

GARY KENT



The Incredible
Journey



THE FINGERPRINTS OF GOD

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Whenever NASA scientists send another probe to Mars, the Red Planet, it creates a great deal of excitement. People can't wait to see the latest images from Mars. They anticipate news about the discovery of extraterrestrial life: perhaps micro-organisms, or the remnants of a long-lost civilisation.

Have you ever wondered why is that we feel such an urge to explore our planetary neighbour? Or, for that matter, why we feel so naturally curious about everything? I would like to explore the Bible answers to these questions.

Science is built on the belief that there is order in the universe. It assumes that our world is predictable. When a scientist becomes curious about something, he or she develops a hypothesis in order to uncover the cause. Often, he or she will then run a series of carefully controlled tests to determine the correctness of this hypothesis. If the events in nature can be reproduced, this gives tremendous insight into why things happen the way they do.

This process, called the 'scientific method', has been highly beneficial to us. Prior to systematic experimental science, people simply made assumptions that not infrequently led to strange conclusions. Aristotle, for example, once made the statement that men have a different number of teeth to women. Apparently, however, he failed to open anybody's mouth to check! He just assumed his claim was true. For centuries, Aristotle's hypothesis was

presumed to be fact.

It was also believed at one time that life could spontaneously erupt from non-living matter.¹ After all, when you left a piece of meat out in the sun, maggots materialised. When the river Nile flooded every year, frogs emerged from the wet dust. And if grain became old and mouldy, mice appeared. The logical conclusion, obviously, was that life could come from non-life.

In 1668, a doctor by the name of Francesco Redi challenged the theory of spontaneous generation¹. He believed that maggots came from flies' eggs, not from meat. He tested his theory under controlled circumstances and proved it to be correct. However, scientists were unwilling to give up their long-

¹ For more information on spontaneous generation, see Levine, R., & Evers, C. *The Slow Death of Spontaneous Generation (1668-1859)*. Accessed July 30, 2018, at http://www.accessexcellence.org/RC/AB/BC/Spontaneous_Generation.html

held, cherished idea. They debated his findings for almost two hundred years, until in 1859 Louis Pasteur finally proved Redi right. Thanks to Pasteur's research, today we have infinitely better methods of food preservation and disease prevention.

The scientific method has proven again and again to be a useful tool for the human race. Science has led to better methods of farming, advances in health care, better transportation and communication, a better understanding of genetics, and millions of other discoveries that give us a better standard of living. Sadly, however, the modern scientific method has become tangled with old-fashioned human pride. Somewhere along the way, we picked up the idea that because we're now able to address so many of our own problems, we no longer need God.

During the nineteenth century, the growing spirit of scientific rationalism

moved humanity past many superstitions held in the Dark Ages. In many ways, that was a good thing, but it also led us down a road of proud unbelief that eventually caused the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche to declare that God was dead. Belief in the Word of God came to be ridiculed in academic circles. Darwinists said that the creation story was utter nonsense. Marxists said that religion was just an oppressive tool used to keep the lower classes in their place.

For a while, it seemed that Christianity would die out altogether. Cultural currents and scientific theories relegated the Bible to nothing more than a fictitious, legendary tale, a book suited to the human race in its infancy, but unnecessary in the Age of Enlightenment.

Now if you think about it, that was a rather surprising conclusion, because the scientific method was originally

based on the assumption that there is measurable design in our universe. Early scientists were simply trying to understand God's ways and character more clearly through His created works.

Take the great seventeenth-century scientist Isaac Newton. Speaking about the universe, he once said, "This most beautiful system could only proceed from the dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being."² Newton recognised that the law of gravity was not an accident, but the result of careful planning by the Creator. "Gravity explains the motions of the planets", he said, "but it cannot explain who set the planets in motion. God governs all things and knows all that is or can be done."³

² Accessed July 30, 2018, at <http://www.creativequotations.com/one/424c.htm>

³ Accessed July 30, 2018, at <http://www.doesgodexist.org/NovDec01/IsaacNewtonAndGodsLawOfGravity.html>

Here was a man whose faith was unshaken by scientific discovery, a man who could recognise the fingerprints of God in His creation. Consider these words from the apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans:

"For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20).

According to the Bible, we can find plenty of evidence for the existence of God. At the zenith of scientific unbelief in the 1890s, one of my favourite Christian authors wrote:

"Look at the wonderful and beautiful things of nature. Think of their marvelous adaptation to the needs and happiness, not only of man, but of all living creatures. The sunshine and the rain, that gladden and refresh the

earth, the hills and seas and plains, all speak to us of the Creator's love. It is God who supplies the daily needs of all His creatures."⁴

Even though this world has been marred by sin, we can still see the fingerprints of God. Everything is carefully designed to fulfil God's purpose. For instance, there is just the right proportion of oxygen and nitrogen in the atmosphere to support life. If we were closer to the sun, we would fry; and if we were further away, we would freeze. The force of gravity is just right to keep us on the Earth's surface without crushing us. The fact that water expands as it freezes enables life in lakes to continue beneath the icy surface in subzero temperatures.

⁴ White, E. G. (2010). *Steps to Christ*. Grantham, England: Stanborough Press, p. 9. (Original work published 1892)

John O'Keefe, an astronomer at NASA, said this:

"We are, by astronomical standards, a pampered, cosseted, cherished group of creatures...If the Universe had not been made with the most exacting precision, we could never have come into existence. It is my view that these circumstances indicate the universe was created for man to live in."⁵

When the citizens of the ancient city of Lystra saw Paul heal a crippled man, they mistakenly believed that Paul was a god. To prove that he wasn't, he pointed them to the creation:

"We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that

⁵ Heeren, F. (1995). *Show me God*. Wheeling, IL: Searchlight, p. 200.

are in them, who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness” (Acts 14:15-17).

Take a good look, Paul told them, and you'll notice that Somebody designed this planet. There is more than enough proof to establish the existence of an intelligent Creator.

There is so much evidence, in fact, that it is almost as if God cannot wait to be found. As Philip Yancey points out in his book, *Reaching for the Invisible God*, the point of hide-and-seek for children isn't hiding – it's being found!

I have four children who loved to play hide-and-seek, but they were not very good at it. When I closed my eyes and started to count, they dashed across the house and hid in exactly the same

spot every time. Or sometimes, if I was getting close, I could hear them giggling. And if I said, "I wonder if Candice is hiding under the bed?" she'd scream, "No Daddy, I'm in the closet!"

Why would she do that? It's because she wants to be found! I believe the same is true of God. He wants to be found, and He has provided enough evidence to make it really easy. The Wall Street Journal published an article in 1997 by Jim Holt entitled *Science Resurrects God*. In part, it reads,

"In recent decades, physicists have noticed an astonishing thing about the fundamental laws of nature. The 20 or so parameters they contain (numbers governing the strength of gravity, the ratio of the proton's size to the neutron's, and so on) appear to have been fine-tuned so that, against astronomically unfavourable odds, conscious organisms could emerge.

Make gravity the slightest bit weaker, and no galaxies suitable for life would have formed; make it the slightest bit stronger and the cosmos would have collapsed upon itself moments after the big bang.”⁶

Personally, I believe the Bible’s account of a seven-day creation, but putting that aside for the moment, consider Holt’s statement quoted above. As we accumulate more and more knowledge, it becomes increasingly evident that real science leads directly to God! Many scientists may smugly deny the existence of God, but His fingerprints can be seen all over His creation. The article continues:

“The universe, as the cosmologist Fred Hoyle once remarked, looks like a ‘put-up job’. Who but a Divine Designer could

⁶ Holt, J. (1997, December 24). *Science Resurrects God*. *Wall Street Journal*. Accessed July 30, 2018, at <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB882911317496560000>

have twiddled with these 20 different “control knobs” until they were pointing at precisely the right values for the full array of life ultimately to appear?”⁷

In the light of mounting evidence, the goddess of reason has been forced to nod her head in the direction of the Creator. Cosmologists today are looking for what some call the “theory of everything”, or the “God particle”. This is the name they give to a theory or formula that will explain the architecture of the universe, because more and more evidence points to the existence of God.

Robert Jastrow, former director of the Mount Wilson Observatory, put it like this:

“For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled

⁷ *Ibid.*

the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak, as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.”⁸

The universe, it turns out, is not just a big empty space that goes on forever. Its deliberate design is more and more clear.

Let’s think for a moment about God’s argument when Job began to question His actions and wisdom. Instead of directly addressing Job’s problems, God invited him to consider the architecture of the universe:

“Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me” (Job 38:1-3).

⁸ Jastrow, R. (1978). *God and the Astronomers* (New York: W.W. Norton), p. 116.

At first glance, God's words may appear harsh, but let's consider the context. Job has questioned God's capacity to govern the universe. In response, God makes a dramatic point by challenging Job to understand how the universe was made:

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the cornerstone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (Job 38:4-7).

Notice that God uses the language of architecture when He describes the universe. He speaks of foundations, lines and measures. The implication is that God did not throw things together in a haphazard fashion.

Ancient mythology depicts a pantheon of petty gods who created the world over and over in their attempt to get things right. The Bible, on the other hand, says God did it right the first time. At the close of creation, the Bible records that God "*saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good*" (Genesis 1:31). That assures us that humans are not an afterthought or an accident on the margins of the universe. Rather, we are the product of careful planning; we were designed with a heavenly blueprint.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, a mathematician named Leonardo studied a problem that had a revolutionary answer. The problem, given to him by a member of the royal family, was this:

"A certain man put a pair of rabbits in a place surrounded on all sides by a wall. How many pairs of rabbits can be

produced from that pair in a year if it is supposed that every month each pair begets a new pair which from the second month on becomes productive?"⁹

That question requires detailed and complex calculation, but this was no problem for a man with the intelligence of Leonardo. He simply listed the number of rabbits at the end of each month and came up with the following sequence: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, and so on. The rule defining this sequence is that each number is the sum of the two that come before it: one plus one is two; one plus two is three; three plus two is five; and so on.

You may ask what that has to do with God. A great deal more than you might think! Leonardo Pisano Fibonacci had stumbled across a very important

⁹ *Leonardo Pisano Fibonacci. (1998). Accessed July 30, 2018, at <http://www-history.mcs.st-and.ac.uk/Biographies/Fibonacci.html>*

mathematical principle, known as the Fibonacci sequence. Even though it was first used to count rabbits, this sequence is so fundamental that it can justifiably be called one of the blueprints of the universe.

Students of this sequence have noticed that each number bears a special relationship to the numbers surrounding it. The ratio of any Fibonacci number to the one before it and after it is roughly 1.618034.

This is so important that it is called the "golden ratio". The ancient Greeks used the golden ratio for many important building designs. The length of the Parthenon, for example, is 1.618 times as long as the width, and the width is 0.618 times as long as the length.

The Greeks used the golden ratio in designs, because they believed it was much more pleasing to the human eye than any other. Often enduring artworks

use this same ratio. The face of the Mona Lisa, for example, is based on the golden ratio: it is 1.618 times as long as it is wide. The musical scale, violins designed by Antonio Stradivarius, and compositions by Claude Debussy also use the golden ratio.¹⁰

Why do we find that number in so many beautiful art works? Could it be because these works then resemble the work of the Master Artist?

Consider how often that ratio appears in nature. Your forearm, for example, is roughly 1.618 times as long as your hand. Each segment of your finger is roughly 1.618 times as long as the next one. The faces of people considered the most beautiful have proportions built on this ratio. Their mouths are 1.618 times

¹⁰ van Gend, R. (2014). *The Fibonacci sequence and the golden ratio in music. Notes on Number Theory and Discrete Mathematics*, 20(1), 72-77. Retrieved July 30, 2018, from <http://nntdm.net/papers/nntdm-20/NNTDM-20-1-72-77.pdf>

as wide as their noses, and the distance between their pupils is about 1.618 times as wide as their mouths. In fact, this number happens so frequently that some plastic surgeons have begun to use it to improve people's appearances.

Could it be, then, that the golden ratio is one of the mathematical blueprints that God used at creation? I think it might be!

If you create a spiral based on Fibonacci numbers, where every quarter turn is 1.618 times as far from the centre as the previous one, you have what is known as a golden spiral. Most of the spirals found in nature are golden spirals. The shells of the nautilus and the snail, for example, are golden spirals. So are ram's horns, the tails of sea-horses, the cochlea of the human ear, whirlpools in the ocean, the seed patterns of sunflowers, and the tail of a comet as it winds around the sun.

Not only that, but botanists have also discovered that the number of spirals in a sunflower or on a pinecone are always numbers from the Fibonacci sequence. Furthermore, there are spirals running in two directions, but the number of spirals is not equal. Instead, you might have 8 spirals running one way, and 13 running in the other, but the numbers are always neighbours from the Fibonacci sequence.

The list of golden ratios continues. The neighbouring leaves of some trees are arranged at 137.5 degrees from each other. That angle, amazingly, enables the highest number of leaves to have exposure to sunlight, but even more amazingly, when you draw that angle inside a circle, you get two pieces, and the long arc is exactly 1.618 times as long as the short one.

Such complex designs cannot be merely coincidental. This number appears far

too often. Somebody meticulously designed this universe, and He used carefully measured blueprints to do it.

Could it be that humans are just starting to discover the blueprints of the universe? Could it be, when we find ourselves drawn irresistibly to something beautiful, we are subconsciously recognising the fingerprints of God? And if that's true, what does that mean for you as an individual?

I believe it means that you have a purpose. You are not an accident. You are not the product of mere chance over billions of years. God designed you with a deliberate purpose (see Psalm 139:14-16). To discover this for yourself, you simply need to walk outside and take a look at nature, because there you will see the glory of God revealed (see Psalm 19:1-6 and Romans 1:20).

This world is not an accident, and neither are you. Your heavenly Father

wants you to develop to the pinnacle of your potential and He is waiting for you to live out the destiny He has planned for you (see Jeremiah 29:11). Today, the hand of Jesus is reaching for yours, and He invites you to discover Him anew.

The discovery that there is purpose and design to this world often comes as a tremendous relief to people who have been searching for meaning all their lives. In the scientific community, many people are rediscovering God, and that discovery gives science a higher purpose than it ever had without Him. When the pursuit of God becomes your primary objective, the science laboratory becomes a holy place where you can learn about God through His creation. And the human mind is challenged to stretch further than it ever has before.

Maybe you would like to respond to God's call to you today. You can do this by praying a simple prayer: "Father, I am

awed by the vastness of Your creation. I am so thankful that You have a plan for my life. Please, show me Your purpose for me, and give me the strength to work in cooperation with You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

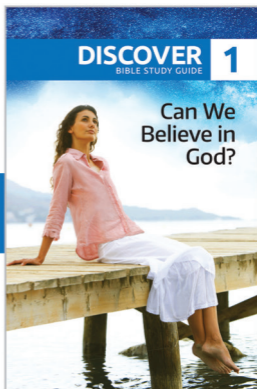
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Unless otherwise noted, all Bible texts are
from the New King James Version

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Wherever we turn in nature, we see the fingerprints of God. The book of Job points us to the architecture of the universe. Our little planet is perfectly orchestrated to support life. In the nautilus shell, the sunflower, the sea horse, we find the golden ratio.

Can all this design, all this complexity, merely be a coincidence? When we find ourselves drawn irresistibly toward something beautiful, could it be because we are subconsciously recognising the fingerprints of God?



Pastor Gary Kent is Speaker for The Incredible Journey ministry. He has produced and presented numerous documentaries on subjects including the Bible, Bible prophecy, world events and natural health. His passion is to share the good news of Jesus' imminent return.

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