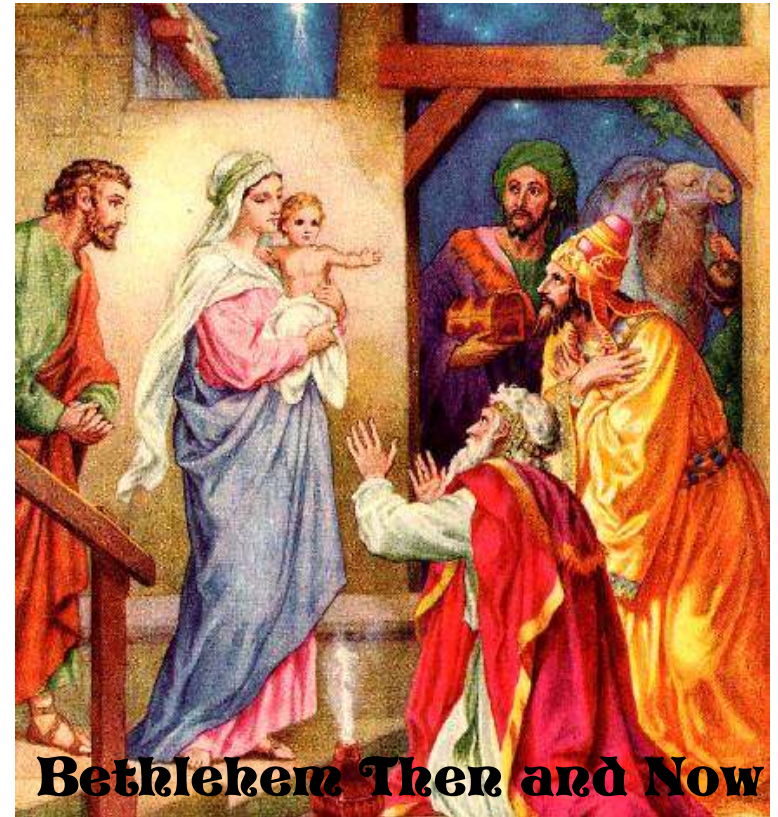


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Darwin on the Galápagos

Intelligent Design, Creationism and Its Critics
Creationism—a Threat to Human Rights?

LUTHERAN SCIENCE INSTITUTE, INC.

4130 Harvest Lane
Racine, Wisconsin 53402-9562
<http://www.lutheranscience.org>

The mission of the Lutheran Science Institute is to learn, share, and promote the glory of God as revealed in His holy Word and demonstrated in His created world, beginning with the pastors, teachers, and laity of the WELS (Wis. Ev. Lutheran Synod) and the ELS (Ev. Lutheran Synod).

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The Annual Meeting of the Institute is held the Saturday *after* Thanksgiving. At least three other meetings are held during the year at locations selected by the president. Meetings are open to the public and announced in the LSI JOURNAL and/or on our web site.

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MEETING SCHEDULE*

- ◆ 4th Saturday in January, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ 2nd Saturday in June, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ Last Saturday in October, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ Saturday *after* Thanksgiving in November, 1:00 p.m.

*Dates, times, and locations subject to change.
Additional meetings may be scheduled. Check with the president, secretary, or editor or see our web site for verification.

LSI Journal

Vol. 21, No. 6 November-December, 2007

4 Bethlehem: Then and Now

By Warren Krug

A look at the birthplace of our Savior during biblical times and also at the present time.

7 Darwin on the Galápagos

What you have probably heard about Charles Darwin, finches, and the Galápagos Islands may be a myth.

10 Intelligent Design Creationism and Its Critics

By Jeff Stueber

A review of the book, *Intelligent Design Creationism and Its Critics* which pays lip service to several anti-ID arguments.

13 Focus on Our Library: Newton's Workshop video series

15 LSI News: Special Rates for Gift Subscriptions / Next Meeting / Call for Candidates / Back Issues Available

16 News

20 Kids' Page: Bronze & Copper

22 My View: Creationism—a Threat to Human Rights?

Coming

Comets and the Oort Cloud

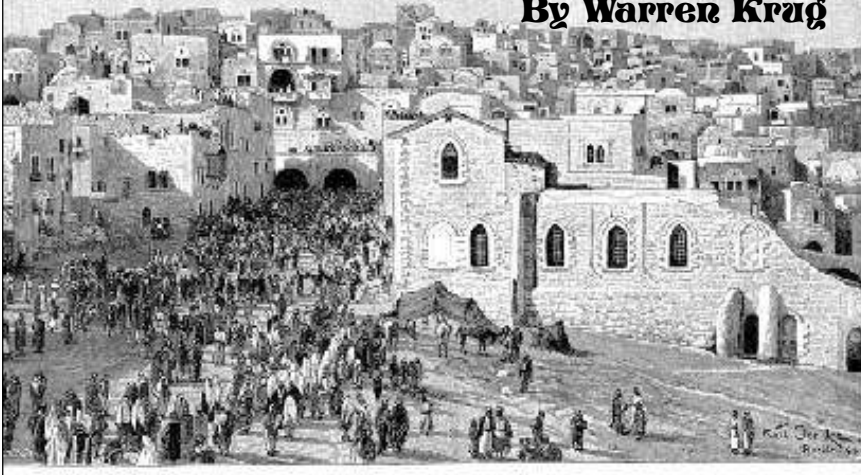
"Many scientific papers are written each year about the Oort Cloud, its properties, its origin, its evolution. Yet there is not yet a shred of direct observational evidence for its existence."

Weird and Wonderful: The Aardvark and the Thorny Devil

Evolution can't explain where Aardvarks came from, and it seems impossible that the moloch ("thorny devil") could have got its spiky coat, and system of grooves, through gradual evolution.

Bethlehem: Then and Now

By Warren Krag



It is nighttime and shepherds are out in some fields near the village of Bethlehem in Judea taking care of their sheep.

Suddenly the darkness of night is shattered as the sky is lit up by a group of angelic beings with an awesome message.

Christ the Lord has been born that day in the town of David, an angel tells the shepherds. Obviously encouraging them to visit the newborn Savior, the angel says that they will find Him lying in a manger wrapped in strips of cloth.

“Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened,” the excited shepherds tell each other. So, leaving their sheep, the

men hurry into the village and become eyewitnesses to the birth of the long-awaited Messiah.

Bethlehem—Big Honors for a Little Town

Bethlehem hardly seemed like a suitable location for an event of such magnitude. It was just a little village, located five or six miles southwest of the much larger city of Jerusalem in the hill country of Judea.

The prophet Micah had prophesied centuries before concerning Bethlehem that “out of you will come for me one who

will be ruler over Israel” even “though you are small among the clans of Judah.” (Micah 5:2)

Yet, the honor of being the birthplace of Jesus Christ was not the first time this little community was blessed by God.

It was near Bethlehem (also called Ephrath) where Benjamin, youngest son of Jacob, was born and where Jacob’s wife, Rachel, died. (Genesis 35) A site thought to be the location of her tomb today lies along a road near Bethlehem.

Bethlehem was the home of Naomi and Boaz, who married Naomi’s daughter-in-law, Ruth. Their descendants included King David and, of course, Jesus.

Also, it was to Bethlehem that the prophet Samuel went at God’s direction to appoint David as the second king of Israel (1 Samuel 16).

So, the little village of Bethlehem had its claim to fame even before the birth of Jesus there. Yet, the birth of the Savior is what we most remember about this little community.

Bethlehem at the Time Of the Birth of Jesus

When Jesus was born Judea was a Roman state or province over which the infamous Herod the Great, an Edomite, was appointed a “king” in exchange for his loyalty to the Roman Empire. The emperor was, of course, Caesar Augustus and the governor of Syria who also ruled over Judea was Cyrenius (Luke 2:2).

The fact that all those living in Judea were subject to the Roman emperor is shown by the fact that as a result of a decree by the emperor, Mary and Joseph had to leave their home in Nazareth to go to Bethlehem, their ancestral home, in order to pay taxes.

While the exact date of Jesus’ birth is unknown (note that not all Christians celebrate it on December 25), if it happened during the winter in Palestine, the temperatures out in the fields where the shepherds were working may not have been



The author is the editor of the LSI Journal. The illustration above of Bethlehem in 1894 obtained from Wikipedia is based on a drawing by Karl Oenike.

much above freezing. According to *wikipedia.com*, average temperatures in January can get as low as 33 degrees F.



A street in Bethlehem.

Bethlehem Today

Bethlehem today is part of a region called the West Bank of Palestine. Anyone following current news knows that there is plenty of political unrest in the area.

A Web site that appears to be favorable to the Palestinians (<http://lexicorient.com>) declares Palestine to be a republic with Mahmoud Abbas as president. It says that about 100 nations recognize Palestine but not most Western powers nor the United Nations. It admits that large parts of the country are occupied by Israel and the final status of Palestine is uncertain.

Christianity at one time was the dominant religion in the area, but Christians appear to be leaving in large numbers. Depending upon whom one believes, this

trend is either the fault of the Muslims (*www.cnsnews.com*) or the Israelis (*National Catholic Reporter*).

Bethlehem has about 30,000 residents (2003 estimate) with estimates of the Christian population ranging from about 3,000 to 10,000. It is an agricultural market and trade town as well as a pilgrim and tourist center. There appears to be an increase in attempts to attract more tourists. The city Web site says that "Compared to other cities and towns in Palestine, Bethlehem is a relatively quiet place." (*www.bethlehem-city.org*)

The most visited place in Bethlehem is the Church of the Nativity which is believed to be built over the site of Jesus' manger. This church is owned and managed by three different Christian denominations: Armenian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Greek Orthodox.

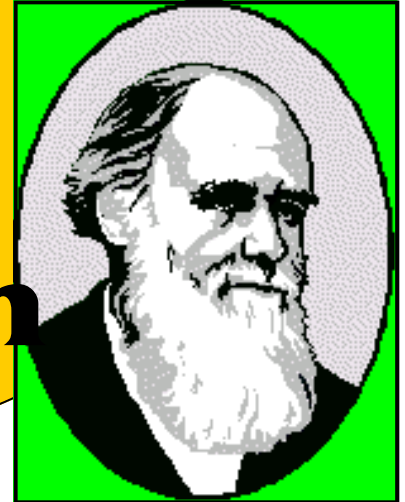
Because our beloved Savior was born there, Bethlehem will always occupy a warm spot in the hearts of Christians. LSI



The Church of the Nativity

What you have probably heard about Charles Darwin, finches, and the Galápagos Islands may be a myth.

Darwin On the Galápagos



Science writer Michael Shermer, publisher of *Skeptic* magazine and author of the book *Why Darwin Matters*, writes a regular monthly column entitled "Skeptic" in the journal *Scientific American*. In the February 2006 issue of that journal, he recounted his personal trip to the Galápagos Islands, famous as the place where Darwin first formulated his theory of evolution.

As the name of both his column and his magazine suggest, Shermer is a strong skeptic of all religious claims, including creation and/or intelligent design. While touring the Galápagos, he "was struck by how clear the solution [to the debate over origins] is in these islands: creation by

Reprinted from the April 16, 2007 issue of *Christian News*.

The Galápagos Islands

Culpepper
Wenman

Pinta
Marchena
Genovesa

Equator

Santiago
Bartolomé
Seymour Norte

Fernandina
Isabela
Santa Cruz
Santa Fe
San Cristóbal
Española
Floreana

0 MILES 50

B Baltra P Pinzón R Rábida T Tortuga

journey back to England, he came up with his monumental theory. Shermer comments on this legend: “The iconic myth is that Darwin became an evolutionist in the Galápagos when he discovered natural selection operating on finch beaks and tortoise carapaces [top shells], each species uniquely adapted by food type or island ecology. The notion is ubiquitous, appearing in everything from biology textbooks to travel brochures, the latter inveigling potential travelers to visit the mecca of evolutionary theory and walk in the tracks of St. Darwin the Divine.” (Ibid.)

structure & filling the same place in Nature, I must suspect they are only varieties.” (Ibid.) Shermer immediately follows this passage with his own commentary:



“That is, similar VARIETIES of fixed kinds, rather than the myth that he already knew that EVOLUTION was responsible for the creation of separate species. Darwin was still a creationist! This quotation explains why Darwin did not even bother to record the island locations of the few finches he collected (and in some cases mislabeled) and why, as Sulloway has pointed out, these now famous ‘Darwin finches’ were never specifically mentioned in *On the Origin of*

Sherner further observes that “Darwin similarly botched his tortoise observations.” (Ibid. 35) In his writings, Darwin referred back to a conversation he had had with the vice governor of the islands, Nicholas Lawson, who told him that he “could with certainty tell from which island any [tortoise] was brought. I did not for some time pay sufficient attention to this statement, and I had already partially mingled together the collections from two of the islands.” (Ibid.)

In other words, Darwin used neither the finches nor the tortoises of the Galápagos Islands to formulate his theory. As Shermer points out, this stands in direct contradiction to the traditional stories regarding how Darwin came to believe that evolution via natural selection was the method by which species came into being. These are remarkable observations coming from someone who dismissed any non-Darwinian theory of origins as “absurd.” LSI

—Associates for Biblical
Research

Shermer, M. 2006. "It's Dogged as Does It." *Scientific American* 294, no. 2.

A Review of Robert Pennock's

Intelligent Design Creationism and Its Critics

By Jeff Stueber



Robert Pennock's book *Intelligent Design Creationism and Its Critics* is a monstrous 805 page manifesto that pays lip service to several anti-ID arguments, but includes numerous other essays that have nothing to do with the main thrust of scientific ID arguments. This is not to discount the seriousness or merit of these essays. They simply have nothing to do with the main topic of the book which is a critique of ID.

Pennock is a convinced anti-ID evolutionist. His recent book *Tower of Babel* is a typical Darwinian manifesto that, apparently, does not include anything new. Robert Kirkpatrick, who reviewed the book for amazon.com, said he bought the book expecting state of the art arguments supporting evolution but "the arguments are weak and have been made repeatedly by others." Allan Steel, who reviewed the book for the *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*,

criticized it for failing to note the distinction between operational science and origin science, for not understanding the limited evidence that microevolution (speciation in finches, for instance) tells us about macroevolution, for suggesting that evolution of language is evidence of biological evolution, and misunderstanding numerous creationist arguments.



In *Intelligent Design Creationism and Its Critics*, Pennock includes Phillip Johnson's article from *First Things* discussing evolution as a philosophical

The author, a frequent contributor to the Journal and a member of the LSI Board of Directors, lives in Watertown, Wisconsin.

metaphysical system of thought. That essay bookends another by Paul Nelson that contends religious ideas influence evolutionist arguments. (Nelson says evolution "was born in a turbulent embrace with theology, and it has yet to relinquish that embrace.") Pennock also includes an essay by Stephen Gould calling for a synthesis of theology and science that only accomplishes this goal by making theological ideas nothing but fiction. (Gould calls the papal insistence on the divine infusion of the soul "a sop to our fears," something that only has "metaphorical value.") These have nothing to do with ID's scientific arguments and appear to me more as filler than important information.

The meat of Pennock's book comes near the middle. Peter Godfrey-Smith denies that Dembski can convert improbabilities, using logarithms, into information content. I certainly agree that something does not possess information merely because it is improbable. (The design of my car is improbable, but would it therefore possess information?) However, given the fact DNA is a code – a code, in fact, that influences itself - this criticism might be muted since a code to change itself is an informational package. Dembski's idea of "functionality" is also

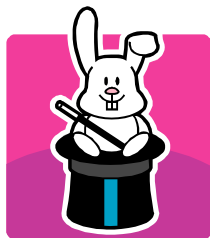
vague, he says. But then he answers Dembski by merely repeating the standard evolutionist argument. How can we get from bacteria with low functionality to a camel with high functionality? "Slowly" we are told while Godfrey-Smith spins a tale of how mutations accomplish the task. There are examples like bacteria becoming more adapted and Godfrey-Smith informs us that creationists have to deal with these issues. Yet, creationists have pointed out these changes are minor and do not reflect the changes that are needed to prove evolution.



One of the interesting give and takes in the book reflects the common animosity unbelievers have toward any ideas of divine intervention. Pennock worries that if we admit the divine into our scientific theories, we will lose the potential for scientific predictability. Even Phillip Johnson, as law professor, would suffer from this malady. Pennock, as quoted by Dembski, summarizes:

For the law to take [Johnson's view] seriously as well, it would have to be open to both suits and defenses based on a range of possible divine and occult interventions. Imagine the problems that would result if the courts had to accept legal theories of this sort. How would the court rule on whether to commit a purportedly insane person to a mental hospital for self-mutilation who claims that the Lord told her to pluck out her eye because it offended her? How would a judge deal with a defendant, Abe, accused of attempted murder of his son, Ike, who claims that he was only following God's command that he kill Ike to prove his faith?

The scriptural reference here is obvious.



Pennock, Dembski says, is asking us to choose between magic and mechanism and any sane man will choose mechanism and reject magic which, in this case, is ID and any theory that purports to explain the world through divine intervention.

Dembski proves that he can quote equally from Darwinists and reproduces a now famous quotation from Richard Lewontin saying his [Lewontin's] fellow scientists accept science because of their prior adherence to material causes to produce material explanations. "But," Dembski says, "design can be explanatory without giving away the store." Pennock, in a subsequent article in this book, will have nothing of this explanation, accusing Dembski of a "smoke and mirrors trick" and backing the same type of creationism as Henry and John Morris who believe humans were specially created by God. Dembski, it seems, to at least be scientifically respectable to Pennock and his ilk, must abandon any linkage between ID and his Bible. It's almost as if Pennock, finding that his father is still alive, refuses to believe it because his father is an axe murderer. Pennock fears ID because he knows God is hiding behind it.

This book is a fine addition to any scientific or theological bookshelf. What the book shows is that no compromises are possible on this issue despite the intelligent design movement's attempt to craft a scientific and mathematical method of detecting design, and this is mostly because unbelievers fear the ground that ID is attempting to break. [S]

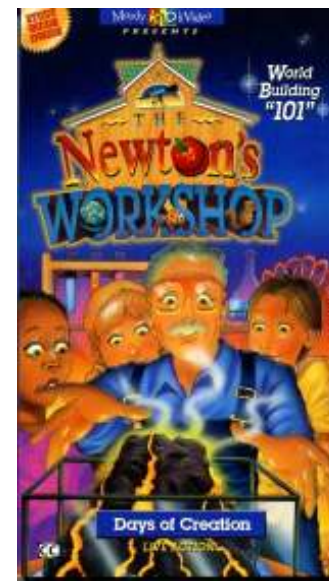
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Newton's Workshop

Newton's Workshop is an outstanding series of live-action programs that deal with various science topics from a Christian biblical perspective. A study guide is included with each tape. Programs are available in both VHS and DVD formats. Each program is about 30 minutes. Highly recommended for **intermediate and upper grades**.



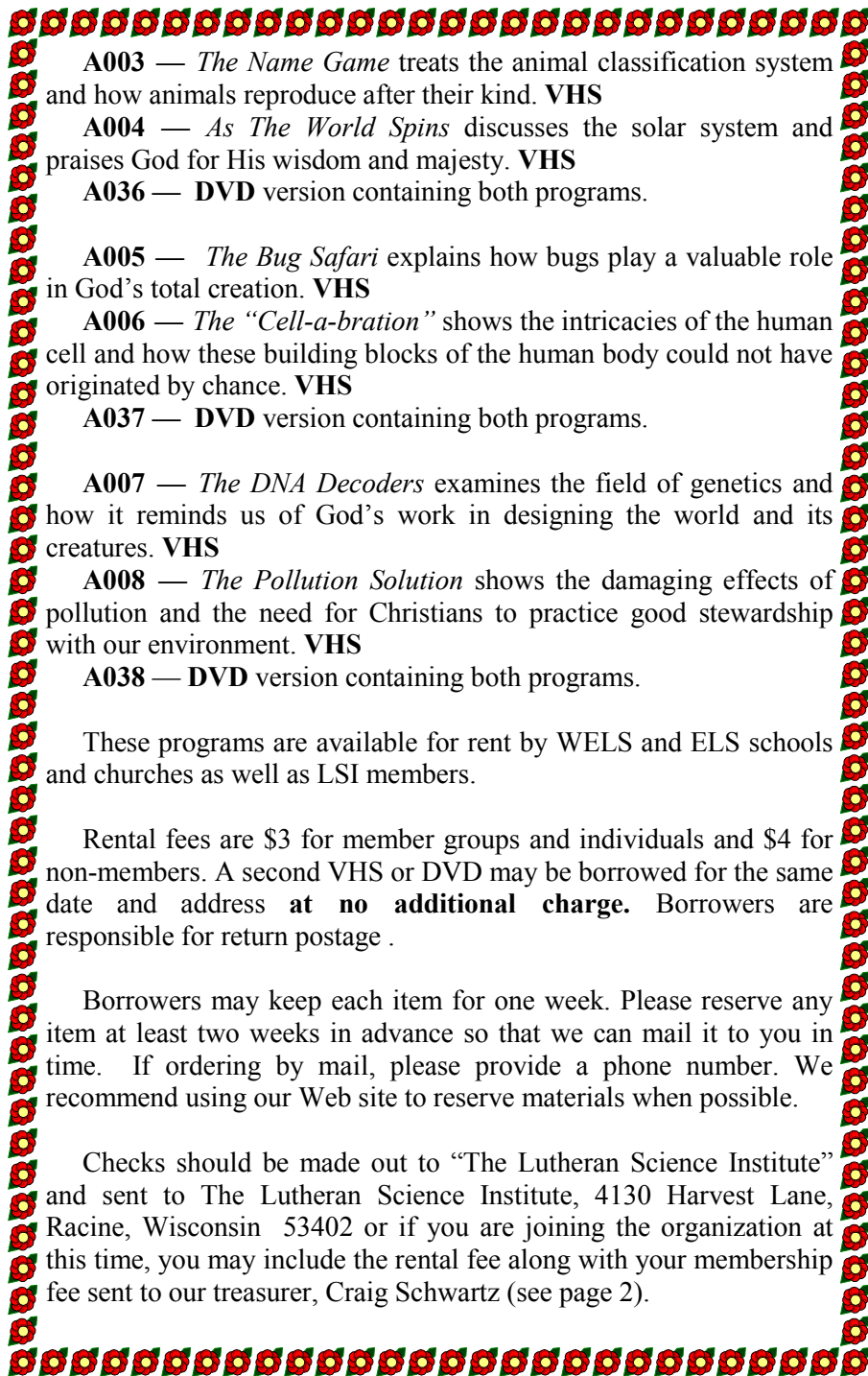
DVD format above. VHS format to the right.



A001 — *World Building 101* discusses the days of Creation and shows God's wisdom in creating the world. Caution: it briefly presents the controversial idea that God created the sun and stars on the first day but didn't allow them to shine on Earth until the 4th day. **VHS**

A002 — *The Germinators* deals with the immune system and how it guards us against harmful germs. **VHS**

A035 — **DVD** version contains both of the above programs.



A003 — *The Name Game* treats the animal classification system and how animals reproduce after their kind. **VHS**

A004 — *As The World Spins* discusses the solar system and praises God for His wisdom and majesty. **VHS**

A036 — **DVD** version containing both programs.

A005 — *The Bug Safari* explains how bugs play a valuable role in God's total creation. **VHS**

A006 — *The "Cell-a-bration"* shows the intricacies of the human cell and how these building blocks of the human body could not have originated by chance. **VHS**

A037 — **DVD** version containing both programs.

A007 — *The DNA Decoders* examines the field of genetics and how it reminds us of God's work in designing the world and its creatures. **VHS**

A008 — *The Pollution Solution* shows the damaging effects of pollution and the need for Christians to practice good stewardship with our environment. **VHS**

A038 — **DVD** version containing both programs.

These programs are available for rent by WELS and ELS schools and churches as well as LSI members.

Rental fees are \$3 for member groups and individuals and \$4 for non-members. A second VHS or DVD may be borrowed for the same date and address **at no additional charge**. Borrowers are responsible for return postage.

Borrowers may keep each item for one week. Please reserve any item at least two weeks in advance so that we can mail it to you in time. If ordering by mail, please provide a phone number. We recommend using our Web site to reserve materials when possible.

Checks should be made out to "The Lutheran Science Institute" and sent to The Lutheran Science Institute, 4130 Harvest Lane, Racine, Wisconsin 53402 or if you are joining the organization at this time, you may include the rental fee along with your membership fee sent to our treasurer, Craig Schwartz (see page 2).

► LSI News

Special Rates for Gift Subscriptions

With Christmas coming, do you need an idea for a gift for a friend, relative, or family member? The LSI Board has approved for the time being a special rate for gift memberships/subscriptions.

Whether intended as a holiday gift or not, a gift subscription will now be available for half-price. Consider a subscription for your pastor, teacher, or anyone else who could benefit. One-year memberships given by a paid-up member to a non-member at a different address would be **\$9** (voting) or **\$12.50** (associate) for one year, **\$21** for three years (voting and associate), or **\$60** for ten years (voting and associate).

Next Meeting

St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Marshall, Wisconsin will be the site for our next Board of Directors meeting. The date of the meeting is November 24, the Saturday after Thanksgiving, and the time is 1:00 p.m.

Marshall is located between Madison and Watertown, and St. Paul's is on Deerfield Road (Highway 72) about four or five

miles north of I-94.

Among several items of business will be the formation of the 2008 ballot.

Call for Candidates

If you are a member, or are thinking about becoming a member, and live in or near the southeastern Wisconsin area, you are strongly encouraged to consider running for an office.

In our upcoming election we will be choosing a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, and three Board members.

Candidates do not need to have a science background. Interest in the goals of the Institute and a desire to serve are all that is needed.

Back Issues Available

We have a collection of back issues of the LSI Journal we will be willing to send to anyone who agrees to pass them out to others who might wish to read them.

Send us your name and address and we will send you a bundle of 10, 20 or 30 back issues (please specify how many). There is no choice of issues, but we will try to include at least four or five different issues in the bundle. Thank you for your interest in serving in this way.

► News

Herod's Tomb Found

The burial place of the infamous King Herod has been located after three decades of searching. So says a team of researchers from Hebrew U. in Jerusalem. Using an account of Herod's burial written by the first century historian, Josephus, the scientists found Herod's sarcophagus under a mound built by Herod and called Herodium. Any valuables buried with Herod, who was king at the time Jesus was born, had been looted centuries before.—*Discover* (August, 2007)

Many English Atheists

Only 28% of people in England believe in a personal God, according to a new religious survey. And fully 42% said they believe religion has a harmful effect. Moreover, 74% polled said they never or only rarely prayed. The YouGov survey was commissioned by John Humphrys, a broadcaster and writer and self-described "doubter."—*Christian News* (9/17/07)

AIDS Vaccine Ineffective

A promising new AIDS vaccine doesn't work. Merck & Co. said it was discontinuing a study of the vaccine, a study partly funded by the National Institutes of Health. Of 741 volunteers who got the vaccine, 24 became infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. In a comparison group, of 762 participants who got dummy shots, only 21 became infected.—*(Racine) Journal Times* (9/22/07)

Beethoven Killed?

Beethoven was accidentally killed, a Viennese pathologist believes. He thinks the composer's physician may have inadvertently overdosed him with lead. Previously research had determined Beethoven had suffered from lead poisoning. Toxic levels of lead had been found in his hair and bone fragments. The pathologist believes the physician tried to ease Beethoven's pain caused by cirrhosis of the liver and edemas of the abdomen by periodically puncturing his abdominal cavity and then sealing the wound with a lead-laced poultice.—*(Racine) Journal Times* (8/29/07)



Beethoven

Human-Animal Hybrids

British scientists may now be allowed to create human-animal hybrid embryos for research purposes, the country's fertility regulator has decided in principle. In creating the embryos, a tiny bit of human DNA would be merged with the eggs of animals such as cattle or rabbits. Some scientists say the research could lead to therapies for diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, but grave ethical and moral objections have been raised. "These embryos are essentially human. Yet they will be cannibalized and killed for their stem cells," a pro-life spokesman said.—*news.yahoo.com* (9/5/07)

Immune System Protects Newborns

The idea that a newborn baby's immune system is undeveloped has been overturned by new research. A Columbia U. immunologist researched about 100 pregnant women who came to a clinic for flu shots. She found a large proportion of newborns were producing immune cells that didn't come from their mothers.—*Discover* (September, 2007)

Toddlers More Social Than Chimps

Toddlers as young as 2½ years old have better social skills than chimpanzees and display a "cultural intelligence" unique to humans. A study, published in the journal *Science*, indicated humans have distinctive abilities to understand nonverbal communication, to imitate another's solution to a problem and to read the intentions of others.—*(Racine) Journal Times* (9/7/07)

Germany Supports Non-Embryonic Cells

Germany has said it would spend \$6.9 million over 3 years for non-embryonic stem cell research. "We will support more those research projects that aim to substitute...embryonic stem cells with stem cells...produced from non-embryonic cells," the German Research Minister has stated. Because of the Nazi experiments at creating a "master race," genetic research is a sensitive subject in Germany, and the production of embryonic cells from pre-existing stem cell lines is banned in the country.—*news.yahoo.com* (9/10/07)

Naturalists Visit Creation Museum

Naturalists from Kentucky state parks are planning a fact-finding trip Nov. 1 to the new Creation Museum. The reason: their comments about ancient earth history are being challenged more often by visitors to the parks who have also visited the museum. When park visitors refer to a particular museum exhibit, the naturalists want the experience of having seen the exhibit in person.—*www.courier-journal.com* (9/2/07)



Coelacanth

Another Living 'Extinct' Coelacanth Discovered

A fisherman in Indonesia has caught a rare "living fossil." The 4.3-foot-long coelacanth fish caught was only the second to ever have been captured in Asia. At one time the odd-looking fish was thought to have gone extinct "70 million" years ago, but then in 1938 a species was caught off the coast of South Africa, and since then more than 300 modern coelacanth have been found.—*news.bbc.co.uk* (8/1/07)

'Hobbit' Wasn't Human

The famed Indonesian "hobbit" has now been declared to have been a non-human. According to a report in the journal *Science*, a study of the creature's wrist bones indicates it was not a human suffering from a genetic disorder as some scientists had suggested.—*Milwaukee Journal* (9/21/07)

Iron Supplements Can Improve Memory

A recent study reported in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* indicated that iron supplementation can improve memory and mental-functioning skills in iron-deficient women with diminished memory. The study involved 113 women ages 18 to 35. It is not clear whether the results would hold true for men or for older adults. It is important to talk to a doctor before taking iron supplements.—*Mayo Clinic Health Letter* (September, 2007)

Kidney Stone Procedure Could Be Dangerous

A commonly-used treatment to break up kidney stones could increase the risk of diabetes and high blood pressure, according to Mayo Clinic urologists. The researchers reviewed 20 years of people receiving shock wave therapy (lithotripsy). They found the risk of diabetes was nearly four times greater with a 1.5 times greater risk of developing high blood pressure.—*Mayo Clinic Health Letter* (August, 2006)

Plastic Blood

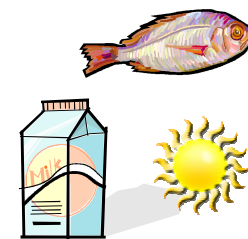
Donated Type O blood and perhaps all donor blood may some day not be necessary, according to a U. of Sheffield chemist who is working on developing synthetic plastic blood. Still to be tested, the plastic blood has the same size, shape, and function as hemoglobin. Also, U. of Copenhagen scientists are experimenting with two bacterial enzymes that can change Type B blood to Type O, the kind all people can safely receive.—*Discover* (August, 2007)

Vitamin D Benefits The Elderly

Increased amounts of vitamin D can apparently significantly reduce the chance of falling in elderly adults. According to a study published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* which involved 124 nursing home residents, those who took at least 800 international units (IU) of vitamin D had the lowest incidence of falls at 20%, while those taking lesser amounts had rates ranging up to 60%. Mayo doctors suggest adults over 50 consider aiming for 800 IU of vitamin D daily from a combination of food intake and supplements.—*Mayo Clinic Health Letter* (August, 2007)

Vitamin D Can Prevent Cancer

Many studies are suggesting that vitamin D is a valuable nutrient for helping cut the odds of getting colon, breast and prostate cancer. Men with the highest blood levels of vitamin D have been found to have half the risk of colon cancer, and older women were significantly less apt to develop any cancer if they took 1,400-1,500 mg of calcium and 1,100 IU of vitamin D daily. Good sources of vitamin D are fatty fish, fortified milk and cereals, sunlight, and supplements.—*USA Weekend* (8/24-26/07)



Americans Not Getting Enough Sleep

A 2005 poll found American adults average 6.7 to 6.9 hours of sleep a night, and that's not enough. The "sleep debt" is taking its toll on health, relationships, and work performance, according to sleep experts. An occasional short bout of insomnia is not a cause of concern, but chronic sleep loss—too little sleep night after night—is. Most people including older adults need from 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night.—*Mayo Clinic Health Letter* (August, 2006)

Six Year Coma Ends After Brain Treatments

A man woke up after six years of minimal consciousness following treatments from electrical brain implants at the medical college of Cornell U. The 38-year-old patient had been severely brain-damaged and was the first to be selected to receive the experimental "deep brain stimulation" treatments. He is now able to watch movies, drink from a cup, express pain, and say his parents' names.—*Clearly Caring* (September/October, 2007)

Pencil Removed From Brain After 55 Years

When Germany's Margaret Wegner was 4, she fell while carrying a pencil, and the pencil penetrated her cheek and disappeared into her brain. Now 59, Wegner finally had most of the writing utensil removed, an operation that should end the 55 years of chronic headaches and nosebleeds she had been enduring. At the time of her accident, the technology did not exist to safely remove the pencil.—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (8/8/07)

Smokers Have Worse Osteoarthritis

Patients suffering from osteoarthritis (wear-and-tear knee arthritis) had 2½ times greater cartilage loss and more severe knee pain if they were smokers, according to a Mayo Clinic study. The study involved 159 men of whom 19 were still smoking.—*Mayo Clinic Health Letter* (August, 2007)



Marijuana Can Lead to Psychosis

Marijuana use can lead to psychosis, says the British Health Department in a study published in the journal *Lancet*. Even infrequent use of marijuana is "not as harmless as many people think," one of the study's authors says. The increased risk of psychosis was said to be 40%.—*Christian News* (8/13/07)

Question Jupiter's Protection of Earth

The planet Jupiter may not be as protective of Earth as formerly thought. Astronomers have thought the giant planet's gravitational pull has caused a slingshot effect, diverting objects heading for Earth from ever reaching us. However, computer modeling by astronomers in Europe doesn't appear to support this conclusion.—*www.nature.com* (8/24/07)



Amateurs Launch Large Rocket in Scotland

Scotland was the location of the biggest rocket ever to be launched by amateur rocketeers. A 12.5-foot rocket, the Corpulent Stump, reached a height of 5,988 feet. A parachute system worked perfectly in allowing the rocket to float back to earth and be retrieved. The rocket suffered very little damage.—*news.bbc.co.uk* (8/27/07)

Three Dead in Explosion At Space Center

Three technicians died and three others critically injured July 26 during an explosion at a remote Mojave Desert facility where top-secret tests are underway for a yet unbuilt privately-funded spaceship. The project is the result of a partnership involving Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic commercial space travel program and famous aerospace designer Burt Rutan. The accident isn't expected to cause significant delays in the attempt to begin commercial spaceflights by late 2009 or 2010.—*www.usatoday.com* (8/26/07)

Lots of Junk in Orbit

There are now more than 100,000 pieces of man-made debris in orbit, and they threaten both satellites and astronauts. The objects range in size from nuts and bolts to huge rocket parts, and 12,000 of them are at least the size of a baseball. This January, a Chinese anti-satellite weapons test created more than 35,000 pieces of debris larger than 1 centimeter. Unfortunately, scientists so far have not come up with a solution to the problem.—*USA Weekend* (8/24-26/07)

Deadly Bacteria in Space

Bacteria in space can become more deadly, a study of bacteria on the 12-day Atlantis orbiter flight in September 2006 has found. *Salmonella typhimurium* food bugs were seen to alter the way they expressed 167 genes. Since humans can't be completely sterilized, this study has important implications for future manned flights to the Moon or Mars.—*news.bbc.co.uk* (9/25/07)

A Prize from Google

Google is offering up to \$30 million in prizes to private firms that can land a robot rover on the Moon. In partnership with the X-Prize Foundation, Google said it wanted to stimulate research into low-cost robotic exploration of space. To win a prize, a firm's robot craft must be able to shoot video and also roam for specific distances on the Moon.—*news.bbc.co.uk* (7/13/07)

Giant Hole in Space

There is a giant hole in the Universe that is devoid of galaxies, stars, and even dark matter, a team of U. of Minnesota astronomers claims. The void is nearly a billion light-years across, and the scientists have no idea why it is there. It is in a region of the sky in the constellation Eridanus, southwest of Orion.—*news.yahoo.com* (8/23/07)



China Wants to Change Its Academic Culture

Chinese legislators want to change the country's academic culture that tends to shame researchers who fail in their projects. The legislators want to insure that funding will continue to be available to scientists even when their research may fail to lead to innovation. Supporters of this new outlook on scientific research cite Thomas Edison who failed for years before finally developing an electric light bulb.—*news.yahoo.com* (8/28/07)

Mine Fires Add CO₂

Coal-mine fires in China and India could be a main cause of global warming, some experts say. Each year up to 200 million tons of coal go up in flames in China and up to 10 million tons in India's mines. These fires may produce enough carbon dioxide to equal America's total carbon-dioxide emissions from gasoline. Controlling the fires may be possible with a nitrogen-laced foam being developed in the U.S.—*Parade* (8/26/07)

Prizes for More Babies

In an effort to help reverse the decline in Russia's population, the governor of Ulyanovsk again offered valuable prizes to any couple giving birth on Russia's national day—June 12. For the third year in a row, couples were awarded prizes that included money, refrigerators, and even cars if they had a baby on June 12. The program seems to be working as the number of births in Ulyanovsk's hospitals has risen each year on that date.—*(Racine) Journal Times* (9/12/07)

Bush Had Lyme Disease

President Bush was treated for Lyme disease a year ago the White House has disclosed. A spokesman says it's not uncommon for him to get tick bites during his frequent bike rides. Lyme disease can be spread by ticks. The president was treated for symptoms "consistent with early, localized Lyme disease" without any recurrence.—*www.cnn.com* (8/8/07)



120th Anniversary of Phonetic Language

This year marks the 120th anniversary of the publication of *Unua Libro*, the first textbook for people wanting to learn the Esperanto language. Invented by a Pole, the easy-to-learn language consists of simple grammar, phonetic pronunciations, and a vocabulary made up mostly of words from Western European languages. Estimates of the number of people currently able to speak Esperanto range from 100,000 to 2 million, and each year more than 100 conferences are held worldwide to promote the language.—*Discover* (September, 2007)

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BRONZE & COPPER

“A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall. He had a *bronze* helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of *bronze* weighing five thousand shekels, on his legs he wore *bronze* greaves (leg armor), and a *bronze* javelin was slung on his back.” 1 Samuel 17:4-6 (NIV)

If there was anything impressive about the giant Goliath besides his height, it may have been everything he wore or carried made out of bronze.

What is bronze? Bronze is an alloy made from copper and tin and perhaps small amounts of other metals. An alloy is a

mixture, usually of two or more metals. The simplest bronze is copper mixed with a small amount of tin to increase hardness and make it better able to resist damage.

How is copper obtained?

Copper comes from a mineral called copper ore which is dug up from the ground. The copper can then be separated from the worthless parts of the ore.



A copper mine in Chile.

How are bronze and copper used? These materials have been used for making tools, machinery, wire, cooking utensils, pipes, works of art and much more.

For how long have people been using bronze

and copper? The fact that soldiers at the time of David and Goliath were already using equipment made of bronze shows that bronze and copper have been used for a long time.

What does bronze look like? Bronze like its main ingredient, copper, is very shiny, especially when polished. However, if left out in the open where oxygen can get to it, bronze can change from its normal brownish gold color to other colors.



Old copper utensils.

Which countries mine the most copper? Chile produces more copper than any other country. Other leading producers of copper include the United States, Canada, Zambia, Russia, Poland, and China.

Bronze and copper are very useful materials, but Goliath was wrong if he thought they could help protect him against David. God was on David's side just as He is on our side.

Source: Compton's Encyclopedia

Activities.

1. Make a dull-looking copper penny shine. Place a dull-looking penny into some vinegar. After an hour check it out. It should be a lot shinier because of the cleaning action of the acid in the vinegar.



2. Can a magnet attract bronze or copper? Try it.

► My View



Creationism—a Threat to Human Rights?

There is a nominee for the most ludicrous statement made by a government body in 2007. The Council of Europe has declared that teaching creationism is a threat to human rights!

What? The right to hear both sides of a controversial issue is a threat to human rights?

As reported by *www.nature.com*, the Council of Europe is an intergovernmental body that is responsible for, among other things, the European Convention on Human Rights. On October 4, the Council voted to encourage its member states to “firmly oppose the teaching of creationism as a scientific discipline on an equal footing with the theory of evolution,” and gave as a reason the perceived threat to human rights. However, the motion is not binding on the 47 member states.


Here in America we’re used to hearing judges and scientific groups denounce creationism as devoid of any scientific merit but never before heard anyone claim

it was against human rights.

To its credit, *Nature’s* Web site printed several responses to the news article, many of them critical of the Council of Europe. Among the comments: the Council provided no documentation for the assertion that creationism is against human rights; Adolph Hitler’s belief in a “master race” was based on evolution and we all know where that led; Darwinism must be in trouble if politicians are getting involved in propagating it in the classrooms.

It is encouraging to see that the creationist movement is having a growing impact around the world, for example in Britain, France, and Russia. Surely the belief in evolution must be a major factor in the shrinking church attendance statistics seen throughout Europe.

Creationism is also having a growing influence in some Muslim countries, and although there have been some contacts with American creationists, Muslim creationism isn’t likely to be the same as biblical creationism.

God willing, once people realize there is no conflict between the record of God’s Creation that He left in nature and the Genesis record, more and more will turn to the Bible to find their Savior. The truth can’t be hidden for long. 

—Warren Krug, editor

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