



PARACLETE

ADVOCATING FOR THE TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

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March 2018

By Our Love?

By Dr. Kaia Kloster, *FaithSearch* presenter

Reaching out to incarcerated youth has been an eye-opening venture. It seems their greatest question regarding God is the timeless question of, “*If God is good, why is there so much suffering in the world?*”

One young man stands out in my mind—one of only two who attended on this particular day. When there are many, they put their guard up. With only two, this young Native American was soft-spoken, but was willing to bare his soul. When I asked why he had chosen to come, his answer was, “*I think I need a little Jesus.*” To which I replied, “*Don’t we all!*”

He went on to share how both his mom and grandma had been encouraging him to pray and go to church. It seems he now thought he may as well give it a shot. He was quick to point out more than once, however, that he wasn’t too sure he believed there really is a God. When I asked him what made it hard for him to believe in God, the look in his eyes and the hushed brokenness in his voice crushed my heart. He had never expe-

rienced any of the good, the blessings, which God seems to promise in the Bible.

On the streets, it had never paid to “be good.” Being good got you taken advantage of, beaten up, or abused. It didn’t get you food or clothes or a safe place to sleep.

I have been thinking of those who did not choose to be born into poverty, addiction, neglect, or abuse. No more than I got to choose to be born into a home with Christian values, stability, food, safety, and love. Rather than my typical response of why there is suffering in the world – the Fall, no personal accountability, the lack of a good work ethic – and pointing my finger at them, I found my finger pointing back at me, at Christ’s Church.

Where had we been as Christians? If we are to be the light in this dark world; if we are to be the hands and feet of Christ; where had we been?

As this young man was stealing food in order to eat, I may have been at a restaurant, a party, or a potluck at my church. As he was shivering in the cold without warm clothes or even a place to sleep, I may have been in my recliner in front of the fire, taking a hot bath, or crawling into my warm bed. As this young man questioned whether there really is a God because he had never experienced the rumored love or the promised blessings, I realized how I had failed him, how the Church had failed him.

If one Christian had stepped into his life – not just to drop off a quilt, or a

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FOR REFLECTION

By Dr. Don Bierle, *FaithSearch* President

The new four-year strategic plan of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is to “**serve and protect Americans at every stage of life, beginning at conception.**” Furthermore, the HHS plan includes a “conscience rights” rule, which would protect healthcare workers whose religious convictions prevent them from participating in the abortion procedure.

Over the years, as a Ph.D. biologist, I have consistently taught a similar “pro-life” position based on two apologetic arguments. **One**, the advancement of scientific knowledge clearly demonstrates that from the moment of conception the embryo is a living being and endowed with a unique complement of human chromosomes and genes.



Two, God has revealed in His Word that He treats the embryo and fetus as a person before birth: “*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart*” (Jeremiah 1:5 NIV). And again, “*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb... your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be*” (Psalm 139:13, 16 NIV).

Is this conceived person in the womb endowed by his/her Creator with the same unalienable right to life that our constitution guarantees cannot be taken away?

Source in part: Public Media Releases

IN THE NEWS



Excavation by archaeologists just south of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem has yielded an exciting discovery – a likely seal impression (bullae) of the **prophet Isaiah** from the eighth century before Christ.

Details in the next issue of *Paraclete*.

Source: *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Vol. 44 NOS. 2 & 3, March/April/May/June 2018, pp 64-73.

What do you get...?

By Dr. Don Bierle, President

I recall many exchanges of jokes that began with “What do you get when...” For example: What do you get when you cross a cow and a trampoline? *Answer:* A milkshake!

When this question is applied to nature, you often get a “real” answer. What do you get when you cross a zebra with a horse? A “**zorse**” of course! What do you get when you cross a camel and llama? A “**cama**”! Lions and tigers produce “**ti-gons**” and “**ligers**.” This actual phenomenon of **hybridization** among animals and plants, even at the higher biological classification of genus and family, is challenging evolutionary theory today.

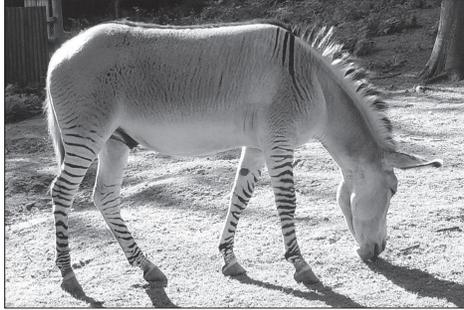
First, it blurs the foundational evolutionary concept of “speciation.” The theory is that over millions of years, genetic diversity arose spontaneously to form a single “tree of life” – from single cells to humans. As new species arose on branches of the tree, they lost their ability to produce hybrids with the species from which they arose. That’s why they are classified as a separate species.

By Our Love?

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donation for the school he no longer attended, but really stepped into his life – with mentoring; with a meal at a family dinner table; with new shoes to wear as they played a game of scrimmage together; or with a phone call to see how he was doing. If one Christian had left their white picket fence world to enter into his messy, hard world, he could have seen Christ. He could have known there is a God. That would have been his evidence. He may not have ended up sitting in the seat across from me.

It’s not considered respectful for a Native American to stare into the eyes of an elder, it would be considered aggressive or rude. So when he did lift his downcast eyes to meet mine briefly, all I could answer in that moment was, “There’s a verse in the Bible that says, ‘They will know we are Christians by our love.’ I’m afraid we haven’t done that very well.”



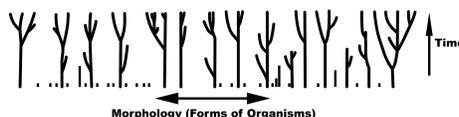
Zedonk: hybrid of a zebra and a donkey.

New techniques of DNA analysis, however, have led to the discovery that **organisms above the species level, at the genus or even family classification, are often able to hybridize.** The illustrations given earlier are examples of this. Finches, tanagers, and sparrows are all separate biological families but are able to hybridize. How can their genetic compatibility be explained?

Second, widespread hybridization calls into question the evolutionary single “tree of life” itself. The assumption has been that the diversity of life arose over billions of years from an original single-celled ancestor. The hierarchy of life allegedly separated over time into independent branches of the single tree that are incapable of interbreeding (hybridization). That is *not* what biology is discovering about species today.

God made it clear that He created life according to “**kinds**” (Genesis 1:12, 21, etc.). This is also the classification identified with the animals that boarded the Ark (Genesis 6:19-20). Creationists study living things in a unique approach called **baraminology**, the study of biblical kinds. Instead of a single tree of life, creationists think of an orchard. Each tree in the orchard with its many branches represents a biblical kind: a designed and unique “toolbox” containing immense genetic diversity and potential in order to respond to environmental challenges and create new species rapidly.

That’s why plants and animals within each “family tree” of the orchard have



Trees of Life in the “Orchard”: Multiple trees with branches represent the biblical kinds.

Did You Know?

The number of people attending **FaithSearch** events through 2017, totaled **977,587**. God willing, in this fortieth “Year of Gratitude,” we will reach **1,000,000 attendees**.

Every month in 2018, there is a **BOGO** (buy one, get one FREE) offer for one of our ministry publications on our Web site (www.faithsearch.org). Make a difference while you save!

Jesus (the object of our faith) saves us, and not our faith itself. Despite their sincere faith, a Buddhist, a Muslim, or a Hindu is *not saved*. There is only one Savior (Acts 4:12; 1 John 5:11-13). How can anything keep us from sharing it with everyone? (Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8)

genetic compatibility and are capable of hybridization. Current baraminology studies estimate there are about 137 mammal and 196 bird kinds (trees in the orchard). This is why God only had to choose selected animals from each of the trees for the Ark and not all mammal and bird species. Those selected representatives could diversify quickly into the others of their kind after the Flood.

This scientific research of life forms is yielding insight consistent with the Bible’s own testimony about the creation:

“But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.” Job 12:7-10 (Cf. Romans 1:18-20)

A “**pizzly**”? That’s a cub from polar bear and grizzly parents. That’s funny!

Source: *Answers Magazine*, Vol. 12, No. 6, pp. 54-62. “The Great Species Mixup” by Tom Hennigan

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