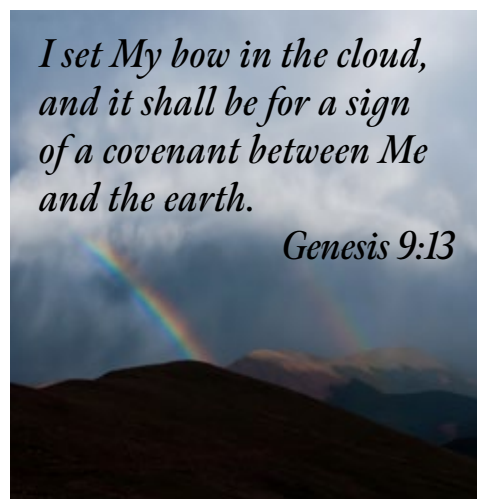
In the book of Genesis God promised Noah, a godly man, that He would never again destroy the world by a flood. What was the symbol of God's promise? The rainbow!

A rainbow can be explained as the refraction of light by raindrops. But



*"Pay attention!" creation shouts.  
"The evidence of the Creator is all around you."*

does that understanding detract from the eternal meaning to which God connected it? Not at all!



*I set My bow in the cloud,  
and it shall be for a sign  
of a covenant between Me  
and the earth.*

*Genesis 9:13*

## FOR SIGNS AND SEASONS

**Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens...And let them be for signs and for seasons..."**

**Genesis 1:14 (NASB)**

The word *signs* in Genesis 1:14 seems to speak for itself. "Pay attention!" creation shouts. "The evidence of the Creator is all around you."

But the Hebrew word for season, *mowed*, implies much more than the sequence Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter. *Mowed* is derived from a word that

means "meet, appoint, summon." *Mowed* suggests a divine appointment...a festival...an assembly convened for a specific purpose...and a signal.

In other words, after we get beyond thinking that *season* refers only to a time of year, we see how God's revelation regarding His creation includes the word *signs*. Everything means something!

There's a definite progression in the heavenly display. Down through the centuries, pagan religions have claimed the signs and garbled the message. But those who look with an expectation of seeing God's purposes outlined in all of creation are not disappointed.

Consider that among the figures displayed in the sky is a Virgin. Called *Virgo* among the constellations, she is



the celestial embodiment of the prophecy in Isaiah 7:14: “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: (There’s that word again!) The Virgin will be with child and will give birth to a Son, and will call Him Immanuel” (NIV).

In fact, all of the Gospel is recounted in the progression of figures in the heavens. The image we see as the scorpion was rendered as a serpent in some cultures in the past. Above him in the sky is the figure of Ophiucus, the Snake-Handler. Ophiucus as depicted is about to be stung on the heel by the snake/scorpion. But at the same moment he is in the act of crushing his enemy’s head. What a perfect reflection of Genesis 3:15, where the Lord curses Satan, the Deceiver.

## WATCHING AND WAITING

**Nations will come to Your light, and kings to the brightness of Your rising.**  
**Isaiah 60:3 (NIV)**

Matthew records that Magi embarked on a Star-guided quest for the newborn King of the Jews. The word Magi is neither Greek nor Hebrew in origin, but rather Persian, Medean, Babylonian, or Chaldean. In different translations it appears as magician, astrologer, sorcerer, seer, and, most commonly, as Wise Men.

Magi isn’t the same word commonly translated magician in Scripture, as when Moses had his encounter with the magicians at Pharaoh’s court in Egypt. In Jeremiah 39, the Babylonian title *Rab Mag* is rendered as high official or Chief Magician. That reference seems to indicate a highly placed royal counselor—hence, a “Wise Man.”

We know that the Wise Men came

from the East. Remarkably, Ezra 6:2 mentions the Medean city of Ecbatana as the place where the archives of Persian King Cyrus were located—including his order authorizing the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. That is the same city where the biblical Queen Esther—who was married to the Persian King Xerxes—is said to be buried. Interestingly, her name means “star!”

So then, the Magi were men wise enough to be court counselors to the Persian/Parthian royalty. They may have been familiar with the writings of the Jewish prophet Daniel (who was a respected counselor in Babylon himself). If the Magi living at the time of Jesus’ birth knew Daniel’s work, they undoubtedly also knew the time of prophetic fulfillment was drawing near.

If the Wise Men calculated from Daniel’s writings (9:25-26) that the time of the Anointed One’s death was less than forty years away, then they knew His birth must be imminent! So when the heavens announced the birth of a new King of the Jews, the Magi were already expecting such a sign and were eager to go seek Him.

So, journey they did! They were led to Bethlehem where they encountered the new, heaven-announced King—one not only to be respected or admired or even obeyed, but One worthy to be worshipped!

## Have You Seen His Light?

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined. – Isaiah 9:2

So, the appearance of a miraculous

vision in the sky led those watching for it to journey to the side of a Baby whom they believed was a newborn King. Even granting all that to be true, what does it have to do with you, living two thousand years later? And why is learning about the Star so important to you today?

Here’s why: because that Child—heralded by angels, sought by shepherds, and worshiped by Wise Men—was God incarnate, Jesus Christ.

The Son of God. The One Who said, “I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life,” and “No one comes to the Father except by Me.”

Follow the Star of Bethlehem! Not just to the top of a Christmas tree but to the Manger...to the Cross...to the Empty Tomb!

Join the ranks of the Wise Men and Women by bringing Him the most precious of gifts—your life, your trust, your hope.

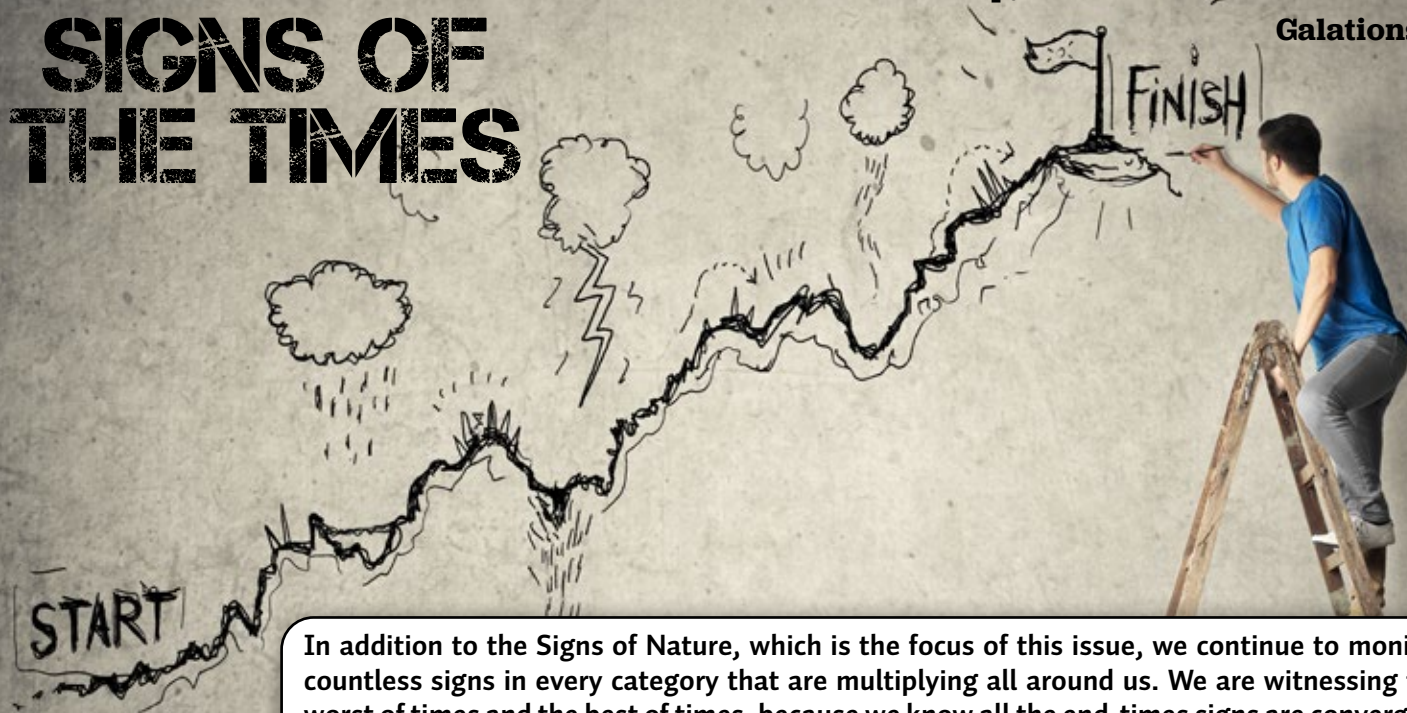
You have nothing to lose, and everything to gain...for all Eternity. ♦



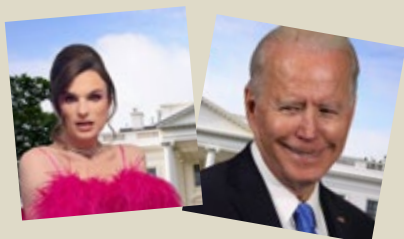
### EDITOR’S COMMENTS:

*This article was taken from Brock and Bodie Thoenes’s book “Why a Star” (available at Amazon). A gifted husband-and-wife writing team, the Thoenes are widely respected for their insightful and biblically accurate historical fiction. They are also avid students of astronomy, as this book demonstrates to the glory of God.*

# SIGNS OF THE TIMES



In addition to the Signs of Nature, which is the focus of this issue, we continue to monitor countless signs in every category that are multiplying all around us. We are witnessing the worst of times and the best of times, because we know all the end-times signs are converging and pointing to the soon return of our Lord. Are you ready? If you have not received Jesus as your Savior, do not delay! We would be glad to pray with you; call (972) 736-3567.



## SOCIETY

President Joe Biden sat down with a transgender activist who refers to himself as a “glittery girl.” Celebrating that shocking assertion, Biden gushed, “God love you.”



## SPIRITUAL

A sermon delivered at Trinity College chapel in England—and later affirmed by the college dean—recently asserted that Jesus was actually transgender.



## WORLD POLITICS

While Iran boasts of accelerating its nuclear research and purification, President Biden is still pushing for a nuclear deal—relying on Russia as the intermediary—even as he refuses to support Iranian protesters clamoring for freedom.

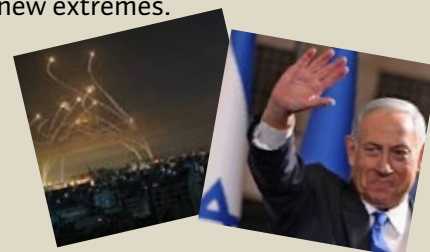


In a sadly-ironic twist, a Trump 2024 “I’ll be back” sign was posted on a church in Pennsylvania and spotted by our evangelists while traveling for our regional conference. Are we looking for the return of a political “savior” or the Savior of the World, Jesus Christ? Wake up, Church!



## TECHNOLOGY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) research is on the verge of emulating human communication, expression, and even emotion—taking Siri and Alexa to new extremes.



## ISRAEL

Frustrated with continuing political turmoil and rising threats close to home (from the Palestinians) and abroad (primarily from Iran and Syria), Israelis overwhelmingly supported re-elevating Benjamin Netanyahu back into office as Prime Minister.

# Creation Flood Coming

KEN HAM

Answers in Genesis ministry does not take a particular view of eschatology. We do believe and preach that Christ will be returning and there will be a time of judgment. We note that some prophetic passages relate to the Book of Genesis. For example, in 2 Peter 3, we read of a fascinating prophecy concerning the last days of this earth's history and its connection to Genesis. This teaching is presented in our Noah's Ark attraction, "The Ark Encounter," south of Cincinnati.



## Where is the promise of His coming?

2 Peter 3:3-7 states: *Knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they*

*were from the beginning of creation." For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the Word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same Word, the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.* (ESV)

The Scriptures warn us that in the last days, people are going to say that "all things are continuing as they were from the beginning." Evolutionists tell us that the earth has been in existence for billions of years, and that life started evolving on this earth millions of years ago. Unfortunately, many Christians also hold this same belief. The technical word used in geology for this view is "uniformitarianism." Most geologists have the idea that the processes we see operating in the present world have been going on for millions of years at essentially the same rate—and will probably go on for millions of years into the future.

The evolutionists and the theistic evolutionists (those who believe in evolution but add God to the idea) use the phrase "the present is the key to the past." In other words, the way to understand the past is based on what is observed in the present. For instance, they say that fossils rare-

ly form in today's world. Therefore, it must have taken millions of years to form vast layers of rock containing billions of fossils over most of the earth's surface, including at the Grand Canyon.

Evolutionists also tell us that as we observe mutations (that is, accidental changes in our genes), then these must have occurred since the dawn of time. Thus, mutations must be one of the mechanisms involved in the postulated evolutionary progression. These mutations are mistakes that occur in our genes, and they commonly cause disease. The Bible, however, tells us that there was a time when there was no sin, and thus there was neither animal nor human death, disease, or mistakes.

Those who believe in evolution must assume that natural processes we see today are the same processes that have gone on for millions of years. The only way we could ever know for sure exactly what happened in the geological past would be the eyewitness testimony of someone who could tell us whether geological processes have always been the same, or whether sometimes geological processes have sometimes been different and/or faster?

The Bible claims to be the record of One (God) Who knows everything and has always existed, for He is out-



side of time. In fact, He created time. The Bible claims that God moved men through His Spirit to write down His revelation, so that the Bible is not just the words of men but the Word of God (2 Peter 1:20-21).

The book of Genesis, God's very first testimonial to us, claims to be a record from God that tells us of the events of Creation and the world's early history. They have great bearing upon our present circumstances. In other words, the Biblical record claims to be from a Witness Who was there, Who knows everything, and Who wrote down exactly what happened for us. Thus, the present is not the key to the past. Rather, revelation is the key to the past from Someone who was there.

With this revelation in Genesis, we read about such events as Creation and Noah's flood. These are events which have made the natural world we see (the earth's geology, geography, biology, etc.) what they are today. We must therefore also realize that what happened in the past is the key to what we see in the present. In other words, the entrance of sin into the world explains why we have death and mistakes occurring in our genes. In addition, any explanation of the fossil record, and the death it records, must involve the global devastation caused by Noah's Flood.

Bible-denying evolutionists misread the signs of nature and put their faith in their belief that "all things continue as they have done from the beginning." The prophecy in 2 Peter 3 is being fulfilled before our very eyes.

## WILLINGLY IGNORANT

In the next section of this prophecy, we are told that men will deliberately reject three things. Notice that the emphasis here is on a deliberate rejection,

or as some translations put it, a "willing ignorance." Thus, it is a deliberate action on a person's part not to believe:

1. God created the world, which at first was covered with water (that is, it was cool)
2. God once judged this world with a global cataclysmic flood called Noah's Flood
3. God is coming back to judge this world again, but next time it will be by fire

Today, people everywhere are in rebellion against God, so to admit that the Bible is true in 2 Peter 3 would be an admission of their own sinful and rebellious nature, and of their need to be born again by cleansing through the blood of Christ.

It is easy to see this "willing ignorance" in action when watching past debates over the creation/evolution issue. In most instances, evolutionists, like Bill Nye, "The Science Guy," who I debated in 2014, are not interested in the objective interpretation of the natural evidence creationists put forward. Instead, evolutionists just try to attack creationists by attempting to destroy their credibility. They are not interested in true debate because they are totally committed to their 'religious faith' called evolution.



*Bill Nye, "The Science Guy" and Ken Ham Creation/Evolution debate*

The majority of scientists today believe the earth itself evolved and was not created. They also believe that when the earth came into being, it was first a hot molten blob and was not covered with water. In Genesis 1 we read the testimony of the Witness Who was there (God), Who says that when He made the earth, it was first covered with water. Thus the evolutionist, who was not there (although he talks as if he was) and does not know for sure what the early earth was like holds a faith position. Their assertion that the earth was a hot molten blob is really just blind faith. The Christian, however, does have a Witness who was there, Who can be trusted and Who has recorded for us exactly what happened.

*Today, people everywhere are in rebellion against God.*

We have another fulfillment of the prophecy in 2 Peter 3: people who deny that the earth was created originally covered with water.

Most geologists today also tell us that there never was a global flood as taught in the Bible. We are told that millions of years of geological processes explain the enormous fossil record in the sedimentary rock layers on the earth's surface. However, creationists have shown over and over again that the fossil-bearing rock layers were obviously produced by enormous catastrophic processes consistent with an event, such as Noah's Flood. But evolutionists refuse to accept this view, for to do so would mean that the Bible is right and thus the whole of their evolutionary philosophy would have to be rejected. These people are "willingly ignorant" that the proper interpretation of scientific evidence does not support their evolutionary ideas, but it does confirm a model of geology based

upon what the Bible says concerning Noah's Flood. This is yet another fulfillment of prophecy before our very eyes.

Scientific literature proves that secular scientists expect this world to go on and on for millions of years. You might ask: "How can they know what is going to happen millions of years into the future?" Their answer is: "In exactly the same way we understand what happened millions of years in the past!"

Of course, they don't really know; it is their guess. If secularists believed that God had created, that Noah's Flood was a real event, and that the Bible is true, they would embrace the Biblical account. In Matthew 24:37-39, Jesus Christ uses the event of Noah's Flood as a warning that God has judged and therefore will judge again. Scripture tells us that God is going to come back as judge, but next time He will use fire. Sinful man in rebellion

against God does not want to admit that he must stand before the God of Creation one day and account for his life.

By rejecting Creation and Noah's Flood and claiming that "scientific" evidence supports their own belief, evolutionists become comfortable in not thinking about coming judgment. But, just as God created the world by His Word and sent the Flood through His Word, so God will judge this world by fire.

## CONCLUSION

The fossil record stands as an immense "sign of nature" to the fact that God has judged by water. This should warn each man, woman, and child that just as God has kept His Word in the past concerning judgment, so He will keep His Word in the future concerning judgment.

Second Peter 3 is a prophecy of the last days and we are seeing it fulfilled

before our very eyes. Let us therefore become more vigorous and bolder in witnessing for our God, the God of Creation.

**Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God...**

**2 Peter 3:11-12**



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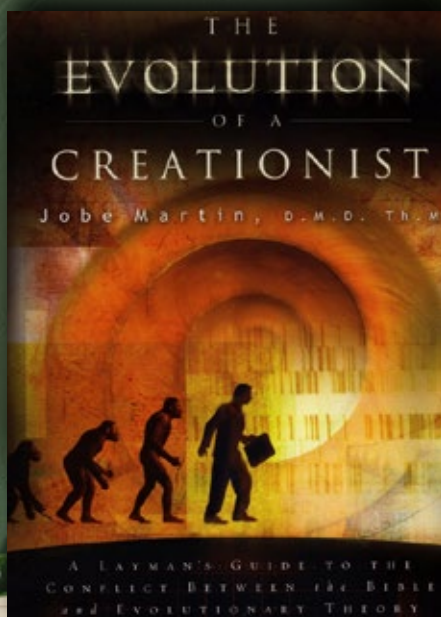
## EDITOR'S COMMENTS:



*Ken Ham is the founder and CEO of Answers in Genesis. Originally from Australia, he now lives in northern Kentucky, where the Cre-*

*ation Museum and Ark Encounter (a full-sized replica of Noah's Ark) are featured attractions. **More information can be found at:***

***answersingenesis.org***



# The Evolution

**DR. JOBE MARTIN'S** personal journey from an evolution-trained scientist to a Bible-believing creationist. Dr. Martin examines many of the claims and theories of prominent evolutionists, comparing their often incredible, inconsistent, pseudo-scientific explanations of origins to the clear and simple description of the Creation as depicted in the Bible.

An additional treat in this book is a series of Marvels of God's Creation, animals whose incredibly complex design completely defies the ability of evolutionists to come up with any explanation for how the creature could have evolved to its present state.

# DIGGING DEEPER

*It's been a few months since we offered a "Digging Deeper" section in the Lamplighter. Given that we have just finished our 44-episode series on "Jesus in the Old Testament" on our Christ in Prophecy television program, it seems fitting to revisit this feature. The following questions focus on the latter portion of the Old Testament.*



## of a Creationist

This book is extensively footnoted and is suitable for a textbook in creation science. It gives all the glory to God for His magnificent creation and provides excellent topics for discussion and engagement of non-believers in debate on the world's origin, which can be used by the Holy Spirit to bring an evolutionist to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

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TIM MOORE

**1. True or False?** The Bible affirms that the Signs of Nature are difficult to observe.

**2.** What is a metanarrative and why is that word important to understanding the Old Testament?

**3.** Why are some prophetic books in the Old Testament referred to as "Minor Prophets"?

**4.** What direction did Jonah go when he was running from God's calling? Where did he go when he finally submitted and obeyed?

**\*Bonus Challenge:** What is the "Sign of Jonah"?

**5.** Nahum says that God is both jealous, avenging, and wrathful, but also slow to anger and a stronghold for those seeking refuge. Are those descriptions contradictory?

**6.** What did the LORD tell Amos would cause people to stagger from sea to sea and from north to the east?

**7. True or False?** Ezekiel foretold that God would regather the Jewish people into their own land following their repentance and based on their merit.

**8.** Which nations of the earth will the Lord bring to the valley of Jehoshaphat in order to judge them?

**9.** Where does Zechariah say the LORD will dwell, and what will that place be called?

**10.** What did Daniel do when he discerned that the time prophesied for the exile to be over was drawing near?

Lamb & Lion's responses to these questions may be found at [ChristinProphecy.org](http://ChristinProphecy.org).

# The Nature of Things

TOMMY NELSON

***“In Him we live and move and have our being”***

**Acts 17: 28**

***“Since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, eternal power, and divine nature have been clearly seen.”***

**Romans 1: 20**

**O**ur country seems to be adrift, to have lost its way. What is the way? What is the truth? What is life?

The ground of all being is found in the true and Triune God, whose nature determines the reality of all things. Everything that exists, both the visible and invisible find their answer for existence in God. I once heard Francis Schaeffer say, “If the Bible did not teach the Trinity, I would still be an agnostic.” The Trinity grants the essential answers to all of life. The Bible is not true because it works; It works because it is true. It directs one into the truth, the reality of how things really are.

First, God exists. Matter is not eternal. All things find their existence in God.

***“All things came into being through Him and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.” (John 1: 3)***



***“From Him through Him and to Him are all things.”***  
**(Romans 11: 36)**

God is the source, the means, and the purpose of every atom in the universe. God has condescended to co-exist with His creation. He formed matter, stretched out space, and established time. Philosophers have called Him the “First Cause”, the “Prime Mover”, and the “Unmoved Mover.” The Bible calls Him “YHWH,” the eternal self-existent One. Man not only bears His image, “In Him we have our being.”

David wrote in Psalm 100. “It is He who made us and not we ourselves.” All exists because of God’s self-existence and without God, there would be nothing. Rightly does all creation proclaim the glory of God. (Psalm 19: 1). One philosopher has said that the primary observation is that something is there as opposed to nothing. That something is from God “who calls into being that which does not exist” (Romans 4: 17).

Secondly, all exists with order, unity, and diversity. Nothing in this world exists solitarily. All things are part of a greater unity. All unities are comprised of diversities. Everything is part of an

“order” or, as in the Greek, a “cosmos.” And again, this reflects God’s own nature. God is One...but His singular being comprises that of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Tri-unity. Unity and diversity. He has not only shared existence with the creation, but the very majestic and mysterious nature of that existence—that of Intelligent Design.

Which of us has never looked upon a hummingbird, or the Milky Way, or the human body, or a home, or a team, or a mechanical anything, or a molecule, or a quark, and not marveled at unity amidst diversity? As with all things of nature, this is not something observed, thought through, or figured out. Its perception is immediate without thinking through. The conclusions are “understood through what has been made so they are without excuse” (Romans 1:20).

## **GOD’S INVISIBLE BUT OBVIOUS ATTRIBUTES**

Men are not without knowledge, nor do they have to be brilliant to understand. It’s why “The fool hath said in his heart, ‘there is no God’ ” (Psalm 14: 1), “That which is known about God is evident within them” (Romans 1: 19). The glory of our universe and all its full-

ness is the result of which the Trinity is the efficient cause. I remember even as a non-Christian, studying a cadaver in an anatomy class and standing in awe at the ordered arrangement of the placement of organs in the human torso. Every torso perfectly arranged, no matter where the person was from or when he lived.

The Trinity also grants that all human relationships exist with authority and submission. There is what is called “the doctrine of procession” within the Trinity, where the Father sends the Son, and the Father and Son send the Spirit, and the Son and the Spirit are both subordinate to the Father’s authority. Responsible authority in loving submission marks the relationships within the Trinity, and this is reflected in the institutions of man. The home, the school, marriage, children and parents, the workplace, the church and government. All involve authority and subordination to work as they ought. When leadership is not responsible and loving and subordinates are not obedient and respectful, everything that we perceive as civilization is gone. This “oughtness” in human order finds its origin in the Trinity. Thus, where the knowledge of God is absent, the institutions of society erode, then collapse in rebellion and cruelty—as we

are seeing today.

Additionally, human dignity and personhood both result from the Trinity. The members of the Trinity are Persons, all with mind, will, and emotion. And in these we have a standard for the nature of man in the image of God. Man is the image bearer of God and therefore meant to be treated with justice and honor. In the Trinity, the divine nature of society is revealed and the laws concerning the dignity of our fellow man. The basis of human government is the image of God in man (Genesis 9:6). The spirit of all divine law is to “love one another” (Romans 13: 9). As Paul said to the Athenians, “‘We are all his offspring.’ Being, then the children of God, we ought not to think that the divine nature is like gold or silver or stone, and image formed by the art and thought of man” (Acts 17: 29). In the Trinity, there is indeed the pleasant notion of “The brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God.” Apart from the image of God, we walk in the jungle.

Finally, Love. The gods of the pagan were continually at odds with each other as well as with man. (Poor Prometheus!) But within the Godhead we have personhood, order, morality, and love. The Father loves the Son who loves the Father, and the Spirit


loves and delights to reveal and glorify Them as the Spirit of truth. Theologians call it perichoresis (from the Greek peri, “around” and chōreō, “to go, or come.” Think of Fred and Ginger dancing together in perfect harmony – two people, one unit). Thus, in the very nature of God, we have the eternal standards from whence all of life flows forth. Without this eternal foundation life as we know it literally “dis-integrates.” Without existence, order, respect, dignity, morality and love, man becomes selfish, unkind, prideful, immoral, violent, and finally insane. Without the Trinity, there can be no life as we know it.

When Paul reasoned to the Greeks about the evidence for God, he used just these arguments:

- The *Cosmological* argument of the existence of the universe (Romans 1:1-20)
- The *Teleological* argument of order (Acts 14: 15-17)
- The *Moral* argument of man’s instinctive sense of right and wrong (Romans 2:1-3)
- The *Anthropological* argument from the nature of man and his conferred, divine glory (Acts 17: 24-29)

And, “He is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17: 27). But although these instinctive observations are placed within us and before us, because of the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, man is darkened to God and thus darkened to nature, himself, and his fellow man. “Man is born for troubles as sparks fly upward” (Job 5:7). He’s a dead man walking.

Jesus Christ the Son became one of us at the will of the Father, and through the glorification of the Holy Spirit, man can now be reconciled back to God. Forgiven, justified, reborn, and illumined to the true knowledge



*Jesus Christ the Son  
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glorification of the  
Holy Spirit, man can  
now be reconciled back  
to God.*

of God in His Word and restored to the foundational truths that surround us. Truths that we long for, yet truths that we have lost. And not only do we rest easily upon this rock, but we obey Him and proclaim Him.

“All authority is given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you (to obey); and lo, I am with you to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20).

This age of the offer of and the work of God to restore man back to the perfect knowledge of the true God, the triune God of Israel, and the church – this offer is a limited offer.

This age is a limited age.

Is there a joy in being restored to truth?

Naturally! ♦



#### EDITOR'S COMMENTS:

*Tommy Nelson is the pastor of Denton Bible Church in Texas and an acclaimed writer and speaker. He is widely known for encouraging married couples through his teaching on the Song of Solomon, and will be a featured speaker at the 2023 Lamb & Lion Ministries Annual Bible Conference.*

# the miraculous nature of a baby's first breath

RANDY J. GULIUZZA

**W**e know that the Lord Jesus will reign throughout eternity and “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10, 11). Jesus will rule over “...a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away...” (Revelation 21:1). It is significant that the Lord Jesus is not ruling over a creation that has been patched up and restored to some prior condition, but over a new heaven and earth.

The Institute for Creation Research (ICR) spends a great deal of energy showing how science confirms the Genesis 1-11 account of the original creation and the worldwide flood. We convincingly show that these records are true history, and that material outside the Bible are not needed to interpret them correctly.

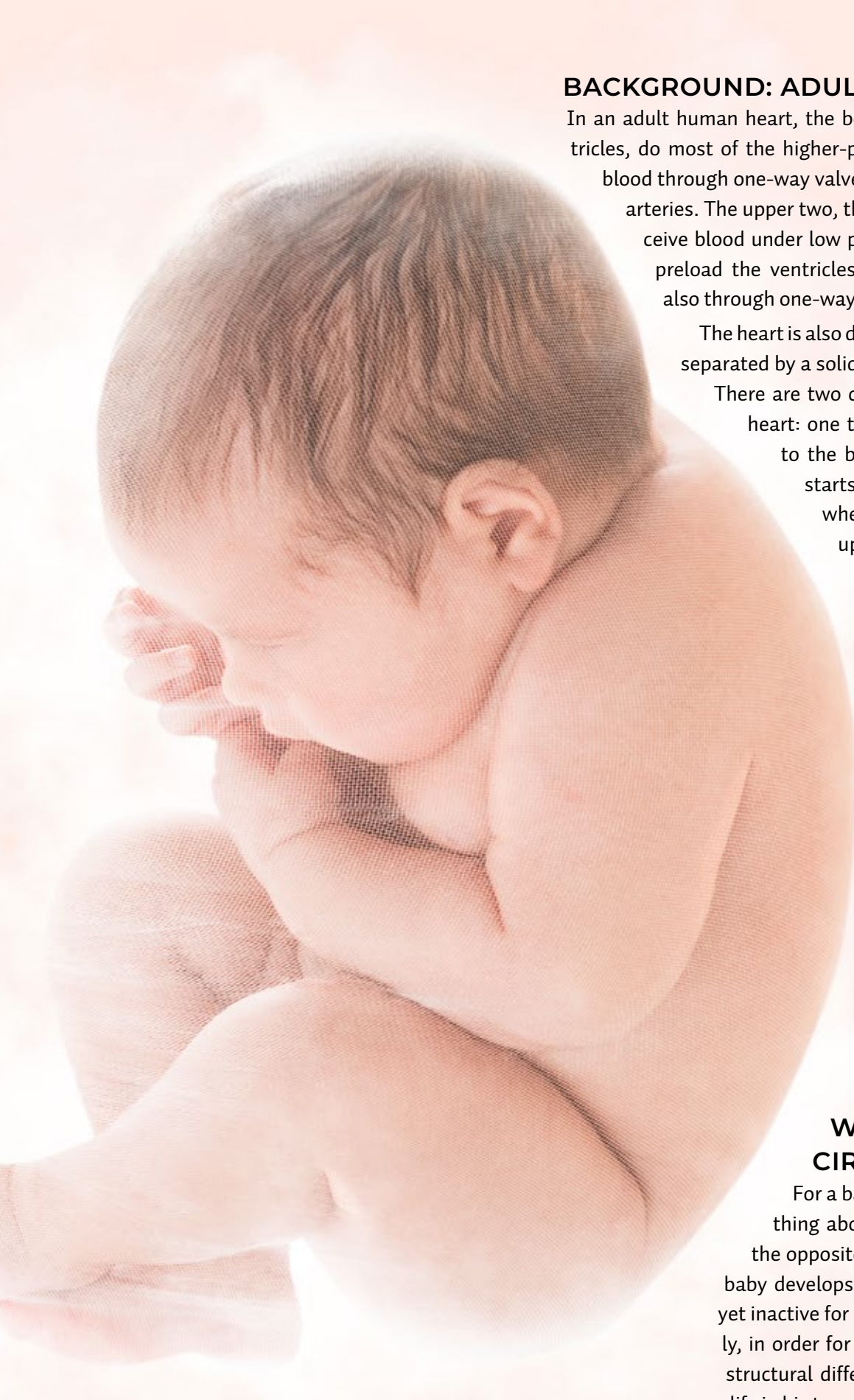
But our focus on the original creation does not mean that ICR isn't eagerly anticipating the Lord Jesus returning to reign over His new creation. In fact, what science has revealed about the birth of a human baby is a wonderful testimony of Christ's power, His constant providential care for us, and is a very insightful illustration of a new creation and a new birth. Let's take a look.

## BIOLOGICAL ENGINEERING AT ITS FINEST

Dr. Christiaan Barnard performed the first heart transplant in 1967. Until that time, if someone's heart was taken out, they died. Amazingly, not only was a man's heart removed, but a non-beating donor heart put in, restarted, and he lived. Years of design efforts and testing resulted in a sophisticated invention that circulated blood and functioned as patients' lungs to bring them oxygen—the all-important “heart-lung” machine.

No doubt in the same hospital in 1967 was a brand-new mother. Her baby had just made a similar transition of survival on an exceedingly better “lung machine,” but no reporters covered it. Although Dr. Barnard's heart-lung machine was a great feat of human engineering, the far-surpassing engineering connecting mother and baby has never been explained by natural processes.

Childbirth is so common it is easy to overlook the fact that a baby thrives in a total water world for nine months—a world that is utterly impossible for any person to live in immediately after their very first breath. This means that just like being born again spiritually, after any new birth, there is no going back (John 3:1-18). The unborn baby in the womb possesses blood vessels with a different arrangement and structure.



## BACKGROUND: ADULT CIRCULATION

In an adult human heart, the bottom two chambers, the ventricles, do most of the higher-pressure pumping, pushing the blood through one-way valves away from the heart through arteries. The upper two, the atria (plural of “atrium”), receive blood under low pressure from veins and rapidly preload the ventricles by pushing blood into them, also through one-way valves.

The heart is also divided into left and right halves, separated by a solid wall of tissue called a septum.

There are two circuits for blood flow from the heart: one to the lungs and back, and one to the body and back. The right heart starts blood on its circuit to the lungs, where less-oxygenated blood picks up a new load of oxygen. The left heart pumps freshly oxygenated blood at normal blood pressures (much higher than the right side) to the rest of the body.

In adults, oxygen-rich blood travels away from the heart through arteries under high pressure, and oxygen-poor blood flows toward the heart through veins under low pressure. Clearly, the heart and lungs are completely codependent in accomplishing the purpose of getting oxygen to all places in the body.

## WONDROUS FETAL CIRCULATION

For a baby in the womb, almost everything about those vital functions is just the opposite for one important reason: the baby develops fully functional lungs that are yet inactive for oxygen exchange. Consequently, in order for a baby to survive, three major structural differences must exist that enable life in his temporary home.

First, the baby must have a substitute lung—a pretty tall order for even brilliant



biomedical engineers. The placenta, a remarkable organ, has a brief existence but fulfills a myriad of vital functions—including serving as the fetal lung and kidney. Second, the circuit to the lungs must be bypassed, so vessels must change to allow this temporary detour.

Third, blood vessels connect the placenta to the baby, tapping into normal vessels that lead to and from the heart. The umbilical cord meets the need for a placental-fetal connection, with one large-diameter vein and two smaller arteries. Inside the baby, these continue as the umbilical vein and umbilical arteries.

The umbilical vein carries oxygen-rich blood toward the heart. At a spot next to the liver, it connects to a large vein carrying less-oxygenated blood back to the heart. Interestingly, the two combined streams of blood do not tend to mix. It just happens that

when they reach the right atrium, the more oxygenated blood stream is adjacent to a temporary opening in the septum, where it passes through to the left atrium because the blood pressure in the right side of baby's heart is higher than the left side—the opposite of the post-birth situation. The right heart still pumps blood to the lungs, but because the lungs have not yet expanded, the resistance to blood flow is very high and, therefore, the pressure is high. Some blood does make it to the right ventricle (about 10 percent) and flows through the lungs, which is the right amount to meet metabolic needs but not for oxygen-carrying purpose—which does not yet exist.

The temporary opening has a piece of septum tissue over it that is located in the left atrium. Thus, it acts like a “trap door” valve so that high pressure on the right side can push it open with each beat. In adults, it would make no sense for the artery carrying oxygen-poor blood to the lungs to connect by a big blood vessel to the artery carrying oxygen-rich blood (the aorta) to the body. But the baby does have this big connecting vessel in order to bypass the lungs and send oxygen-rich blood from the placenta to the body. Most of this blood travels to the part of the body with the highest oxygen demands—the growing brain.

So, baby is content in the womb with temporary umbilical arteries and vein, a temporary opening in the septum, the temporary pulmonary artery-aorta shunt vessel, high pressure in the lungs and right side of the heart, and low pressure on the left side. With the onset of labor, culminating in delivery, that world is set to radically change. However, crucial mechanisms are built into the temporary structures that enable a safe transition out of the womb.

I AM A  
LITTLE  
MIRACLE

## MIRACULOUS CHANGES AT BIRTH

The umbilical cord responds to changes that occur at birth based on: blood-oxygen levels, stretching, the presence of adrenaline, and trauma. Obviously, during delivery and the severing of the cord, all of these are present. When the cord is clamped after birth, the strong muscles surrounding the vessels react with a rapid and powerful constriction of the arteries and vein. This stops blood flow to and from the placenta, which has two effects. It greatly reduces the risk of either baby or mom losing a lot of blood and also causes an immediate drop in the amount of oxygen baby is getting.

Very sensitive sensors—inside certain blood vessels measuring carbon dioxide content, and also on the skin detecting temperature drops—stimulate the nervous system's breathing center. Under normal circumstances, increased carbon dioxide blood levels coupled with decreased body temperature after exiting the birth canal trigger an irresistible urge for baby to take a strong breath and inflate his lungs for the first time. The lungs have been prepared for this event by special cells producing a compound called surfactant. This substance makes it easy for non-inflated lung tissues to expand for the first time. Otherwise, forces required to open the lungs would be too high for almost all newborns to

accomplish. Once inflated, pressures necessary to pump blood through the lungs quickly drop 90 percent from their intra-womb high values.

Thus, pressure in the right side of the heart immediately drops well below the pressure in the left side. The “trap door” valve (actually two flaps of skin that neatly fold and interlock when pushed together) covering the septum’s temporary opening in the left atrium is pressed closed by the increased pressure on the left. Cells begin to grow over the edges of the valve, fusing it to the septum. Less than a minute after birth, signals from baby’s nervous system cause strong sphincter muscles to close off the umbilical vein where it attaches near the liver and also close off the temporary pulmonary artery-aorta shunt. That large vessel permanently closes over the next one to two days.

The baby’s body has started changes that will continue through adulthood. During the next year, those internal umbilical arteries and vein transform from blood vessels into stabilizing ligaments. So, in the one critical minute after delivery, the baby’s body has initiated actual structural changes enabling it to survive in its radically different environment with all temporary vessels, shunts, and openings functionally closed in the first 30 minutes.

## CLEARLY-SEEN CONCLUSIONS

The reality of fetal to newborn circulatory changes is this: structures indispensable for life in the womb are incompatible with life out of it, and at birth all structures are rapidly reversed, resulting in the opposite effect on survival. In either case, if the offspring dies, evolution ends. In On

the *Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin wrote, “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down.”

Consider the theory of Evolution broken...if not a catastrophic failure. Why? Given that a transplanted heart living inside someone is truly an incredible achievement—at what level of accomplishment is getting a

whole person to live inside another person? Absolutely incredible—which the Lord Jesus Christ is!

Unless a person is willfully blind to the natural signs all around us—including a baby’s first breath—“His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature” can be clearly seen (Romans 1:20). It is obvious that He creates, He directs, He provides, He cares. Indeed, everything He does is beautiful beyond description...and He’s coming again! ♦



### EDITOR’S COMMENTS:

*Dr. Guliuzza is the President of the Institute for Creation Research. He is a registered Professional Engineer and served in the Air Force as a Flight Surgeon and Chief of Aerospace Medicine. He has earned degrees from Moody Bible Institute, Harvard University, and the University of Minnesota. More information on the Institute for Creation Research can be found at [icr.org](http://icr.org).*



*Adorable cousins, Lazarus and Opal (Kentucky grandchildren of Mike and Cindy Vaughn and great-grandchildren of Ralph and Anice Leach), model our favorite metaphor for Jesus: the Lamb & Lion.*

# HOLY COW?!

TIM MOORE

**P**rophetic circles are abuzz about the significance of the red heifer mentioned in Numbers 19. The excitement centers on the fact that five solid red heifers were bred in America and flown to Israel in late 2022. They will be examined when they are two years and a day old. If one of them is found to be suitable, it would be sacrificed.

Rabbinical tradition (think Tevye from *Fiddler on the Roof*) holds that once a red heifer is killed and its ashes collected, the priesthood can be restored, and the third temple can be built. Since cows are very much a part of the created order, it is appropriate to consider this as a natural “sign.”

## A MOOOVING EXPERIENCE

Many Christians who have visited Israel know that the Temple Institute has been planning and preparing to rebuild the temple for some time. It already has various implements that will be used in a rebuilt temple. You can see the beautiful menorah crafted for that purpose in Quarter Square in the Old City of Jerusalem—funded by a Ukrainian Jew and estimated to be worth millions of dollars.

In Numbers 19, the Lord told Moses and Aaron to sacrifice an unblemished red heifer (a young female cow that has never been pregnant, yoked,

or milked) as an ordinance of purification.

Zealous Jews who long for the temple to be rebuilt want to fulfill the “lasting ordinance” of the red heifer in the Old Testament—which initially involves a humble cow. Some of them are motivated by sincere religious zeal, while others merely want to reclaim the location that is central to Jewish identity and national pride—much like the zealots of Jesus’ time.

The prophetic buzz focuses on the hope that these red heifers might be a sign that Israel is on the cusp of rebuilding its temple.

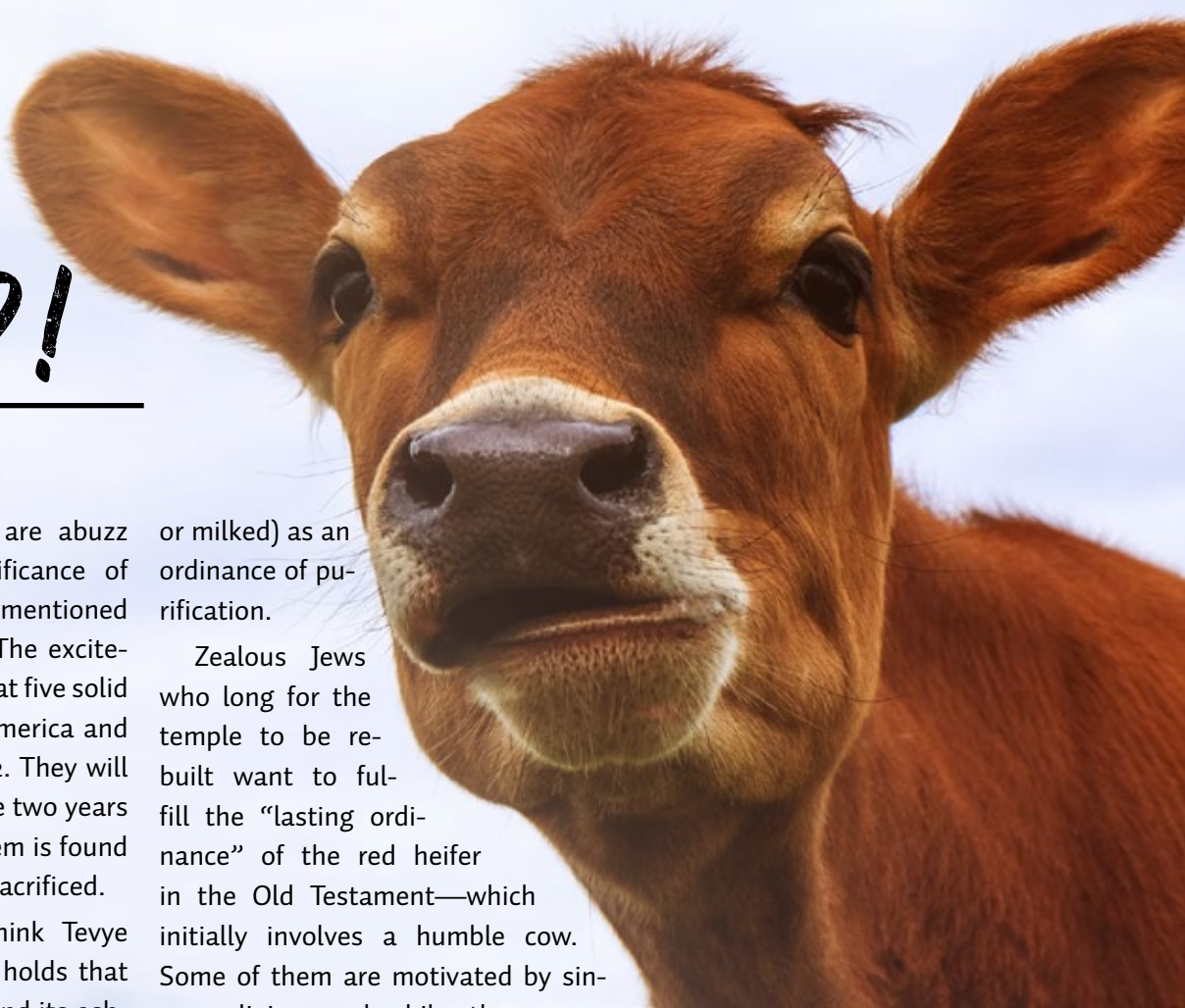
## THE TEMPLE. THE TEMPLE. THE TEMPLE

Christians recognize that the temple will in fact be rebuilt—after the Jews sign a peace treaty with the Antichrist. That temple will become the center of Jewish national and religious identity for 3½ years, even though their initial impetus will not be to worship Jesus as the Messiah. Jews who believe in Jesus right now will be raptured, while others will place their faith in Him during the Tribulation. We know that 144,000 Jewish witnesses—or evangelists—

will proclaim the Gospel during that horrific period.

Some Christians eagerly support the goal of rebuilding the temple. For instance, the farmer who bred the five red heifers in Texas is a Christian motivated to help the Jewish people prepare to rebuild their temple as prophesied. Still, we long for and worship a Person, not a place. With that in mind, perhaps we can gain perspective on the third temple if we consider the first two.

King David was inspired to build God a temple to replace the tent where the Ark of the Covenant dwelled. Nathan initially affirmed that inclination, but then returned with a word from God. The LORD asked rhetorically, “...did I speak a word with one of the tribes of Israel, which I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, ‘Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?’ ” (2 Samuel 7:7, repeated



in 1 Chronicles 17:6) His clear insinuation was that He had not demanded a temple of wood and stone, but rather hearts that were fully devoted to Him.

Samuel established this same truth when he said, “Has the LORD as much delight in burnt sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel 15:22).

Still, God did honor David’s desire to build for Him a temple—although He did not allow David himself to build it. Solomon built the first temple. Later, God took offense when the exiles who returned from Babylon neglected the building of the second temple—not because He lacked for a dwelling, but because their attitude reflected hearts that were far from Him.

The second temple was eventually completed and later made larger and grander by the great builder, Herod. In terms of official endorsement, however, Jesus did not heap praise on the structure of the temple itself or endorse Herod’s work. Instead, He honored its intended purpose as a “house of prayer” (Matthew 21:13). Recalling the full text of Isaiah’s prophecy, Jesus cited God’s promise: “Even [foreigners] I will bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples” (Isaiah 56:7).

So, regarding the temple, God’s official endorsement or gracious acceptance depends entirely on the motive of the people doing the building and the sacrificing. If they seek to please and serve the LORD, then their inclination to worship God will be honored as David’s was—and the Holy Spirit will draw them to believing faith in the

Lord Jesus Christ. The same could be inferred about the role of a red heifer. Anyone who thinks that a building or a cow will be sufficient to appease our holy God apart from the Gospel is as deceived as those who cried out, “the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD” in Jeremiah’s day (Jeremiah 7:4).

## **THE GOD OF TALKING DONKEYS & RED COWS**

God has incorporated humble animals to fulfill His purpose throughout human history. He made garments of skin to cover Adam and Eve’s nakedness (Genesis 3:21), opened the mouth of a donkey carrying a pagan prophet (Numbers 22:27-30), appointed a great fish and a lowly worm to teach Jonah eternal lessons (Jonah 1:17 and 4:7), and granted the foal of a donkey the honor of bearing Jesus into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:2-6). He will return to earth mounted on a white horse (Revelation 19:11). And soon, a cow will once again play a mysterious role in the protocols ordained by God.

In the end, we know that a red heifer will be sacrificed and the third temple will be built. In the fulness of time, those pre-seen historic events will give way to a time of Great Tribulation for the Jewish people. Only when they have come to the end of themselves will they cry out, Baruch Haba B’shem Adonai—“Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the LORD!” Then Jesus Christ will return to earth in glory and power, ascend the mountain of the LORD, and reign from the throne of David.

## **...AND THE LAMB & LION**

While preparations for the third temple may be underway, I believe it will

not actually be constructed until after the Church is removed from the world at the Rapture and the Antichrist is revealed. And, although the red heifer is significant for what it portends, the third temple will not secure forgiveness of sins through a reconstituted sacrificial system. As Hebrews 10:4 recognizes, “...it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” But we know that God’s prophetic Word will be fulfilled, and that in the end the Jews will look upon the perfect Sacrifice and weep over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn (Zechariah 12:10).

There is no question that God works in ways far beyond our comprehension and that He inspires individual Christians to serve Him faithfully. Some will support Jewish efforts to fulfill the prophecies outlined in Scripture. That was true a century ago when Christian Zionists avidly supported the Jewish effort to return to the Promised Land and reestablish a home and a nation. Christians do not believe Israel represents a separate means of salvation apart from our Jewish Messiah, but we take seriously God’s admonition to bless His chosen people.

So, while I am fascinated by all the prophetic events that are swirling around us today and converging as never before—including news of a red heifer—I am not fixated on any of them individually. Instead, I am watching and waiting—and listening for “a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God,” knowing that soon and very soon our Blessed Hope is coming for His Bride.

That joy-filled expectation leads to my appreciation for the Lamb and the Lion—two metaphorical references to our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ♦

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