# CHAPTER TWENTY

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# REFLECTIONS OF A SECULAR NATURE

## INTRODUCTION

Whereas previous chapters have been related to actual events in my life, with a little baloney thrown in, I will attempt in this chapter to speak in a more philosophical manner regarding life. In the vernacular of a college graduate, (wow!), such talk means it has an extra dose of baloney. However, I hope that's not really the case because from my viewpoint the points I make are serious, although the reader will have to judge the content for him or herself. As taken from Webster, it will be philosophical in the sense he defines as "an attitude towards life". Being personal in nature, it has grown out of my experiences and is consequently limited by them as well as by my capacity to learn from them and logically express the same. I claim no unusual intellect and realize the path my feet have trod is but an infinitesimal part of that covered by my generation, let alone mankind as a whole. With this admission one may wonder what I can contribute as well as what its value might be, if any, and its purpose. I'm not sure it has any real value other than to myself in that it has kept me busy and helped stave off Alzheimer's or dementia of any kind. It does, however, portray my viewpoint of life after eight decades of struggle through its maze.

As I mentioned in the preface, the total effort has kept me busy during my retirement, helped me learn a little more about the computer (especially Word Perfect with its drawing tools) and hopefully delayed the onset of any senility. This particular chapter and those following have stimulated my old bean by requiring me to research some topics, thinking deeply about what I have come to believe and deciding the best way to express the same. Having concluded that I am no expert on any of the subjects I plan to discuss, I realize my opinion might be modified with time and certainly disputed by some who might read this. Thus, each person will have to judge whether the materials I lay out have any value to them on their own. Its real purpose, however, is to let my posterity see where I stand on a number of issues that I deem important in life. I guess I have a glimmer of hope that the substance herein will motivate them (my posterity) to at least seriously contemplate life and determine for themselves just what they feel it is all about.

I will begin my discussion in this chapter with my views of some general terms that seem to apply to secular thought but also have connotations of religious thinking as well. We frequently hear people speak of right versus wrong and good versus evil and truth versus error or falsity. Having done so myself, I wondered on what basis I or anyone else would draw such a conclusion. I decided we had to have a standard by which we compared the thoughts in question to arrive at our conclusion. Such a standard might be our personal experiences, religious studies, scientific statements or any number of individuals whose statements we accept as factual. That being the case, I think it is safe to say that our conclusions are no better than the standard we accept as authoritative and likewise, the standards are no better than the ultimate authority they rest their validity on. Following such logic back to its ultimate authority, it seems to me we must rest our case on either God and His purposes or mankind's personal understanding of their existence derived since their arrival on the world's stage.

The scriptures are replete with counsel for man to trust in the Lord and not in the arm of the flesh. Thus, at this point, mankind must separate into two groups who either accept the scriptures as coming from a divine source and consequently from the ultimate authority or

reject such a source as being nothing more than a product of man's imagination. The latter view, of course, provides the basis for man being the ultimate authority as derived through the evolution and genius of man during his existence. Once again, it boils down to whom each of us decides to put our trust, i.e. in God or in the arm of the flesh. Consequently, we begin our search for truth, right or goodness with our decision to believe in God or not. That choice determines our ultimate authority and the true basis of our conclusions. Needless to say, our convictions can grow in a given direction through study and practice of the principles therein or stagnate with no effort and thus we must simply accept the conclusions of others. I would guess the majority of mankind fall in the latter category regardless of the religion they profess. Of course, we can also reverse fields, as many have and become believers or disbelievers because of our experiences and/or study. I point the foregoing out because the terms involved will arise from time to time in both my secular and religious discussion but any further thoughts on religious aspects will have to wait for chapter 21. I might add, even though it might already be obvious, that my ultimate authority is God, my heavenly Father in whom I place my trust.

I also want to discuss briefly another term most of us would refer to as "VISION" because it impacts everything else in life. I will then divide my reflections in this chapter into three distinct categories, which I choose to label as ""SCIENTIFIC", POLITICAL and "OTHER ASPECTS OF SECULAR LIFE". Obviously, the latter category is a catchall and allows me to wander from topic to topic as I feel motivated. As already noted, in the next chapter, i.e. twenty one, my reflections will be primarily of a religious nature. I mention them here because they do, in large measure, relate also to secular activities. However, I intend to leave any in depth discussion for two later chapters.

Herein, I will try to relate my sincere belief as to why and how I have arrived at the particular view of the secular principle or precept I am discussing. Obviously, not all readers will be interested in what I have to say and even less will agree but that's okay. I'm not writing this chapter to convince anyone that my views are necessarily right but rather to express them in a meaningful way that will guide the interested reader through the logic that I see in it. Then, if it has any motivational benefit for them, I and, hopefully they, will feel so much the better. You see, I believe all mankind should take time to ponder the purpose of life and at least seek after that which they perceive as the truth of it. Those who get bored with my remarks will probably set the book aside rather quickly at this point, before completing this chapter. However, if not, they will have only lost a little time by reading it and will have gained a closer view of my somewhat warped personality. Even the latter situation could be a plus in that it might help them avoid that same fate when they reach this point in mortality. If not, at least they have been warned.

In the process of this discussion, I will include various comments and articles from recognized authorities or at least well qualified people to support my views and thus help the reader to understand the logic of the position I have taken. Some are rather lengthy and even quite technical in substance. Consequently, they are rather heavy reading and require a good deal of concentration and thought to perceive the points that are made. Their purpose is to point out to the reader that many well qualified people don't necessarily subscribe to the prevailing opinions accepted by society. I believe they provide valuable insight of the problem at hand, much more so than my comments and thus deserve the reader's best effort to digest them, so bear with me as I describe my thoughts and conclusions.

If one ponders the purpose of life for any appreciable amount of time, he or she will, quite probably, come up with a vision or mental picture of what they perceive it to be, as well as some idea of the actions they want to take as a result of that vision. With this in mind, I want to talk about the concept of "vision", itself and how I believe it applies to the lives of all mankind.

## VISION

Among the definitions, provided by Webster for the word "vision", are; "*a picture formed in the mind and imaginative foresight"*. With these definitions in mind I want to include some comments from a marvelous book by Thomas Sowell, a conservative writer and columnist with impressive credentials. My interest in his weekly column of our local newspaper, as well as many of his other articles I have had an opportunity to read, attracted me to one of his books entitled **"A Conflict of Visions".** Therein he addresses the political vision primarily. His comments will be in italics.

According to Mr. Sowell, *"… visions are not mere emotional drives. On the contrary, they have remarkable logical consistency, even if those devoted to these visions have seldom investigated that logic. Nor are visions confined to zealots and ideologues. We all have visions. They are the silent shapers of our thoughts.*

*Visions may be moral, political, economic, religious or social. In these or other realms, we sacrifice for our visions and sometimes, if need be, face ruin rather than betray them. Where visions conflict irreconcilably, whole societies may be torn apart. Conflicts of interests dominate the short run, but conflicts of visions dominate history.*

*We will do almost anything for our visions, except think about them. The purpose of this book is to think about them".*

Similarly, this is my purpose in this and succeeding chapters, i.e. to have my posterity recognize their vision of life, think about life's purpose and act in reasonable accordance with the same. Such vision about that purpose lies at the source of mankind's struggles, whether secular or religious. Even if one firmly believes Christianity is the only true religion, he or she must agree that the vision of some people, who have claimed it, was distorted. From such sprang the inquisitions, the crusades, etc. in efforts to impose their so-called Christianity on others. Thus, claiming to be a Christian is hardly sufficient to validate it as true. Rather one's conduct in matters of any kind, it would seem, define his or her real belief in the same.

Consequently, as you read my remarks, be patient and ponder them a little before dismissing them as being beyond reality and unworthy of consideration. Though you may find yourself in disagreement, I believe the development and review of one's own "life encompassing vision" will be of considerable benefit to that individual. It will help him or her develop an overall plan for life and an ultimate goal based on their understanding and abilities thus far achieved. It will help them prioritize their future efforts and develop a base for intermediate visions such as education, marriage and life's profession. It could also help generate involvement in civic affairs, the arts and religion, acquiring political savvy and an appreciation for the beauty of life. Such a base should help him or her better weigh the differences, including values, between the secular and spiritual sides of life.

I must admit that I failed to do this early in life and I suspect such wide areas of interest, if developed at all, come later for most young people. I would guess that such slow development of wide understanding of society's menu results from time constraints, interests and maybe several other things. However, I have learned that even limited involvement in important areas is of considerable value because of its effect on our lives, actual and potential. Though we may not have time for deep involvement in all, an appreciation for their importance and benefits will help us better focus on our own vision of life and the final objective we seek. Such appreciation can also broaden our interests, thus impacting our professional status and enrich both family and social life.

What little political savvy I have comes from significant reading in the political arena since retirement. It hasn't motivated me to run for office for I have little confidence or desire to succeed but it has helped me to realize the impact politics have on my life and society in general as well as their future effects on my posterity. Thus, my votes are cast with a greater sense of responsibility, resulting partially from my concept of the purpose of life. Similarly, my religious involvement has helped me appreciate the spiritual side of life as well as both music and art to a greater degree while contemplating their role in life. Oddly enough, I have found a sense of enjoyment in such involvement and realized that they have broadened my appreciation for both the disciplines and the artists and professionals therein. In all four areas, i.e. politics, religion, music and art, I now understand more fully my distain for some of the so-called professionals involved as well as the awe I hold for others and their more edifying achievements. I admire their motivation to contribute their time and works for their own and mankind's benefit as well as the skills they display in the process. All of this helps me define more clearly my vision of life and the final goal I seek therein. Whether I achieve it or not remains to be seen.

Now, as I look back on life, I realize that my real involvement, even in religion, was limited up to the time of my retirement. Such lack blurred my vision and goals as well as limited my secular abilities and the joys available in life. Significant effort was limited to family and profession without realizing that broader interests would improve results in both areas. Since retirement, I have been fortunate in being given

assignments in church, which have encouraged sociality and speaking abilities as well as musical appreciation, believe it or not. Though I may never develop expertise in any such areas, I have broadened my interests and increased my satisfaction with life as well as developed a modicum of ability in each. If I have any regret, it is in waiting so long to make the effort. I bear witness that one can develop at least some skill in areas of limited interest through applied effort and reap a fuller life with its associated joy. It broadens friendships and opens up more of life's blossoms with their attendant beauty. I realize now that I have kind of rambled through the preceding thoughts with only a general objective in mind but don't give up yet as I intend to get a little more specific as I continue.

**THE GENERAL FRUITION OF A VISION**

I think all significant progress in the world begins with some sort of vision. That vision may be altered as time progresses with differing scope and complexity. Thus the football enthusiast might initially visualize himself as making the first team in high school and gradually alter it with success until he sees himself as a standout in the NFL. Likewise a gymnast might begin with a desire to simply compete as a means of exercise and ultimately see him or herself as an Olympic champion. Similar remarks could be made about any endeavor requiring the vision, planning and effort of man in my opinion.

The vision, if having possibility, provides the motivation to develop a logical plan whereby a theory is born. One might theorize that if he eats a high energy diet, works out in various strengthening exercises 5 hours a week and practices certain gymnastic exercises daily, he can reach a certain level of ability in X amount of time and be accepted by the Olympic team. Of course, such a theory is best developed under the guidance of someone's experience, i.e. a person who has been there and done that.

Obviously, the plan is just a theory, having no validity until certain successes or points of empirical evidence establish its validity. Mr. Sowell makes these remarks regarding the process. *"Logic is an essential ingredient in the process of turning a vision into a theory, just as empirical evidence is then essential for determining the validity of that theory".* Unfortunately, the validity of empirical evidence often becomes a subject of debate between contesting parties and no agreement is reached. All one has to do today to witness such debate among so-called professionals, is to consider the global warming controversy and man's apparent contribution to it. Similarly, one might consider the current economic situation (2008) with its attendant bailouts by various names along with the political rhetoric that accompanies it.

The vision Mr. Sowell speaks of pertains to this physical existence and opinions of various means for making it more suitable for mankind. These means include political, legal, economic, social, moral, scientific and even religious concepts, which, in the view of the designer, will promote the welfare of mankind. In general, those concepts are confined to systems, which influence or control our mortal existence. They are unconcerned with the possibility of life after death or the idea of a pre-existence. Even so, one familiar with the gospel and particularly the restored gospel can make valid connections. Such connections relate to the purpose of mortal life, its impact on our eternal existence and the nature of our mortal beings whether physical only or of a dual nature including both a spiritual and physical being. To further demonstrate the principle of a vision, I include the evolution of my own vision. Though unrecognized most of my life, it still existed. I realize that I might lose most readers at this point in boredom but I will risk it because with my limited skills, it is the easiest way to demonstrate its everyday reality.

**EVOLUTION OF MY PERSONAL VISION**

My initial vision of my existence began, I suppose, back in my grade school days, before I even had any concept of the real purpose of life. It was probably limited to getting through high school and becoming an adult, which included achieving some degree of success by getting good grades in school and generally obeying the guiding rules of life, as given to me by my parents. Of course, our church attendance reinforced those rules, while parental kudos as well as those of a few from friends and siblings, provided the necessary empirical evidence for me and established the validity of the simple theory I had developed for my vision of life.

As I progressed in school to the high school level, my vision became more complex. It now began to include my concept of adulthood, which included the need to become more of a man and prepare myself for a vocation. I realized I was timid in nature and even somewhat of a sissy, so to speak. In fact, as I have said previously, Dan often reminded me of

that fact. I desired recognition and acceptance, of course, from my siblings and parents as well as by others in my limited role in society. I believed that such recognition resulted through doing well scholastically, portraying manly attributes, developing a sense of humor and being able to carry on an intelligent conversation. The latter would be particularly difficult, given my shy personality. This was apparently my theory, which obviously needed empirical evidence to establish its validity. Of course, I didn't think in those terms at that time but only upon my goals of success, which was acceptance by those I admired, even my dear brother Dan, believe it or not. Recognition in society had become the goal of my vision.

Achieving scholastic success wasn't much of a problem because any strengths I might have had seemed to occur therein. The few kudos, I might have received, usually came in that area. Portraying a manly image was a horse of a different color. I was skinny with little evidence of a manly physique and, coupled with my timid nature, the overall image I portrayed was somewhat less than acceptable, even in my tortured mind. How I longed for an impressive build and an outgoing personality that would light up my friends, while bringing me the recognition and attention I so desperately craved. I simply wanted to be accepted in my society and make a splash of sorts, somewhat like Dan did.

Though I don't remember taking a vow to change my situation, I obviously began to take steps to improve it, it being unacceptable in my mind. These steps, I believe, were responsible for the course I found myself on for the next several years. First, I went out for football, which I deemed a manly pursuit. About the same time, at the tender age of fourteen, I applied for my first job with the U.S. Forest Service. This was feasible because of WW II, which depleted domestic society of "real men". I was accepted and began my job of piling brush in June of that year (1943) at the age of fifteen. The next summer, as mentioned in chapter three, I secured a job chasing smoke in Bear Valley adjacent to the Idaho primitive area. All of these terms, i.e. chasing smoke, Bear Valley and primitive area had connotations of manliness, which was essential to my ultimate objective. Quite often, I found myself in fearful or trying situations, which when conquered, proved to me I was on the road to that objective I so desired. Later, I entered college with the idea of graduating in forestry and mimicking my idol Joe Ladle. He, however, convinced that me there was little opportunity in such a profession and I changed to geophysics, which offered opportunity to work outside rather than at a desk. These goals in college were motivated partially, I believe, by my drive for manhood. Thus, that vision developed in high school, though rather blurred and disjointed, really launched me on the road to becoming a geophysical engineer.

My vision continued to mature by virtue of my progression in life, as previously mentioned. That progression provided points of empirical validation for my career through promotion and satisfaction, indicating my theory for success was valid. Even so, I realized my introverted nature was still a major problem for me, inhibiting my professional and my social life. I have spoken of the ramifications of this particular personal characteristic previously on my professional life and my inability to change it, at the time. It wasn't until after my retirement that I began to conquer, or at least alleviate, this particular difficulty through service in the LDS Church. My introduction to the restored gospel in the early sixties with its maturation in retirement produced this desired and, in my mind, beneficial course correction, bringing me to my present situation.

My becoming a great speaker, lecturer or sought after figure in society is beyond realism, let alone a personal desire but the fear of speaking in church or in other social situations has lost the dread it once imposed on my psyche. The extemporaneous remarks required in some of my temple work pose no unusual fear, as they once did. I count this as a special blessing obtained only through active involvement in areas of life requiring such activity. It provides another empirical point validating my vision and theory that growth of any kind is only achieved by dedication and effort in areas of concern.

The vision of my existence, as it has matured into today's state, is not really mine but one taken from the restored gospel. It becomes mine, however, as I learn of its concepts and apply them to life, weaving a tapestry of purpose in my every day actions. Here, I will liken that vision to a gigantic crossword puzzle of thousands of pieces. It began to take shape, I suppose, with my earliest realization that my life was inextricably entwined with those of my family and eventually society as a whole. The

few pieces of the puzzle I put together, before joining the LDS Church, portrayed a pleasant and hopeful existence, which motivated me to become involved and accept the challenges, which it seemed to constantly place in front of me. At that time, I didn't understand the beauty and degree of magnificence my vision of the plan of salvation would eventually become, or more properly evolve into, later in my life. Each step forward has added another piece or pieces towards my solving that puzzle and hence, enlarged its scope and beauty. This, of course, motivates me to seek greater understanding and apply the principles contained therein to my life. It also motivates me to try to clearly explain certain facets of this evolving vision.

In the following, I will make comments, which I believe relate to one's vision but I leave it to you, the reader, to come to your own conclusion.

## REFLECTIONS ON SCIENCE

Being an engineer by vocation, I have a natural interest in things scientific. That doesn't classify me as having any expertise but only an interest therein. Even so, I always wondered about the spiritual side of life. It was this interest along with the scientific, I suppose, and my realization that all moral principles seemed to emanate from, or at least be embodied in, Christianity and a Supreme Being that kept me trying to bring them into harmony in my own mind. That pursuit has involved scientific study as well as historical and theological study. Though I claim no unusual knowledge in any of these areas, I will try to reiterate here some scientific conclusions of others, which have guided me in establishing my own concept of truth. I now take the position that all truth emanates from God and all error is a product of Satan or man acting without God's enlightment.

***"According to a study released last year, 40% of American scientists believe in a personal God – and not merely an ineffable power and presence in the world but a deity to whom they can pray".***

I have, indeed, increased my scientific background and, I believe, grown spiritually over the years through that effort. I now realize such effort is a never-ending quest, at least in this life, bringing up new questions as old ones are disposed of. I am convinced, however, that science and true religion are compatible. If God created the heavens and the earth, which I hold to be true, then he also established the laws of science. Consequently, our real understanding of these laws will eventually help lead us to God. When that time comes, there will be no conflict between science and religion. In the meantime, I will continue to study scientific as well as theological thought with the faith that apparent contradictions will vanish as my understanding in both subjects' increases. With that in mind I will now share a few scientific articles and comments that have come my way in magazines containing various reviews of scientific thought and also a couple of books I have read. It is obvious in all of these that two different schools of thought result from the same evidence giving validation to an earlier comment of mine. At the very least, in my poor beleaguered mind, the conclusions of those who support the "big bang theory" and/or evolution through gene mutation are open to serious question. In all reality, they have not advanced past the designation of scientific theory, having no complete empirical evidence to establish them as fact, though often purported to so be. This will be evident to the reader who strives to understand the material I have included. He or she may want to read the actual articles involved themselves.

### SCIENCE FINDS GOD AND

### WHAT CAME BEFORE CREATION

The above title of this section names two scientific articles, which provide information regarding the cosmos interspersed with my own comments. One came from the July 1998 Newsweek and the second from the U. S. News and World Report of July 1998. They attracted my attention because of my interest in that area. I don't expect anything I present to necessarily influence anyone else's thinking but rather to shed some light on my own thoughts regarding the complex subjects involved. I reiterate my position that God and science are compatible, if for no other reason than God created the laws by which the universe is organized. That bias, for which I make no apology, will show up in the selections I have taken from these articles as well as in my associated comments.

I begin with a comment taken from Newsweek wherein the author said, *"According to a study released last year, 40% of American scientists believe in a personal God – and not merely an ineffable power and presence in the world but a deity to whom they can pray".* This percentage is apparently increasing as indicated from earlier comments made in the article. One might infer

from the above quote that other scientists might believe in a supreme being but not be drawn to prayer. In addition, many scientists are quick to point out that the sheer vastness, complexity and existence of scientific laws point to some sort of a supreme being, which they may or may not call God.

Opening remarks of the article describe one Allan Sandage who has spent his life studying the cosmos. Following is a description of his changing views over the course of his life. *"Now slightly stooped and white-haired at 72, Sandage has spent a professional lifetime coaxing secrets out of the stars, peering through telescopes from Chile to California in the hope of spying nothing less than the origins and destiny of the universe. As much as any other 20th century astronomer, Sandage actually figured it out: his observations of distant stars showed how fast the universe is expanding and how old it is (15 billion years or so). But through it all Sandage, who says he was 'almost a practicing atheist as a boy,' was nagged by mysteries whose answers were not to be found in the glittering panoply of supernovas. Among them: why is there something rather than nothing? Sandage began to despair of answering such questions through reason alone, and so, at 50, he willed himself to accept God. 'It was my science that drove me to the conclusion that the world is much more complicated than can be explained by science,' he says. 'It is only through the supernatural that I can understand the mystery of existence'".*

***'When you realize the laws of nature must be incredibly finely tuned to produce the universe we see,'… 'that conspires to plant the idea that the universe did not just happen, but that there must be a purpose behind it'.***

A later section of the article has this to say, *"Physicists have now stumbled on signs that the cosmos is custom-made for life and consciousness. It turns out that if the constants of nature – unchanging numbers like the strength of gravity, the charge of an electron and the mass of a proton – were the tiniest bit different, then the atoms would not hold together, stars would not burn and life would never have made an appearance. 'When you realize the laws of nature must be incredibly finely tuned to produce the universe we see,' says John Polkinghorne, who had a distinguished career as a physicist at Cambridge University before becoming an Anglican Priest in 1982, 'that conspires to plant the idea that the universe did not just happen, but that there must be a purpose behind it'. Charles Townes, who shared the 1964 Nobel Prize in Physics for discovering the principles of the laser, goes further: 'Many have a feeling that somehow intelligence must have been involved in the laws of the universe'".*

A little later in the article another statement by Polkinghorne is given regarding mathematics wherein *"he says, 'This points to a very deep fact about the nature of the universe,' namely that our minds, which invent mathematics, conform to the reality of the cosmos. We are somehow tuned to its truths'".* A little later another comment surfaced that grabbed my attention, namely; *"Since pure thought can penetrate the universe's mysteries, 'this seems to be telling us that something about human consciousness is harmonious with God,' says Carl Feit a cancer biologist at Yeshiva University in New York and a Talmudic scholar.*

Still further on, a *"Sister Mary White of the Benedictine Meditation Center in St. Paul, Minnesota is quoted as saying, 'Science produces in me a tremendous awe. Science and spirituality have a common quest, which is a quest for truth'."* This statement supports my own view regarding the two disciplines.

These quotes, in my view, are sufficient to validate my stand that science and religion are compatible and that when pure truth regarding the cosmos and man are found, there will be no controversy. Many scientists argue or theorize among themselves about these fields. They are constantly changing their theories, which always seem to have flaws because they don't factor God into their studies, at least in my view. When the Lord chooses to provide the necessary light to scientists, pure truth will prevail and the answers will be found. In the meantime, we are left to choose between God's omniscience and man's fallible intellect. Without question, I have obviously selected the former. I'll now move on to excerpts from the second article, mentioned previously. They provide a similar picture.

The second article dwells on the big bang theory and a more recent creation of physicists' termed the Multiverse. The big bang theory seems to be falling out of favor because it can't explain what went on just before the big bang. Quoting from the second article;"*The earliest big bang*

*theories held that if all matter had once been pressed into a pinpoint, it must also be incomprehensibly hot, because compression generates heat. The initial matter-filled space of the universe might have bubbled at trillions of degrees, before it detonated for unknown reasons, its contents cooling into recognizable elements as they expanded into frigid space. The early postwar physicist, George Gamow, is credited with dubbing the proto-substance 'Ylem' (EYE-lem) from a medieval English word for matter). Gamow admitted he didn't have the slightest idea what Ylem was."*

The article goes on to say that in an attempt to explain where Ylem came from, some researchers came up with the term singularity to identify zones, which seem to defy current understanding of the laws of physics. Singularities are believed to reside in the cores of black holes. This thinking apparently led to the multiverse concept in which a mother universe can spawn another universe or daughter universe, which expands in totally different dimensions so as not to collide with the expanding mother universe. This proliferation of universes improves the odds of pure chance coming up with laws favoring both the formation of the universe by pure chance as well as life within it. Such thinking refuses to admit the existence of a higher intelligence being involved and is determined to prove everything came into existence by pure chance, thus supporting the theory of evolution. As I have repeatedly said, "I find such thought not only difficult to comprehend but also depressing because it leaves humanity without hope of existence beyond this life, let alone the glorious view provided by the gospel as restored by Joseph Smith and portrayed in the plan of salvation". I view it as being from the adversary because its purpose is to prove the non-existence of God.

***Researchers have calculated that after a big bang, unless the ratio of matter and energy to the volume of the universe (a value re-searchers call omega) was within one quadrillionth of one percent of the ideal, a runaway relativity would have rendered the cosmos uninhabitable: either too scrunched and distorted for life, or too diffuse for stars to form.***

Taking another section of this article regarding laws of the universe, we read, *"A curious question of geometry also handicapped many standard theories of the big bang. Einstein asserted that space is curved, a plastic region molded by the energies of the cosmos. If the firmament is destined to contract (researchers call this possibility the closed universe), the outer cosmos should already be curving back upon itself, creating very strange views in your local telescope. If the heavens are destined to keep expanding (called an open universe), curved space should be causing other astronomical strangeness. But as far as instruments can detect, the cosmic topology appears monotonously ordinary."*

They go on to say how a new galaxy discovered in March 1998 is so far out that it must have been created 13 billion years ago and space between it and the earth appears to be flat, apparently negating Einstein's theory or at least adding an element of doubt to it. Continuing on with the article, we read, *"Figuring out why our cosmos is so pleasantly flat may provide important clues as to why the genesis was hospitable to life at all. Researchers have calculated that after a big bang, unless the ratio of matter and energy to the volume of the universe (a value re-searchers call omega) was within* ***one quadrillionth of one percent*** *of the ideal, a runaway relativity would have rendered the cosmos uninhabitable: either too scrunched and distorted for life, or too diffuse for stars to form.* (Emphasis added with bold type.) [one quadrillionth of .01 or 1 % is 0.000,000,000,000,001 of .01, a mighty small number, which is, indeed, fine tuning] but I leave that judgment up to the reader.

*Other natural constants that trace back to the big bang also seem strangely fine-tuned in favor of a universe amenable to living consciousness. Had gravity been only slightly stronger, stars would burn through their nuclear fuel in less than a year: life would never evolve, much less settle in. Had the strong force that holds the nucleus of atoms together been only slightly weaker, stars would never have formed. So far no theory is even close to explaining why physical laws exist, much less why they take the form they do. Standard big bang theory, for example, essentially explains the propitious universe in this way, 'Well, we got lucky'."* My, what an encouraging thought for mankind. If that doesn't express lack of empirical evidence, what does?

Inflation theory supposes the creation of universes out of nothing. It speaks of false vacuums crackling with quantum-mechanical

promise, whatever that is. They contain vast amounts of virtual-particles or subatomic particles that sometimes pop up out of nowhere. Within these false vacuums there is potential for quantum fluctuations, which sometimes cause the subatomic world to change conditions for no apparent reason. There was also potential for vast amounts of cosmological constant, the force that may be pushing the universe apart. By the way, a quantum, according to my dictionary, is a small discrete packet of energy and is defined as the product of v (frequency) and Planck's constant. The latter, I remember hearing of in college physics, but that's about all.

Now, with all this gibberish in mind, all one has to accept is that over eons of time one of these quantum fluctuations within a false vacuum becomes sensational and causes everything to come unglued. Virtual particles materialize in astonishing numbers and along with the repelling force of gravity produce the big bang and another daughter universe. Thus, universes can be created out of nothing by pure chance. Ah, isn't the pure imagination of their logic wonderful? There is no need for God because the logic coming from the mind of man becomes their God. One Physicist, Alexander Vilenkin of Tufts University, believes that (quoting the article) *"what came before creation was nothing in the literal sense; therefore the creation of universes will never end, since you can never run out of nothing".* Another physicist, *"Andrei Linde of Stanford University proposes a cosmos which copies itself endlessly. This Multiverse generates new sectors by the billions, but we can't see these companion heavens because each new universe expands into a different dimension.* My question is this, "Is accepting the idea of God's existence more difficult than accepting such mind boggling theories with all their gibberish?" Not in my mind, it isn't, though I will admit it, my mind, is limited in capacity. Even so, such scientists are asking us to accept a concept, which is a figment of their imagination, one that can't be seen or proven in a concrete way and this because they refuse to accept the existence of a Supreme Being, leaving all existence to pure chance. Talk about a need for empirical points of data to validate theory as fact. This has to be a prime example. They would have us place our faith in them and their logic rather than in the God who created mankind. I believe such thought is the ultimate in vanity and is brought about by confusion and pride instigated by the adversary, as I have stated earlier. It is a product of personal choice and uncontrolled desire.

As a cap for the preceding thoughts, I will now include another short article in its totality, which summarizes some of the above and leaves us with a hope that science will eventually recognize God as the Great Creator. The following article mentioned above, lies within the 2nd article taken from US News and has a sub-title of:

**COSMIC DESIGNS – SCIENTISTS AND THEOLOGIANS DISCOVER COMMON GROUND**

Five sections in this last article have been printed in bold type for emphasis. Later, I want to discuss these briefly, inserting my own feelings and thoughts regarding them.

*"Darwin, Freud, relativity, the mechanics of the big bang – rightly or wrongly, all have been taken as supporting the modernistic conception of a chance based world in which forces devoid of meaning account for all outcomes.* ***Some thinkers have maintained that the big-bang theory shows no God was necessary at the creation. Intellectuals have wrung their hands in angst about how [the] bang-caused cosmic expansion will result in an inescapable running down of the stars, proving existence to be pointless. A depressing inevitable death of the universe figures prominently in the works of post-modern novelist Thomas Pynchon; while in the movie 'Annie Hall', Woody Allen's character is psychologically paralyzed by his dread of the galaxies expanding until they die.***

*By contrast new developments in big-bang science are almost supernaturally upbeat: The universe wants us, and the stars will shine forever.*

*This remarkable change in perspectives is helping inspire a warming trend between scientific and spiritual disciplines. A conference last month in Berkeley, California, at which cosmologists discussed the theological implications of their work, is representative. Allen Sandage, one of the world's leading astronomers, told the gathering that contemplating the majesty of the big-bang helped make him a believer in God, willing to accept that creation could only be explained as a 'miracle'.*

***HERESIES.*** *Not that long ago, such a comment from an establishment scientist would have been shocking. The mere existence of the organization that sponsored the Berkeley event, a well-regarded academic group called the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences, might have been snickered at. Today, 'intellectuals are beginning to find it respectable' to talk about how physical law seems to favor life, notes Ian Barbour, a professor of both religion and physics at Carlton College, in Northfield, Minnesota.*

*In this vein, the recent book Consilience by Harvard biologist E. O. Wilson argues that there is no need to wall off scientific from moral thought; rather, people should once again pursue the Enlightenment vision of reconciling the technical and the spiritual. A boomlet of serious books such as 'A Case Against Accident and Self-Organization' and God: The evidence goes further, suggesting the unknowns of the big-bang eventually will be seen as divine latency.* [Webster tells us one definition of latent is, *"present but not seen until some change occurs",* which certainly implies God's involvement.]

***If nothing else, the theological idea of creation ex-nihilo – out of nothing – is looking better all the time as inflation theories (main story) increasingly suggest the universe emerged from no tangible source.*** *The word 'design', rejected by most twentieth century scientists as a theological taboo in the context of cosmology or evolution, is even creeping back into the big-bang debate.* ***Physicist Ernest Sternglass, among Einstein's last living acolytes,*** [an admiring follower] ***recently argued that the propitious circumstances of the big bang show that the universe is 'apparently designed for the development of life and is destined to live forever, neither to fly apart into dying cinders nor collapse'.***

*Parallels between cosmology and spirituality may be coincidence. Some find it significant that the book of Genesis describes God creating existence out of the 'waters', because big-bang science asserts the early universe was mostly hydrogen, the chief component of $H_2O$. Maybe that tells us something: probably it's just word choice.* ***But on more telling issues, the trend line of cosmology unquestionably favors a sense of purpose. Existence may be eternal, pre-wired somehow for life; consciousness may expand forever; never running out of room or resources; there may be a larger cosmic enterprise waiting for us to join its purpose, if we can just learn wisdom and justice.***

*Because the cosmos is ancient by our measure, people assume they are latecomers, gazing out into a universe worn down and faltering. But if the firmament will expand for an enormous span of time, or even for an eternity, then our universe glistens with morning dew. Homo sapiens may represent a youth movement, arriving at a time when almost everything is still to come.* ***Dreary projections about ultimate fates may be supplanted by the belief that, like the cosmos itself, the human prospect is, as the physicist Freeman Dyson once wrote, 'infinite in all directions'."***

The first of five sections in bold speaks of a chance-based world in which forces devoid of meaning account for all outcomes. This approach denies the need or existence of God because everything from the beginning occurred strictly by chance. Thus, there is no purpose to life and we exist only for this lifetime with no hope of a future existence of some type. If so, moral principles are devised by man and have no application beyond man's communities. Truth or error are not absolute but only have definition, existence and application through the societies of humankind. There are no inalienable rights bestowed upon us by a divine creator and we all fall subject to the values and rules established by the societies in which we live. Thus, those having great influence in society necessarily control the meaning of truth, error and standards of morality, leaving the rest of us subject to their unbiased intellect, wisdom and integrity, ha, ha!

The third, fourth and fifth areas highlighted speak of intelligent design set forth for the development of life. They speak of the existence of the universe as being eternal and a larger cosmic enterprise waiting for mankind if we can learn wisdom and justice. The prospect of the cosmos, like the human prospect may well be infinite in all directions, according to the physicist Freeman Dyson. Recognition of a supreme intelligence as a creator of the cosmos or universe necessarily extends to life itself and negates the idea of the evolution of mankind. A Being capable of designing and creating the universe can obviously create life of all kinds including all species and doesn't need chance

mutations to accomplish the eventual existence of mankind. Consequently, this recognition of design and purpose in the creation of the universe places the theory of evolution on very shaky and tenuous ground. That is, with much of the scientific community, doesn't it? I hope to show this more clearly a little later.

The second section in bold speaks of the doctrine of ex-nihilo or the creation of something out of nothing as being the doctrine of theology pertaining to the creation of the heavens and the earth and all things which in them are. This seems to be an appropriate place to point out that this doctrine does not pertain to the restored gospel or that brought forth through Joseph Smith, the prophet. In his teachings, the term creation means to organize materials, which are already in existence, much as we would take steel, plastic, rubber and glass to organize or create an automobile. Through revelation he was taught that intelligence and element have always existed and always will, while creation of various entities is brought about by bringing appropriate portions of element and intelligence together to fashion the object of design. This, by the way, is in harmony with Einstein's statement that matter cannot be created nor destroyed. He tells us that matter can be converted to energy and vice versa but not destroyed.

To me, this makes much more sense than creating something out of nothing even though the thought of something having always existed, also staggers my imagination. Admittedly, my understanding of just what raw element and intelligence are is somewhat vague but probably a little better than what George Gamow understands of Ylem. However, I can wait patiently for the Lord to clarify this for mankind, if and when he sees fit. In the meantime, such knowledge has little to do with my life including my effort to become more Christ like during this mortal probation. I admit having to struggle to prove myself worthy of God's divine grace, even salvation and eternal life. That, in my opinion, is the ultimate challenge in mortality. The closer we move to perfection in Christ the more we become like him and ultimately know him in his fullness, as described in the scriptures. [Ephesians 4:12-13 and 1 John 3:2].

**EVOLUTION**

The theory of evolution, advanced by Darwin, is prominent in several branches of science and I am giving it a section apart from the cosmos because of its implications for mankind. I make no pretense of being an expert in this area, as I have reiterated before but will share some thoughts and opinions taken from some of my reading as well as comments of my own. Such quotes and comments should provide the reader with an understanding of my position. The latter, i.e. my comments, you may readily discount but quotations of recognized experts mentioned by one, Dr. Skousen, Dr. Salisbury or George Gilder will be somewhat harder to discredit, if that were to be your interest and purpose.

A most interesting book I recently read by Eric Skousen, Ph.D., is titled "Earth in the Beginning" and includes many thoughts regarding evolution. I will include some of his statements as well as statements of geologists, paleontologists, botanists and biologists, which he quotes. I will also add quotations of some latter day prophets to provide a view of the earth from a theological standpoint. Such statements, coupled with my own faith in my Creator, are sufficient to convince me that the present day theory of evolution of the species is in the same precarious position as is the concept of evolution of the cosmos. That is, it is no more than a theory put forth by atheistic scientists with their undying faith that man will find the answer some day.

Let me begin with a statement from Brigham Young wherein he stated, *"Geology is a true science, not that I would say for a moment that all the conclusions and deductions of its professors are true, but its leading principles are; they are facts – they are eternal."* Also, the L. D. S. Church's First Presidency directed Dr. James E. Talmage, an apostle and trained scientist, to speak out publicly in favor of the earth sciences and its leading principles and discoveries. This occurred in 1931 at a time when many Christian churches were mounting an organized opposition to the findings of earth scientists. Since he made that speech in 1931, it has been republished many times by the Church according to Dr. Skousen. I list these statements by Church officials to point out, "There is no opposition to the true sciences by the L. D. S. Church but only to conclusions drawn from incomplete facts, which are contrary to revealed truth". This is in harmony with the Church's acceptance of all truth regardless of its source, which principle was taught by Joseph Smith, as I remember. The obvious key to accepting any conclusion is establishing its truth, which may be difficult unless one accepts such from a prophet of God.

Dr. Skousen points out a principle of 'adaptation' possessed of many creatures on page 105 of the earlier sited book as follows, *"…. It is well established among modern life forms that when a community of organisms is moved to a new habitat or environment, there is a change in appearance of subsequent generations. This is the principle of 'adaptation', and is commonly observed among many different creatures (though not all)."* Such adaptation is evident even to the ordinary individual. We can even observe it in ourselves as we adapt to different climates and conditions.

This, however, is not evolution from one life form to another. He goes on to state, *"Soon after the discovery of radioactivity in 1896, there followed the unexpected disclosure that genetic material can be altered or 'mutated' by chemical or radioactive substances so that certain traits in the offspring are affected. . . . These discoveries were hailed as the plausible mechanisms by which 'speciation by natural selection' could proceed in nature. This is the modern synthesis of the theory of biological evolution."* He then goes on to explain the problem of intermediate forms, a part of which I include as follows. *"It has been pointed out, however, that if this theory is true, there should be some evidence of the continuous development of life in the earth's crust, from the simple to the complex. However, despite an intensive search for confirming data, as of yet, earth scientists freely admit that* ***'a detailed sequence of evolution is not evident in the rock record'****."* He then quotes Dr. Stephen J. Gould, a paleontologist with Harvard University, who was more specific, as follows. *"'The extreme rarity of transitional forms in the fossil record persists as the trade secret of paleontology. The evolutionary trees (graphs of evolutionary genealogies) that adorn our textbooks have data only at the tips and nodes of their branches; the rest is inference, however reasonable, not the evidence of fossils'."*

***Dr. Hoyle concludes that instead of a graduated record of evolving life forms, 'the conclusion from geology is that the (life form genealogical) … were always separate'."***

Dr. Skousen, in making his point regarding evidence pointing to evolution, goes on to write the following. *"Even though further research may discover some evidence of continuous development from one 'kind' to another 'kind', it is not likely.* ***'There are so many workers in the field,'*** *Sir Fred Hoyle writes,* ***'that nothing clear-cut can have been missed.'*** *In fact, the fossilized strata, rather than being a reasonably continuous record of evolving life forms, is more like the record of repeated introductions of new life forms. Dr. Hoyle concludes that instead of a graduated record of evolving life forms,* ***'the conclusion from geology is that the (life form genealogical) … were always separate'."***

The above is sufficient for me to declare that evolution theory has much to prove and is, in fact, nothing more than a theory without empirical substantiation. Yet they spout it as fact, which in my view, is a form of dishonesty; for which the extreme left is noted. There is one more piece of damning evidence from the scientific world. This is taken from page 110 of Dr. Skousen's book under the sub-title "Mistaking Similarity for Smart Engineering". *"If the huge varieties of life, preparatory and modern, had descended and developed from a few varieties of earlier life, biologists could develop an acceptably consistent classification system of all known life forms. In fact, they haven't. In a typical textbook on life sciences we find this statement, as taken from Gideon E. Nelson, et al, page 361:* ***'No satisfactory classification scheme exists. Many have been suggested; each has its advantages and disadvantages'.*** *This fascinating but often under-emphasized fact can be discovered by perusing any number of life science textbooks that deal with plant and animal classification.*

As Dr. E. O. Willey has written: ***'Phylogenies (ancestral trees) for most organisms have not yet been reconstructed. … For example, no secondary school or college textbook published in the United States contains a classification that is logically consistent with the basic features of vertebrate phylogeny, well known though the vertebrates are.'*** *This failure, though quietly admitted but seldom emphasized, stems from the false assumption that all living things are somehow related to each other through vast periods of time."* There it is; the assumption that all life is related. It seems to me, this is a classic example of the old saying, "Don't confuse me with the facts, my mind is made up". That is, many scientists are determined to present evolution as factual even though many facts indicate another means at work or at the very least considerable missing evidence firmly establishing that theory. Once again, the empirical points necessary to substantiate a theory are missing. We, the

average citizenry, are asked to place our faith in the wisdom of intellectuals who may be bright but who appear to lack wisdom, or so it seems.

**THE CASE FOR DIVINE DESIGN**

My information presented in this section comes from a very interesting book by Dr. Frank B. Salisbury, a PHD in microbiology. He presents both sides of the scientific question regarding the origin of life, in what I believe is a very fair and balanced way. He is LDS in terms of religious persuasion and feels strongly that the case for evolution through genetic mutation is yet to be proved, if it can be. He presents quotations from both believers and unbelievers in intelligent design or creation by an omniscient God. He concludes that science can neither prove nor disprove the existence of God as the author of all creation. That, of course, comes as no surprise because such a conclusion would negate the principle of faith, a primary element in man's acceptance of God, the Father and Jesus Christ. The latter is our Lord, our Savior and our Redeemer, as God is, our Father in heaven. He also points out that **those who won't accept the hand of God in the creation of the cosmos display a high degree of faith in man's intellect and the theory of evolution or creation by mere chance.** I attribute this to pride or the refusal to accept the concept of a being with greater intelligence than they. That is, they place themselves at the crest of evolutionary development and in that sense among the greatest intellects in existence. Now, let's move on to the evidence he presents.

Before getting into any details contained in his book, I want the reader to understand, in so far as possible, that I have developed a much greater respect for the intricacies of microbiology than I ever had before. It is, indeed, as complex as any field of science and thus, not easily understood. He (Dr. Salisbury) points out that even in his 220 page book; he can only provide a simplified overview of the processes involved. Consequently, in my few remarks, I can only pick a few excerpts from his work to demonstrate the complexity of multi-cellular plants and animals, including humans. Even then, my remarks may leave something to be desired regarding both accuracy and clarity for the reader. The purpose of the remarks, though only a sampling of the tremendous complexity of life, is meant to help the reader understand why I subscribe to the concept of divine creation. It is these and other pieces of information in the book that, I believe, fortify the legitimacy of a God created cosmos with life as we know it. Though they might not prove that our creation is the work of an omniscient being, such a stance is, in my belief, far more logical then one of creation by mere chance, even if we allow several billion years for the end result. The refusal of the atheistic evolutionists to recognize the existence of a Supreme Being is, if anything, less logical than is the faith of the believer. If the remarks included in the following should stimulate a greater desire in the reader for deeper understanding, he or she must go to a more complete source. I would obviously recommend Dr. Salisbury's book for any beginner in the field. Though your intellect may be far superior to mine, I believe a person will find his book sufficiently challenging for anyone new to the field. The book's title is that of this particular section's heading.

I am going to have to restrict myself to what I consider are major points that Dr. Salisbury makes in his book because, even then, this subsection will be very long. Let me begin with the major divisions or chapters of his book. To begin with, the book has 7 chapters in addition to a preface and 4 appendices that provide deeper explanations of various phenomena.

Chapter One describes two ways of gaining knowledge, namely through scientific study and through living according to one's faith. I will skip that particular chapter all together.

Chapter Two talks about macro evidence of evolution, which he says is a strong case. His opinion is; the gaps, as spoken of by Dr. Skousen, have been reduced significantly in the last century or so. However, he does not dispute the fact that many still remain, some of which were just discussed.

Chapter Three describes modern cellular and molecular biology, which he says provides evidence of design. I will include a little from it to acquaint the reader with the tremendous complexity of cells, both plant and animal.

Next, in Chapter four he talks about amino-acid sequences and their relationship to cell division/reproduction. These sequences help one to understand the tremendous odds against the development of a cell through natural selection and mutation. I will be pulling some quotes from it.

Chapter Five continues with the improbability of life originating as a single cell. He calls it a

weak case for the evolutionists. I will include some quotes from it.

Chapter Six speaks of why various authorities believe as they do. I'm sure it will provide some choice quotes.

Finally, Chapter Seven describes why each of us has to make our own decision on what to believe or as he says, "Choose your own Weltanshauung". That word, according to Webster, means *"a cosmological philosophy".* I may take some comments from it, if they seem worth the space. Finally, I will take some comments from the various appendices, particularly from Appendix C, which describes a molecular motor necessary for cellular respiration. I found it fascinating as I believe you will. I believe the overall evidence, even without the evidence of God, as found through faith, is logically in favor of a divine creation or as many call it, an intelligent creation.

No further discussion of macro evidences of evolution is necessary because of the coverage of Dr. Skousen. Consequently, I will begin with information contained in Chapter Three, which describes the cell and its complexity, which should boggle your mind.

**CHAPTER THREE -- CELLULAR BIOLOGY**

Figure 22-1 provides a view of a portion of a cell as traced from the view of an electron microscope. Its purpose is to acquaint the reader with some idea of the many parts of a cell, which I believe are called organelles. I was unable to find a definition in Webster. We will make some reference to it as we discuss various items in chapter 3.

A brief mention of the size of the items we are looking at will be of value to the reader. A meter is a little over one yard long, 39.37 inches to be a little more exact. The human cell is about 20 micrometers in size or 0.00000020 meters or, in English, 0.000000005 inches or .005 millionths of an inch. The organelles within the cell are measured in terms of nanometers or 0.0000000001+ meters and must be viewed with an electron microscope. Dr. Salisbury tells us that there are about 75,000,000,000,000 (75 trillion) cells in the average human body. It would take about 10,000 of these to cover the head of a pin. We are looking at only a portion of a cell; so you should be able to get an idea of how much the picture you see has been magnified, as well as the complexity of such a minute item.

I believe the best way to communicate the essentials of this chapter is to use Dr. Salisbury's summary of the chapter at its end. Then I might try to throw in my own two bits worth but I'll wait to make that decision. I

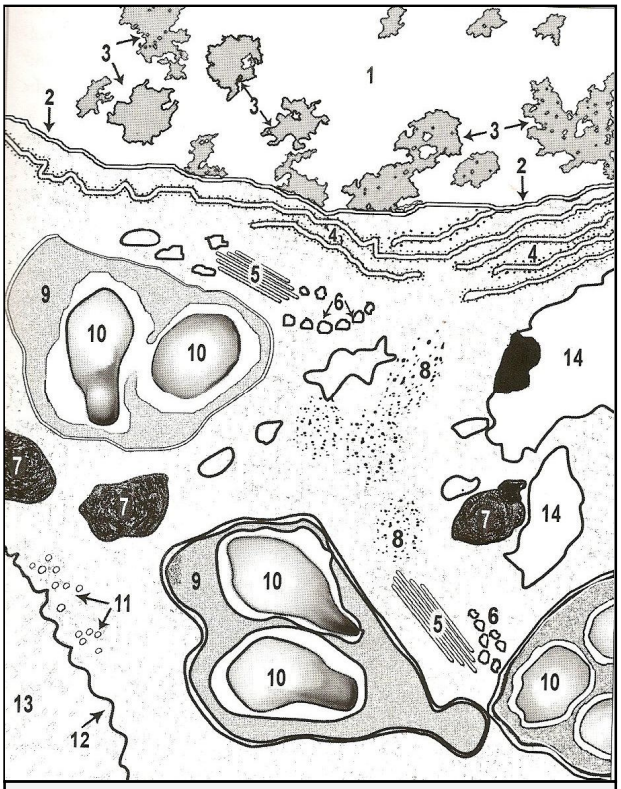


**Figure 22-1** Tracing of an electron micrograph of a cell, which identifies its various parts or organelles. 1) Nucleus 2) Nucleus membrane 3) Chromatim 4) Endoplasmic reticulum 5) Golgi Apparatus 6)Vesicles 7) Mitochondria 8) Ribosomes 9)Proplastids 10) Starch grains 11) Microtubules12)Plasma membrane 13) Cell wall 14) Vacuoles

suppose I should warn you that I wouldn't expect you to understand all of the statements in the summary. I had to read and re-read the complete chapter to even get a smidgen of understanding. Though the reader may well be brighter than I, I suspect he or she would have to read the complete chapter at least once for a reasonable understanding, unless they are biologists, that is. The idea of presenting the summary from my perspective is to give the reader a reasonable idea of just how complex the cells are, whether human, animal or plant.

**SUMMARY**

1) *"The cell doctrine states in its simplest form that all living organisms consist of*

*cells and that cells arise only by division of other cells. This concept is a great unifying concept for modern biology — at least as unifying as the general and specific theories of evolution.*

2) *Living organisms can be classified into two main groups: the prokaryotes, which have no organized nuclei or other organelles, and the eukaryotes, which do have nuclei and various cellular organelles. Beyond this grouping, biologists now speak of three great domains of life: the Archae, Bacteria, and the eukaryotes, each with important sub-groups.*
3) *Proteins, especially protein enzymes, constitute the basic machinery of cells. Proteins consist of amino-acids attached to each other in long chains (often a few hundred amino-acids in a chain) through peptide bonds.*
4) *Enzymes catalyze the reactions of metabolism by forming an enzyme-substrate complex with substrate molecule(s) attached to an enzyme active site.*
5) *The catalyzed reaction is facilitated as the enzyme-substrate complex lowers the energy barrier that otherwise slows the reaction (sometimes greatly). A product or products are the result of the reaction — which can occur thousands of times per second for each enzyme molecule.*
6) *Most cells are in the micrometer (millionth of a meter) size range, while proteins and the molecules of metabolism are in the nanometer (billionths of a meter) size range. A human body consists of about 75 trillion cells.*
7) *Eukaryotic cells consist of the following constituents (plus some others that we did not discuss) and some of these also occur in the prokaryotic cells.*
   A. *All living cells are surrounded by membranes, which consist of a bilayer of molecules that are water soluble on one end and lipid soluble on the other, plus many complex proteins and structures made of proteins that control what moves in or out of the cells.*
   B. *A folded membranous component of eukaryotic cells is the endoplasmic reticulum (ER), which performs many functions in cells. The Golgi complex consists of other membrane structures with special functions.*
   C. *The semi-fluid material within eukaryotic cells (excluding the nucleus) is called the cytoplasm. Other organelles including the nucleus are suspended within the cytoplasm.*
   D. *Cells contain a cytoskeleton, which consists of fibers of microtubules and actin filaments; these are responsible for various cellular functions (for example, chromosome movements).*
   E. *Ribosomes occur in both eukaryotic and prokaryotic cells (although they differ somewhat in these two cell types). They are responsible for protein synthesis.*
   F. *Mitochondria are cellular organelles in virtually all eukaryotic cells; they are responsible for cellular respiration, a metabolic process that breaks down many kinds of molecules to produce (usually) carbon dioxide and water, plus adenosine tri-phosphate (ATP), which is the energy currency of cells. Oxygen is usually used in cellular respiration.*
   G. *Chloroplasts are organelles confined to green plants; they are responsible for photosynthesis, in which water molecules are broken down, releasing oxygen, and the remaining hydrogen ions are combined with carbon dioxide through complex reactions to produce various molecules. ATP is also produced.*
   H. *Plant cells may have large vacuoles, which often occupy much of the cells' volume.*
   I. *The plant cell wall is unique to plants and a few other groups; animal cells do not have walls. The wall resists the pressure caused by osmotic intake of water (mostly into vacuoles), and these turgid cells give the soft parts of the plants (their leaves) their nonwilted appearance.*
   J. *The nucleus is a complex structure within the eukaryotic cells. It consists of a double, porous*

*membrane surrounding nucleoplasm in which is suspended nucleoprotein, consisting of nucleic acids and protein. There are also nucleoli, which synthesize ribosomes.*

8) *During cell division, the nucleoprotein condenses into chromosomes, and it is now known that genetic material consists of the DNA portion of the nucleoprotein.*
9) *In 1953, J. D. Watson, F. H. C. Crick, M. Wilkins, and R. Franklin discovered that the DNA molecule is a double helix, and this structure makes it possible to understand how genetic information can be transferred from generation to generation.*
10) *Protein synthesis on ribosomes is facilitated by at least three kinds of RNA:*
*A. Messenger RNA (which is formed as it copies — transcribes — the sequence of nucleotides in DNA, carrying this sequence information to the ribosomes outside the nucleus).*
*B. Transfer RNA (which translates the mRNA codons — groups of three nucleotides of the genetic code — each to a specific amino acid, which becomes attached to the tRNA).*
*C. And finally, ribosomal RNA (which with the protein portion of the ribosomes, uses the information from the mRNA, via the tRNA molecules, to synthesize protein molecules, each with the correct sequence of amino acids as determined by the sequence of nucleotides in the DNA genes.*

*11) We think of the events described above as following a program. Much of life function follows such programs, and the result is the process of development (such as the development of a mature human being from a fertilized egg cell).*

*12) A basic example of programming is the process of division of genetic material in eukaryotes: mitosis. This occurs as the nuclear membrane disappears, chromosomes appear from the nucleoprotein, line up on the poles of the cell, and a new nucleus forming around the chromosomes as they disappear back into the nucleoprotein.*

*13) Cell division, or cytokinesis, occurs as membranes (and the wall in plants) separate the two newly formed nuclei.*

*14) In the process of meiosis or reduction division, another example of programming, a single cell undergoes two divisions, resulting in four new cells, each with only half the number of chromosomes as the original mother cell. These cells with half the chromosomes become gametes (sperm and egg cells), or spores (in plants).*

*15) In plants, the spores go through a series of brief to extended developmental stages before becoming gametes; this is called alternation of generations.*

*16) Can all this complexity be accounted for by "natural processes" without an intelligent creator?"*

Dr. Salisbury covers the above summary with considerable detail in the book. I would suggest that anyone with deeper interest might get the book and study it. His question at the end, namely item 16, asks what I consider a very logical question. As we go through other points

| X | $20^x$ |
|---|---|
| 1 | 20 |
| 2 | 400 |
| 3 | 8,000 |
| 4 | 160,000 |
| 5 | 3,200,000 |
| 6 | 64,000,000 |
| 7 | 1,280,000,000 |
| 8 | 25,600,000,000 |
| 9 | 512,000,000,000 |
| 10 | 10,240,000,000,000 |
| 11 | 204,800,000,000,000 |
| 12 | 4,096,000,000,000,000 |
| 13 | 81,920,000,000,000,000 |
| 14 | 1,638,400,000,000,000,000 |
| 15 | 32,768,000,000,000,000,000 |
| 16 | 655,360,000,000,000,000,000 |
| 17 | 13,107,200,000,000,000,000,000 |
| 18 | 262,144,000,000,000,000,000,000 |
| 19 | 5,242,880,000,000,000,000,000,000 |
| 20 | 1,048,577,600,000,000,000,000,000,000 |

Figure 22-2 Twenty raised to the 20th power.

in the remaining discussion, I think any logical person would agree that it takes just as great a leap of faith to believe they, cells, occurred by accident or chance as to believe or have faith in an intelligent creator.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

This chapter has to do with the sequences of nucleic acids and of amino acids, which contain the information for the various operations that take place in the cell. I am going to copy the opening paragraph verbatim as taken from chapter four of Dr. Salisbury's book. It summarizes the need and importance of the sequences of the previously named molecules in the proteins of the cell. This will provide the least chance of misquoting the author and thus producing an error in conclusions.

*"The sequences of nucleotides in the nucleic acids or of the amino acids in the proteins form the basis of the life function. This sentence contains information, based on the sequence of the letters, because you, the reader, speak English and can understand what the sentence says. A protein contains information because its sequence of amino acids produces an active site, capable of catalyzing* [speeding up] *some critical reaction, or its amino acid sequence gives the protein structural or hormonal function. The nucleic acids contain information that determines protein information, either by the sequence of DNA nucleotides that will be translated to make proteins or by the sequence of RNA nucleotides that gives them the structural ability to act in protein synthesis.* As I understand it, the structural function establishes just what the cell will become such as a fingernail, toe, etc. The hormonal function regulates the metabolic process, growth and reproduction by controlling specific chemical processes, according to Webster. I think we could summarize this by saying together they control the developmental process determining what our physical being becomes, though that's just my opinion.

Dr. Salisbury goes on to say that to account for the origin of life, we must account for just how the many sequences came about because they basically control life. Apparently, there are thousands of reactions going on per second in each cell which regulate the body's metabolism. According to Webster, metabolism *"is the sum total of the chemical processes of living organisms, which result in growth, the production of energy and the maintenance of the vital functions, and in which the waste products of these processes are rendered harmless."* That's a mouthful and it is going on in some 75 trillion cells of the human body. It seems that even when you are sleeping the cells apparently aren't, at least all of them. Of course, different cells have been given different structural information and they reproduce needed cells of the same type, as I understand it. They are programmed to do their specific jobs, as stated in the oil field vernacular.

I'll use myself as an example of the body developing skin cells when and where needed. A week ago I managed to fall flat on my left side in the garage, which opened up a deep cut in my elbow. That's something I do quite easily as a natural part of being clumsy. Besides the cut there was a skinned zone with the flesh exposed to the air. The doctor who sewed me up pointed out that the skin would grow across that area but that I had to keep the ends of the sutures out of it because the skin would grow right over them. Well, I didn't completely succeed and he had to pull the ends up through the growing skin, which slowed the healing. The point is, somehow the skin in that area knew a needed area was missing and was somehow programmed to grow sufficient skin to cover it. Maybe it grows replacement skin in undamaged areas, I don't know but the cells sure stepped up to the plate when they found something missing. I wonder why my brain cells don't respond in the same way. I could use a little more intellect or brain power since I have been told, from time to time, I had something missing there. Oh well, I have made it through almost eight decades so I guess I can make it a little further. At least, I now know it's a sequence problem because of misguided programming and can hope for a future correction.

Dr. Salisbury goes on to compare the information contained in cell sequences with the information contained in a sentence, though he admits it isn't a perfect analogy. He does this to point out the tremendous odds against getting the proper information or sequences in place by chance or the natural selection of evolution. He does this by explaining the power rule, which states; *"The number of combinations of letters in an alphabet is equal to the number of letters in the alphabet raised to the power of the number of letters in the combination."* The combination referred to is the sentence or phrase being analyzed. He then applies this to a phrase from Shakespeare, which says; *"THIS ABOVE ALL:*

*TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE."* Counting spaces, quotation marks, period and letters we get a total of 45 typographical elements (two spaces being after the colon). As simple as this sentence is, the possibility of it occurring by chance is one of a possible $30^{45}$ arrangements of the letters or approximately $2.954 \times 10^{66}$. For those unfamiliar with what it means to raise something to a given power; we mean the number multiplied by its self that many times. That is $10^3$ is 10 x 10 x 10 = 1000. Thus, the number $2.954 \times 10^{66}$ is 2.954 with 66 zeroes after it, which is approximately what $30^{45}$ is. To make it a little easier to visualize and still include in the limited space I have, I have copied a table of $20^{20}$ or multiplied by its self 20 times and included it as figure 22-2. The last number therein, though much smaller than $2.954 \times 10^{66}$, is massive in and of itself. This should give the reader some feeling for just how small one chance in $2.954 \times 10^{66}$ would be.

To provide an image of the size of this possibility a little clearer way, I will include a paragraph from his book as follows; *"Let's mentally try to write all of the forty five letter arrangements (sentences) of our thirty letter alphabet. I imagined a computer that could write one billion arrangements per second.. There are 31, 556, 962 seconds in a Gregorian year ($3.1557 \times 10^7$), so multiplying that number by a billion ($10^9$) and dividing this result into the number of arrangements gives us about $10^{50}$ years (more exactly, $9.360 \times 10^{49}$ years). That was too long to wait, so I covered the earth to a depth of 2 km. with identical computers, each was one liter (1 L) in volume, and I programmed each one to work on a separate part of the arrangements so that no two computers ever wrote the same sentence (or string in computer language). Now it only took about $10^{29}$ years to write all the possible sentences. That was still too long, so I had no recourse but to cover $10^{20}$ planets (all the size of the earth) with my computers, again to the depth of 2 km. That reduced the required time to write all the possible arrangements to a mere billion years (more precisely, 936,085,039 years)."* He goes on to talk about the data base and concludes it would take about 100 million 100 gigabyte hard drives per computer to store all the data. He then states many more conclusions of which I'll only include a couple. He points out that everything you or I or anyone else could ever write with 45 letters would be in that data base. Short sentences, like "I love you" or "Jesus wept", might possibly occur an astronomical number of times but still only be a minute portion of the total arrangements. The overwhelming number of the letter arrangements would be meaningless nonsense, but also a vast number would be nearly correct. He concludes then, in total, *"Clearly, sorting through a data base of $3 \times 10^{66}$ arrangements for appropriate sentences would have been a difficult way for Shakespeare to write his plays. It simply doesn't sound plausible. It is much more plausible that he used his creative intelligence to form the sentences that gave meaning to his dramas."*

In the next section, he tells us *"With regard to the question of creation, we are really dealing with proteins and nucleic acids, not human language. Even the small molecule insulin, with 51 amino acids, is as complex* [actually more so] *as our Shakespearian sentence; that is, it would be almost equally difficult to generate insulin by random processes as to generate our sentence that way. Note further that most proteins have hundreds of amino acids.*

Biologists everywhere recognize the tremendous odds against random selection, so they devise ways to reduce the odds. Dr. Salisbury discusses many of these in considerable detail for those interested enough to get his book. Though there are many more interesting comments made throughout the chapter, I'll have to settle for the chapter summary to complete this subsection.

**SUMMARY**

1 *The sequence of nucleotides in nucleic acids or amino acids in proteins form the very basis of life function. These sequences may be thought of as information. Thus, if we are to account for the origin of life, we must account for the origin of the sequence information.*
2 *Information in a written sentence is determined by the sequence of letters. Thus human language is an (imperfect) analogy for nucleotide and amino acid sequences.*
3 *Consider various alphabets: numbers (10 "letters"), Roman (26 letters or more if punctuation or cases are considered), nucleotide (four letters), amino acids (twenty letters).*
4 *If the information on nucleic acids or proteins is analogous to that of language, then we can gain insight into life by considering the amount*

*of possible information (the number of possible sentences) in randomly generated sentences.*

5 *This number is determined by the power rule, which states that the number of possible sequences is equal to the number of letters in the alphabet raised to the power of the number of letters in any given sentence (or string).*

6 *Applying the power rule to a 45 letter sequence constructed from a 30 letter alphabet, it is apparent that there are $30^{45} = 2.954 \times 10^{66}$ possible sequences, a huge number indeed.*

7 *We realize that, although these sequences would contain every sentence or sentence fragment that has ever been or ever will be written with that alphabet, the vast majority of these sequences would be meaningless in any conceivable language.*

8 *The conclusion implied (but not proved) by the analogy is that the possible functional amino-acid sequences (as enzyme catalysts for any conceivable metabolic reaction) must be only a tiny fraction of the total possible sequences ("protein space"); thus, the likelihood of their appearing through random processes is almost nonexistent.*

9 *By our creative intelligence we are able to produce meaningful sentences with various alphabets that we have learned, and an Intelligent Creator could, in some roughly analogous manner, produce functional enzymes and cellular organizations. In a logical sense, however, analogies are always imperfect.*

10 *Various possible ways have been presented to side step the difficulties brought up by the big numbers, and thus to account for the complex sequences by chance processes.* ***So far, none of these possible ways is conclusive:***

- *A. If there is some minimum sequencer below which no enzymatic function is possible, that sequence cannot be achieved by changing individual amino-acids (letters) one at a time, selecting only the ones that are part of the final sequence (as Dawkins suggested). There is no selection value until the minimum sequence has been achieved.*
- *B. Starting with a functional enzyme, however, it is possible to improve that by changing only one amino acid at a time factually, changing its controlling DNA. This is being done in laboratories all over the world.*
- *C. If the minimum sequence to produce an active site can be very short (as suggested by Quastlet), the chances of getting it are much greater than the conclusions based on our calculations might suggest.*
- *D. Active sites based on short sequences don't seem likely in view of the complexity of known enzymes including lysozyme (the first enzyme to be understood), histone IV (highly conserved between peas and cows), cytochrome c (much variability among organisms, but enough conserved to make its appearance by chance quite unlikely), and reverse transcriptase (an amazingly complex enzyme of the HIV virus).*
- *E. It is conceivable (as Kauffman suggests, supported by some evidence) that multiple sequences could function as the same active site making universal enzyme tool boxes possible. This would also greatly improve the chances of getting effective active sites through random processes. Current information about the complexities of presently understood enzymes makes this seem unlikely — but who knows?*
- *F. Lateral gene transfer has been suggested to play an important role in evolution, but it offers no solution to the problem of the*

*origin of suitable gene and enzyme sequences.*

11 *It has been countered that the analogies require a teleological evolution (evolution toward a goal), which may or may not be true. In any case, it is possible to find examples in which evolution toward a goal does appear to be the case.*

12 *In view of all these considerations, the analogies of gene and protein complexity with language complexity cannot serve as proof that creation could occur only with an Intelligent Creator. Still, the analogies certainly provide insights into the magnitude of the problem and are compatible with an Intelligent Creator.*

**CHAPTER FIVE**

Dr. Salisbury tells us that the case for defining the origin of life through science is rather weak. That is, no one theory or plausible story has been brought forth, which the scientific community accepts as valid. I want to introduce the reader to this chapter by including the two opening paragraphs from Dr. Salisbury's book and then comment on a few major points he makes therein, which will help you see just how I view the situation. By the way, my comments will be in regular type as opposed to the book quotations in italicized type. For simplicity, I will only include quotation marks around the whole chapter's quotes.

*"The goal of the game we play in this chapter is to see if, through observation and experimentation, we can provide a plausible explanation for the spontaneous origin of life without reference to God. If we can, chalk-up one more evidence for the atheistic theory of creation — knowing, of course, that such evidence doesn't prove such a creation, only that it is plausible. If we fail to provide a plausible story of an atheistic origin of life, chalk-up one for an Intelligent Creation — knowing, of course, that laboratory failure at any point in time doesn't necessarily mean ultimate failure; such evidence might be forthcoming sometime in the future.*

*We'll conclude at the end of the chapter, along with virtually every scientist working in the field, that science has not (yet?) provided a truly plausible story explaining the origin of life without an Intelligent Creator. Still, it is fascinating to examine the lines of evidence that have been reported to support or reject current theories of the origin of life on earth. The exercise provides yet another perspective of just how complex life really is, and why some scientists working in the field suggest that we may never have a fully plausible story, with all the gaps filled, of how life could have originated spontaneously. These scientists are not saying that the lack of a plausible story proves the existence of God, only that what actually happened a few billion years ago might now be lost forever."*

A little later, Dr. Salisbury covers the concept of a pre-biotic soup or a concentration of organic molecules at the bottom of ancient seas or some other favorable location, which might have come together by chance to form a simple form of life. He then moves on to a section he calls "The Giant Leap" from which I will take a lengthy comment that should puzzle the atheist and give credence to the believer in God. Here I quote Dr. Salisbury in the following, which may take you a while to digest and really understand; but the reward will definitely be worth the effort.

*"Now comes the key question: Does the presence of a primordial soup prove that life could originate in such a soup? This is often taken for granted (Achenbach, 2006). Yet scientists working in the field are fully aware of the giant leap required to go from that soup to something as complex as the simplest living cell. Even a simple virus, which needs living cells to reproduce itself, is far too complex to have originated by chance in that soup. Some way, they say, life must have been far simpler than it is now, capable of reproduction with errors (so Darwinian selection could function), but at some kind of molecular level that, so far, has remained elusive.*

*In previous chapters, we have discussed the complexities of life. First and foremost, we must account for those pesky sequences of amino acids in proteins and nucleotides in nucleic acids. The sequences clearly have a minimum complexity — some number of amino acids in specified places to form an active site to catalyze a given reaction. True, we don't know what that number is, and it surely varies for different enzymes.* [The term minimum complexity means the minimum size or number of molecules contained in a sequence below which it could not function properly and thus would be susceptible to mutations and their

products of change. Consequently, they cannot come into being by virtue of evolution]

*Second, in life as we know it, no single sequence of either amino acids or nucleotides can account for life function. Enzymes work in complex assemblages to carry out photosynthesis or cellular respiration — as well as protein synthesis, DNA duplication, membrane formation, and numerous other cellular processes. Could a single sequence — a replicator molecule — have accounted for life's beginning? I doubt it, but who knows?* This is an example of a what-if story or an imaginary situation in which the researcher's theory might seem plausible.

*Third, our life consists of protein assemblages protected in compartments — cells and cellular organelles. Enzymes, to function properly, must be protected from their environments. Even a "simple" prokaryotic cell contains subdivided compartments, such that many of its contents are protected from other contents that would interfere with their functions. Can random changes and selections account for all this? It seems doubtful to me.* And I might say, to me also but then I am only an average citizen.

*Fourth is the mystery of development — the programming that leads to such events as cellular duplication and differentiation to form highly coordinated organ systems. Again, as far as we know, all this is a matter of gene and enzyme sequences, themselves minimally complex, forming foundations for the higher levels that also have characteristics of minimal complexity.*

*So, if one is to explain the origin of life's complexities, one must explain the origin of suitable sequences that control the thousands of enzymatically controlled reactions going on in cells. (That sentence is possibly the most important sentence in this book.) What-ever your philosophy, sequence rules.*

*Today's world is a complex web of interacting sequences, and it is anything but obvious how such a web might have started. DNA, which only carries the message from generation to generation, cannot reproduce without a cadre of enzymes and precursors that have been "activated" by ATP. And those enzymes get their proper sequences from nucleotide sequences in DNA — with the help of RNA and enzymatic machinery. None of the complex molecules we know today is a step toward life; we need the whole shebang, including membranes, ATP, and many other things. Can we imagine a plausible simple beginning?* Well, I don't think we can. I think the atheists simply will go to any extreme to try to eliminate God from the equation. Do you?

There are many interesting stories, the what-if type, in this chapter but Dr. Salisbury manages to point out flaws in all of them, which are recognized by other scientists as well, even the atheistic ones. Before including the summary of this chapter I will include the author's closing paragraph first to clearly illustrate where he stands. It illustrates, I think, that a scientist can explore the unknown with an attitude of, "Our existence is miraculous and I want to find out just as much as possible about how God designed it" or with the idea that "there is no God and I'm going to prove everything came about by chance". Belief in God does not detract from scientific thought; it simply begins with a different basic premise. Now, Dr. Salisbury's closing paragraph.

*And yes, I do turn to religion — well, not really; that's where I start with my Weltanschauung, rather than going there for answers after science fails. It is, however, surely too early to say that science has failed. Even as my religion sets a foundation for my thoughts about Creation, it still leaves me open to consider and wonder about what science discovers. In common with science, my religion doesn't even come close to describing exactly how Creation occurred. Yet it does teach that the Creation was, in some way, the work of an Intelligent Creator, and that teaching fits well with all my other religious convictions. For that matter, it fits well with what science has learned — and failed to learn — about the complexities of life, how it works, and how it originated.* Now, let's summarize.

**SUMMARY**

1. *One branch of science attempts to provide a plausible scenario of how life might of originated, here on earth or perhaps somewhere else in the universe, by a spontaneous process that did not involve an Intelligent Creation. So far, although progress has been made, all scientists agree that no totally convincing theory has emerged.*
2. *It is important to note that the idea of spontaneous generation of life under present Earth conditions (which was*

*believed during most of human history) has been thoroughly discredited.*

3. *Most modern theories depend on the presence of organic molecules identical with or similar to those presently found in living organisms. There are three popular ideas about how the molecules in the primitive soupy seas (a pre-biotic soup) might have originated:*
   - *A. Conditions on the early earth might have been such that organic molecules would be formed from simple carbon compounds (methane, $CO_2$), hydrogen, water, and ammonia using energy produced by lightning, geothermal vents, and so forth. In this regard, there is often mention of the Miller-Urey experiment carried out in 1953.*
   - *B. It is now known that organic molecules of varying levels of complexity form in space. These could reach the Earth via meteorites, comets, or by other means. (The question of their absence on the Moon and Mars remains.)*
   - *C. Even today, there are deep sea hydrothermal vents that produce extremely hot water along with various minerals and organic molecules. Some scientists suggest life originated under these conditions.*
4. *Most scientists agree that it is a giant leap to go from relatively simple organic molecules to the complex sequences found in nucleic acids and proteins.*
5. *RNA is known to have enzymatic properties; it has been suggested that RNA formed early in the earth's history, leading eventually to the complexities of protein synthesis and the role of DNA in preserving information. Thus, RNA world was postulated.*
   - *A. Rather elaborate ideas have been postulated, based on RNA world.*
   - *B. But RNA world faces serious, probably insurmountable problems.*
   - *C. RNA is an extremely unlikely molecule to have existed on primitive Earth. One must imagine totally unreasonable conditions that would produce the nucleotides of RNA, and then one must imagine even more unreasonable conditions that would combine these nucleotides to form reproducing RNA.*
   - *D. The structures and function of ribosomes is now understood, and realizing their complexity (required for protein synthesis) makes RNA world seem even more unlikely.*
6. *Some theories relating to the origin of life include:*
   - *A. Manfred Eigen worked with viruses, but he has no good suggestions about the origin of sequences.*
   - *B. Stuart Kauffman's Complexity Theory suggests that when there are enough proteins floating around in the pre-biotic soup, order will grow out of disorder, and life will come into being. Other scientists working in the field are not convinced by Kauffman's suggestions.*
   - *C. Günter Wächtershäuser suggests that life formed near hydrothermal vents, with reactions being catalyzed by iron and other sulfides. Many investigators are impressed with Wächtershäuser's proposals, but they also fail to suggest the origin of suitable sequences.*
   - *D. A. Graham Cairns-Smith suggests that the origin of life on Earth consisted of clays, which gradually were taken over by the organic systems that we presently know. Again, Cairns-Smith has no good suggestions about those sequences or how the change might occur.*
   - *E. Johnjoe McFaddin suggests that the answer to the origin of life is to be found in the strange mysteries of Quantum mechanics, specifically the concept of super positions.*
   - *F. Michael Russell has presented what is probably the most detailed and most plausible just suppose story about the origin of life. It is based on the chemistry that must take place near warm, alkaline springs in the deep ocean.*
   - *G. Lastly, Svante Arrhenius and Fred Hoyle (and others) have seriously considered the possibility that life on earth came from somewhere else in the universe (Panspermia) — but*

*this only puts the problem beyond our reach.*

7. *Some of us begin with the concept of an Intelligent Creation; nevertheless, we enjoy learning what is going on in science that studies the origin of life. There is much to be learned about nature and how it works — even about the nature of God.*

**CHAPTER SIX**

Dr. Salisbury discusses Richard Dawkins, a much published atheist's, views in the early pages of the chapter. He includes remarks Dawkins made in a book regarding William Paley's comments in an earlier work regarding the complexity of life. This is an extremely important point, i.e. life has a purpose and that purpose is of God. This is a point I have come to embrace as has been evident in previous chapters. Because of its importance, I am going to include a significant amount of text herein to not only illustrate its importance but similarly, point out the ridiculous stand (my opinion) that atheists take regarding God by any name. First, I will introduce the reader to William Paley and his argument by quoting a paragraph of Dr. Salisbury's first chapter under the subtitle of **"The argument from Design"**.

*"William Paley's **'Natural Theology; or, Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of Deity, collected from the Appearances of Nature'** published in 1802, and **'A View of the Evidences of Christianity** (third edition published in 1795)', were well known and greatly admired in the 1800s. Paley was an Anglican Priest who wrote a number of influential works on Christianity, ethics and science. His Natural Theology was based on John Ray's **'Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of the Creation',** published in 1691 over a century before Paley's own work. Both present the so-called teleological evidence for the existence of God (that creation has a purpose, and that its apparent design argues for a Designer). As is often related, Paley used the analogy of a watch. As the design apparent in the watch testifies of its creator, so the apparent intricate design of living organisms testifies of their Creator. (See Paley's argument in Appendix B.)*

I want to point out a few of things that came to my mind as I read the paragraph, namely the concept of a design with a purpose was evident to some Christians as early as 1691, probably before, second, though not stated in the paragraph, the early Christian Church or that founded by Christ had the same belief, and thirdly, the restored gospel or that of the LDS Church espouses that doctrine today. Though many other faiths/denominations may believe similarly, I am not aware of any who proclaim it so frequently and continuously as the LDS Church. Neither do other churches, to my knowledge, so clearly describe said purpose as does the LDS Church in the "Plan of Salvation". I think that that is significant though others may not. Now, I'll go back to chapter six and Richard Dawkins. Here I begin with an introductory paragraph from Dr. Salisbury's book therein, then move on to a major portion of Appendix B followed by Richard Dawkin's argument and close the section with comments by Dr. Salisbury once again on Dawkins.

**APPENDIX B**

RETURN TO WILLIAM PALEY

Beginning with Dr. Salisbury's introduction: *"Since Paley has taken such bad press, it seems appropriate that we see what he really said about the watch, back in 1802, or at least as much of it as space will allow (See Danielson, 2000, pp. 191-93). The concept of minimum or irreducible complexity is clearly evident in his analogy:* [Now moving on to Paley]

*'In crossing a heath, suppose I pitched my foot against a stone, and were asked how the stone came to be there. I might possibly answer that, for anything I knew to the contrary, it had lain there forever; nor would it perhaps be very easy to show the absurdity of this answer. But suppose I found a watch upon the ground, and it should be inquired how the watch happened to be in that place. I should hardly think of the answer I had given before — that, for anything I knew, the watch might have always been there. Yet why should not this answer for the watch as well as for the stone? Why is it not admissible in the second case as in the first? For this reason, and for no other, [namely] that, when we come to inspect the watch, we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose — that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day; that, if the different parts had been differently shaped from what they are, or placed after any other manner, or in any other order, than that in which they are placed, either no motion at all would have been carried on in the machine, or none which would*

*have answered the use that is now served by it. … this mechanism has been observed …., the inference we think is inevitable, that the watch must have had a maker: that there must have existed, at some time, and at some place or other, an artificer who formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer, who comprehended its construction, and designed its use.*

*Nor would it, I apprehend, weaken the conclusion, that we had never seen a watch made; that we had never known an artist capable of making one,; that we were altogether incapable of executing such a piece of workmanship ourselves ….*

*Neither, second, would it invalidate our conclusion, that the watch sometimes went wrong, that it seldom went exactly right. The purpose of the machinery, the design, and the designer, might be evident, and in the case supposed would be evident, in whatever way we accounted for the irregularity of the movement, or whether we could account for it or not ….*

*Nor, third, would it bring any uncertainty into the argument, if there were a few parts of the watch, concerning which we could not discover, or had not yet discovered, in what manner they conduced to the general effect; or even some parts concerning which we could not ascertain whether they conduced to that effect in any manner whatever. …*

*Nor, fourth, would any man in his senses think the existence of the watch , with its various machinery, accounted for, by being told, that it was one out of possible combinations of material forms; that whatever he had found in the place where he found the watch, must have contained some internal configuration or other; and that this configuration might be the structure now exhibited, [namely] of the works of the watch, as well as a different structure.*

*Nor, fifth, would it yield his inquiry more satisfaction to be answered, that there existed in things a principle of order, which had disposed the parts of the watch into their present form and situation. He never knew a watch made by the principle of order; nor can he even form to himself an idea of what is meant by a principle of order, distinct from the watch-maker.*

Now, I'm going back to Salisbury's conclusive remarks which are included with the exception of only the last sentence of paragraph 3. *Note that no one — including Charles Darwin, Richard Dawkins, and Kenneth Miller — has refuted Paley's argument as presented here. Indeed, it is interesting to see that in his five points he anticipates many theories of Creation that have been proposed even in recent years. The concept of irreducible complexity is clearly evident in his first paragraph. In his second, he notes (as does Behe) that we don't need to understand or know the watchmaker to know there is one. Even if the watch isn't perfect, the evidence of design is there. Even if we couldn't understand all the parts of the watch, we would still know that it had a maker. We wouldn't even think that the watch came into being by itself from the materials of the heath. And finally, we would be hard to convince that some "principle of order" other than intelligent design helped it come into being.*

*Paley's detractors side-step the issue, as Behe (1996, pp. 210-216) nicely points out. Neither Dawkins nor any of the other detractors tells us how the watch was produced without a designer. Instead, they point out the imperfection of analogies leading to the small mistakes that Paley made, and such things. For example, in sections left out above, Paley specifically mentions that the wheels were brass to avoid rust and that the crystal protected the hands. Behe notes that these are not essential parts for the function of telling time. Paley could have honed his analogy to make it sharper, perhaps, but it continues to call out attention to the possible implications of biological as well as man-made complexity.*

*… Science and logic can neither prove nor disprove the existence of God.*

The thought of the last sentence has been pointed out in earlier discussion and I believe because of God's design. If such were possible, it would do away with the need for faith, a principle of power by which the heavens and the earth were made according to Joseph Smith.

Now, Dr. Salisbury's introduction to Dawkin's comments: *"Dawkins makes his position on creation perfectly clear throughout his writing. He does not equivocate about his atheism. Even the subtitle of Watchmaker makes it clear: 'Why the Evidence of Evolution Reveals a Universe Without Design'. In the first chapter of Watchmaker, he quotes William Paley's argument from design (Appendix B), which was discussed in chapter 1. He then states his conviction that there was no Designer of living organisms:*

Now Dawkin's remarks on Paley: *'Paley's argument is made with passionate sincerity and is informed by the best biological scholarship of his day, but it is wrong, gloriously and utterly wrong. The analogy telescope and eye, between watch and living organism, is false. All appearances to the contrary, the only watchmaker in nature is the blind forces of physics, albeit deployed in a very special way. A true watchmaker has foresight: he designs his cogs and springs, and plans their interconnections, with a future purpose in his mind's eye. Natural selection, the blind, unconscious, automatic process which Darwin discovered, and which we now know is the explanation for the existence and apparent purposeful form of life, has no purpose in mind. It has no mind and no mind's eye. It does not plan for the future. It has no vision, no foresight, no sight at all. If it can be said to play the role of the watchmaker in nature, it is the blind watchmaker.'*

Once again, I conclude this particular section with remarks by Dr. Salisbury: *Despite the ardor, Dawkins paragraph is an unequivocal statement of faith. He has never accounted for the origin of life nor the unlimited origin of variability needed for natural selection to work without God, nor has anyone else. Yes, there might have been pre-biotic soupy seas and there are mutations, but who really knows if they will do the job that they are assigned to do by neo-Darwinism? Although their faith remains strong, those whom Dawkins represents never admit to us that it is only faith. It is left up to us that for what it is.*

*In the course of a discussion over dinner with a "distinguished modern philosopher, a well known atheist", Dawkins says that "although atheism might have been logically untenable before Darwin, Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist." His statement is quoted in many books on evolution or creationism. I'm struck by the depth of his "passionate sincerity" and conviction, being "informed by the best biological scholarship of his day." In spite of all the unknowns I am outlining in this book, Dawkins has no misgivings about how evolution works, or about his rejection of an Intelligent Creator.*

*As a matter of fact, I've thought of a way to restate Dawkin's statement. 'No one has thought of a better way to be an atheist than evolution by natural selection. That is why it is accepted and so strongly defended in spite of all the problems.'*

Well, now it's time for my two cents, which may well be its value in the eyes of many. Let me first insert a comment by Dawkins, taken from the previous page, which follows: *"A true watchmaker has foresight: he designs his cogs and springs, and plans their interconnections, with a future purpose in his mind's eye. Natural selection, the blind, unconscious, automatic process which Darwin discovered, and which we now know is the explanation for the existence and apparent purposeful form of life, has no purpose in mind."* In the first place, he, nor anyone else, now knows evolution and natural selection is the explanation for the existence and apparent purposeful form of life. Dr. Salisbury points this out very clearly. The "Watchmaker" responsible for life and all creation, is nor ever was, blind but Dawkins is. He is blinded by the adversary in beginning with the false hypothesis of "There is no God". His blindness is spiritual in nature having occurred by his own acceptance of atheism. This true "Watchmaker" of life is God, our Eternal Father who not only has a purpose but also a plan, clearly stated, as the Plan of Salvation or Redemption or Happiness. These three names clearly describe three different attributes of our Father's plan, namely our need for redemption to attain salvation or eternal life, which is the ultimate happiness. It is achieved only through obedience to God's eternal principles or laws, embodied in his ordinances and commandments, which receive efficacy through the atoning sacrifice of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Such obedience attained through humility, faith and repentance invite the Holy Spirit into our lives who, in turn, teaches us the attributes needed to walk in Christ's footsteps and ultimately take on his image, even that of perfection. Then, and only then, are we worthy to re-enter our Father's presence and receive that ultimate gift, even eternal life or salvation of the ultimate degree, the greatest gift God has to bestow on mankind. Of this I bear my most solemn witness in the Holy Name of Our Lord and Savior.

All of the above, even if imperfectly stated, has been made evident by latter day revelation and is well documented in the "Book of Mormon". Just as all mankind must decide for themselves whether evolution is a fact, or that all Creation is of God, they must likewise decide whether Joseph Smith was called of God as the prophet of the restoration and of the Dispensation of the

Fullness of Times, spoken of by Paul. Failure to acknowledge it is of no excuse and only admits to rejection or lack of interest. In either case, the person involved is responsible for the decision and will reap the consequences of his or her choice. Of this, I also bear witness to all who might read this book and couple it with my love for all mankind but especially for my family, immediate and extended, all of whom I sincerely hope and even pray, will one day find the beauty embodied in the restored gospel.

I sincerely believe and even know, we are sons and daughters of God, our Father, and that we have a Mother there, at his side, both of whom eagerly wait for our return along with our elder brother, Jesus Christ. They fully understand the essential nature of obedience in the development of Christ like virtues. I am fully confident that they are sorrowful at our failures and even weep when we fall, especially when we lose our way and refuse to follow the strait and narrow path leading back to their presence. They know perfection can only be attained by following the light of the gospel as given by Christ. No substitute or imperfect form of his sacred teachings has the power to instill perfection in the soul of man, that attribute required to return to their presence. Thus, the need for all mankind to understand the purpose of life and find the one and only true Church founded by Jesus Christ. To anyone feeling all churches offer salvation to errant mankind, I offer this question for them to ponder without any advice from anyone else: *"Do you believe God would offer salvation in more than one form and through more than one entity, considering the confusion of the world regarding religion and the ease with which mankind is so easily duped?"* An answer is owed only to one's self and God if the individual is sufficiently wise to accept his existence.

I apologize to the reader for losing my own way on this particular subject but the time seemed appropriate to vent my sincere feelings on this most important subject essential to man's achieving his ultimate destiny, even that designed by our Father in heaven. Now, let's get back to the subject at hand.

Michael J. Behe is a professor of Biochemistry at Lehigh University and has been previously mentioned in some of Dr. Salisbury's remarks. He wrote a book called "Darwin's Black Box, the Biochemical Challenge to Evolution (1996). In that book he made several interesting observations, only one of which I will include here. As you can well see, I could include reams of material for the reader but choose to include only that which seems most relevant and most effective to punctuate why I know, through faith strengthened by logic, that there is a God as repeatedly stated. I will next include one taken from Dr. Salisbury's book, called "The Bombardier beetle: irreducibly complex?" for an illustration of that particular principle. It is an example of the principle aptly and clearly stated by William Paley back in 1802. I may also make a few remarks of a couple of other activities of animals and humans illustrating this principle but they will be reduced to essential points.

*The eight stories of cellular and molecular complexity that Michael Behe tells as examples of irreducible complexity include: vertebrate vision, the bombardier beetle, the cilium (perhaps his best example), the bacterial flagellum, the blood clotting mechanism, cellular transport (movement of proteins via the ER and the Golgi apparatus), the immune system, and the synthesis of ADP (an important molecule in several cellular functions).*

*I would like to summarize all of Behe's stories, but we'll have to settle for here for just one: the marvelous bombardier beetle. The bug defends itself by squirting out a boiling hot solution at an enemy through an aperture in its hind section. To prepare for such an event, specialized structures called secretory lobes make a highly concentrated mixture of hydroquinone and hydrogen peroxide. The mixture goes into a storage chamber, the collecting vesicle, which, in turn, is connected to but sealed off from the appropriately named explosion chamber. Attached to the explosion chamber are small knobs called ectodermal glands that can secrete the enzyme caralase (see figure 3.1), which breaks down hydrogen peroxide at the rate of thousands of ($H_20_2$) molecules per catalase molecule each second, releasing oxygen ($0_2$) and water ($H_20$). When the beetle feels threatened, it relaxes the sphincture muscle that otherwise closes the connection between the collecting vesicle and the explosion chamber., at the same time squeezing muscles around the ectodermal glands so that the mixture and the catalase end up in the explosion chamber at the same time. There, the newly released oxygen reacts explosively with the hydroquinone, yielding more water molecules and a highly irritating chemical called quinone. The reaction releases a large amount of heat, so that the*

*solution rises to the boiling point as it squirts out at the enemy.*

*The function is clear: to produce a hot, astringent solution and shoot it at the enemy. The essential parts are also clear. They include all of the structures noted above plus the cells with their enzymes that produce hydroquinone, hydrogen peroxide, and catalase — not to mention the nerve connections from the beetles eyes to its brain, so that it knows when it is being threatened and the nerves from the brain to the explosion apparatus. Without any one of these items, the bombardier beetle won't be able to bomb anything.*

Richard Dawkins challenged it in 1986 and gave an answer, which, apparently, in Dr. Salisbury's opinion, sidestepped the real issue. His response to Dawkin's statement was; *"and, as we'll discuss in more detail in a moment, that is often how evolutionists counter intelligent design creationists."* He goes on to say, *"But please note that Dawkin's reply is just another suppose tale"* and then explains why.

I'll now skip on to a section called "Michael Behe's Philosophy". Here, I pick a few of his philosophical statements, the reader can evaluate, coming from Darwin's Black Box.

*"The conclusion of intelligent design flows naturally from the data itself* — not from sacred books or sectarian beliefs. (p. 193)

*Inferences to design do not require that we have a candidate for the role of designer. We can determine that a system was designed by examining the system itself, and we can hold the conviction of design much more strongly than a conviction about the identity of the designer. (p. 196)*

*As the number or quality of the parts of an interacting system increase, our judgment of design increases also and can reach certitude. [*Dr. Salisbury takes issue here saying, *'well philosophically, our judgment of design can increase, but maybe never to the level of certitude.']*

*The fact that biochemical systems can be designed by intelligent agents for their own purposes is conceded by all scientists, even Richard Dawkins. (p. 203)*

*The result of these cumulative efforts to investigate the cell — to investigate life at the molecular level — is a loud, clear, piercing cry of "design"! The result is so unambiguous and so significant that it must be ranked as one of the greatest achievements in the history of science. The discovery rivals those of Newton and Einstein, Lavoisier and Schrodinger, Pasteur, and Darwin. The observation of the intelligent design of life is as momentous as the observation that the earth goes around the sun or that disease is caused by bacteria or that radiation is emitted in quanta. The magnitude of the victory, gained at great cost through sustained effort over the course of decades, would be expected to send champagne corks flying in the labs around the world. This triumph of science should evoke cries of "Eureka!" from ten thousand throats, should occasion much hand clapping and high fiving, and perhaps even be an excuse to take a day off.*

*But no bottles have been uncorked, no hands clapped. Instead, a curious, embarrassed silence surrounds the stark complexity of the cell. When the subject comes up in public, feet start to shuffle, and breathing gets a bit labored. In private people are a bit more relaxed; many explicitly admit the obvious but then stare at the ground, shake their heads, and let it go at that. (p.232-33)*

There was much more discussion in the chapter including a section on blood clotting complexity but time and space requires I move on. For anyone interested in further detail, I highly recommend that they read Dr. Salisbury's book. As before, I will now copy the summary of Dr. Salisbury's chapter six verbatim, which should turn up some additional interesting thoughts and maybe add a little clarity for the reader.

**SUMMARY**

1. *Some biologists and other scientists have decided that the "facts" of evolution lead to the conclusion that there is no Intelligent Creator (no God).*
2. *Examples of atheistic scientists briefly reviewed in this chapter include Carl Sagan, Richard Dawkins, Douglas Futuyma, William Provine, Edward O. Wilson, David Hull, and Stephen Jay Gould.*
3. *Richard Dawkins is one of the most eloquent writers who hold there is no God — that there is no "watchmaker" or Intelligent Creator analogous to William Paley's intelligent watchmaker. Dawkins claims that the universe has no Designer, no Planner; it is analogous to a "blind watchmaker".*

4. *The biochemist, Michael Behe, on the other hand, describes the concept of irreducible complexity, arguing that even the lowly mousetrap testifies of its designer because it would not function unless all the parts were available and assembled together in the proper way.*
5. *Behe's thesis is that when Darwin (and Wallace) proposed the theory of natural selection, they did so in ignorance of the intricacies of biochemical systems, as we understand them today. For those early pioneers, biochemistry was hidden in a "black box" — Darwin's Black Box.*
6. *Behe is one of the intelligent design creationists, whose argument is essentially the same as that of William Paley in 1802 and those who preceded him: "The Argument from Design".*
7. *Behe provides eight biological examples to illustrate his concept of irreducible complexity; one of those stories is summarized in some detail here: the bombardier beetle.*
8. *Behe's philosophy is suggested with a number of quotations from Darwin's Black Box.*
9. *Many evolutionists have attempted to counter the concept of irreducible complexity. Often their arguments are trivial. For example, those who counter the argument from design often do so by pointing out how old it is — but that is clearly irrelevant. Robert Dorit summarizes the argument against Behe, and most of those seem trivial.*
10. *Yet, their point that it may well be impossible to know and to prove that some complex structure could not come into being without a designer could certainly be valid. It is simply impractical (if not impossible) for any individual to imagine all the ways to account for any natural, complex machine.*
11. *These thoughts, if valid, confirm the conclusions of this book: "science can neither prove nor disprove the existence of God."*
12. *Among those who will counter irreducible complexity is Kenneth Miller, who argues against all Varieties of creationists and then tells of his own belief in God the Creator.*
13. *Miller and others who attempt to explain the specific examples of apparent irreducible complexity do so by pointing out that the parts for some structure or function that has been said to be irreducibly complex were available for evolution to work on, being present in proposed ancestors of the organisms with the complex structure or function. 'Evolution only had to put the parts together' in the apparently irreducibly complex way.* [In my opinion, for what it's worth, this is a negative in terms of evolution in small steps].
14. *Dawkins takes this approach in relation to the bombardier beetle but falls far short of providing a plausible story about the evolutionary steps needed to give the beetle its mechanism.*
15. *The evidence for this approach is often based on observed amino acid and/or nucleotide sequences that have some function other than the one in question that would provide the needed molecules for natural selection to act upon to produce the function in question.*
16. *Miller uses Behe's example of the vertebrate blood-clotting mechanism as an example of this approach, basing his discussion on the work of Russell Doolittle. Yet, one might decide that Miller completely fails to answer Behe's arguments the mechanism is irreducibly complex — it is as if Behe had written the answer to Miller instead of the other way around.*
17. *If those who reject some or all the concepts of evolutionary doctrine are being incredulous (unable to believe the "obvious" evidence), are those who do accept the evidence being credulous (too ready to accept doubtful evidence)? (See the following chapter.)*
18. *Some argue that an Intelligent Creator would not use the parts already in existence when creating some new organism or biochemical mechanism. Why not? Some of us conclude that God did indeed do what any intelligent engineer would do in creating some new mechanism: take what was available and modify it.*

**CHAPTER SEVEN**

In chapter seven Dr. Salisbury summarizes the information of the first six chapters. Having little that is new; little of it will be included herein.

Even so, he makes some interesting points in a couple of places, which leads me to include them for the reader. A few will come from the body of the text and others from the summary. I will begin by including the first four paragraphs, which, to me, make some interesting observations. The title of the chapter is "Choose your Weltanschauung: an Intelligent Creation? Now the opening paragraphs.

*"It's time to consolidate and review the main themes I've been following in the preceding chapters. First, there is an implied question behind almost everything: Can Darwin's natural selection, with all that has been added to the concept since his time, particularly mutation as the source of variability, truly provide a plausible explanation for the origin of the earth's organisms as we know them today without the intervention of an Intelligent Creator? Scientifically, my reason for suspecting that a positive answer to this question may never be achieved is that we face huge problems in accounting for the origin of those minimally complex (required) sequences, either protein or nucleic acid. Then, of course, come the problems of cellular organization, development and such.*

*Second, most everyone who understands modern biology realizes that the origin of amino acid and nucleotide sequences is a truly serious problem, yet mainstream biologists seem to have ways to, temporarily at least, ignore the problem by believing that it will one day be solved. They create just suppose stories and put much more faith in them than seems to be justified. The stories are almost always based on mutations and small steps, but there are good reasons for doubting that this combination can do the job.*

*Third, some scientists reconcile their understanding of biology with their belief in God. Some of those are, of course, the creationists, but they have certainly received a bad press from the mainstream! Kenneth Miller, one of the creationists' most vocal opponents, still defends a faith in God. ….*

*Finally, we'll face the challenges of building a Weltanschauung in today's scientific world. That world view can, of course, be built on more than modern biology in particular and science in general. Its foundations can include one's personal reasons for believing in God.*

Now, moving on to other parts of the chapter, I will pick and choose comments that appeal to me. That, you see, is a privilege reserved for an author, even of "no renown" and it gives him, me that is, the privilege of selecting what you can read without going to the source. Here's a quote from a sub-section titled **Does It Matter?**

*We saw in the previous chapter that some thinkers have rejected God on the basis of their understanding of evolutionary and even molecular biology. Modern biology, even if the public knows little about it except for the "hearsay" that appears in the media, can certainly have an impact on our collective thinking about and our belief in God. It matters.*

One might ask in all sincerity, "Why does it matter?" Let me give the reader a couple of good examples, which affect life in the United States today. First, the acceptance of evolution in our public schools as a "fact" is extremely difficult to counter because of its general acceptance by the public at large. Politicians, in general, as well as TV and radio announcers spew out comments all the time about this so-called reality. People, who do little reading in depth and accept the media as the source of their understanding, begin to parrot what they have heard from these so-called informed but really uninformed sources. Even though it is usually counter to any religious instruction they have been given, they begin to believe the supposed experts that know and then try to factor it in as a process God used in his Creation. It is apparent that a level of evolution is present in the adaptation of various species to changing climatic conditions but not from one species to another species. This is counter to the real theology most Christians accept.

The next question to arise will probably be something like, "Who cares about the process, as long as we believe in God?" The primary effect of such propaganda is on the children. When they are taught in school that evolution is factual and such is not countered at home by knowledgeable parents, it weakens any belief in God that they may have been taught. This is then reflected in their social conduct and their desire and ability to lead a moral life. Such weakening results in all kinds of immoral activities in society from various crimes to promiscuous actions and infidelity. This downward spiral in morality then weakens individuals and will eventually destroy the effective family, which is the bulwark of a

progressive and law abiding society. Though one may think this comment is extreme, it will take place over generations as parents fail to teach the reality of God and his purpose for mankind. It is cyclic in nature and has occurred many times in the past. Such parents, though claiming Christianity; will be Christians without certitude or even worse, agnostics and atheists. I believe we see a drift in that direction today in our society. Do you? It seems to me that God fearing societies become caught up in their own abilities as their secular situation improves.

Next, I'll pick a few comments from his summary to the chapter. As it turns out, it will be more than just a few because so many important points are made, in my opinion. You can judge for yourself. Tread carefully as you progress through them, lest you miss an essential point.

First, he tells us, *"A personal Weltanschauung should take into account the difficulties in accounting for the complexities of living things, especially the minimum amino acid and nucleotide sequences. Can these sequences be achieved by the natural selection of random changes in the genetic material? There are valid reasons for doubt.*

*Second, What if stories are often based on assumptions that can be neither proved nor disproved. An example is the "explanation" (by Donald Menzel and Ernest Taves) for the "legend" of Jesus walking on water, based on the phenomenon of the inferior image. The explanation works only* [by] *ignoring the available data relating to the reported event.*

*Third, "If a cause, principle or system of belief held to with ardor and faith" can be considered a religion, many evolutionists qualify as supporting the "religion of natural selection." Richard Dawkins statement about the blind watchmaker provides a good example.*

*Fourth, The atheistic weltanschauung can be based on one's acceptance of an atheistic evolution to account for living organisms, the existence of injustice and evil in the world, and the impossibility of accounting for the origin of God.*

*Fifth, The theistic weltanschauung (an Intelligent Creation) can be partially based on one's knowing the limitations of our ability to account for living organisms based only on an atheistic evolution and natural selection (especially in accounting for those sequences), acceptance of the concept that evil and injustice are inescapable consequences of chance and free choice (free will or agency) in the world, and the realization that, although there is no way for us to account for God's origin, this does not mean that he does not exist.*

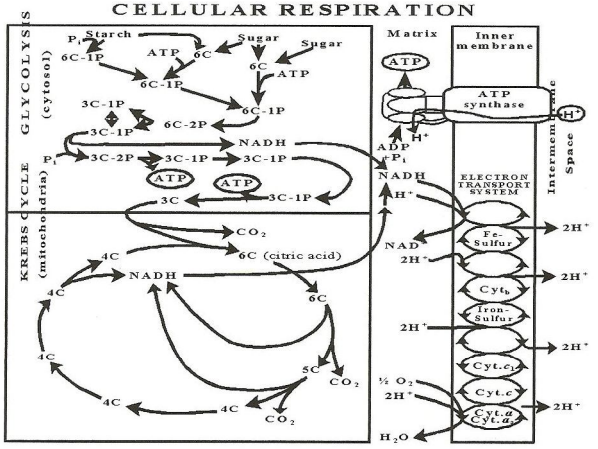


**Figure C-3**

The reactions of cellular respiration. This diagram illustrates the steps involved in three phases of cellular respiration: Glycolysis, the Krebs Cycle, and the Electron Transport System. Each step is controlled by a separate enzyme, all of which are synthesized on ribosomes in response to the RNA information coming from genes (at least one for each enzyme) located in the mitochondria or the cell's nucleus. Obviously, a full explanation of these three figures would require many pages, but the figures should make it clear that life at the cellular level consists of some complex molecular machinery, and this is duplicated many times in each chloroplast or mitochondrion.

Fig. 22-3 An illustration of cellular respiration as taken from Dr. Salisbury's book. The small print in the picture can hardly be read and is typed as follows for the reader's benefit.

**The reactions of cellular respiration.** This diagram illustrates the steps involved in three phases of cellular respiration: glycolysis, the Krebs cycle and the electron transport system. Each step is controlled by a separate enzyme, all of which are synthesized on ribosomes in response to the RNA information coming from the genes (at least one for each enzyme) located in the mitochondria or the cell's nucleus. Obviously a full explanation of these three figures would require many pages, but the figures make it clear that life at the cellular level consists of some complex molecular machinery, and this is duplicated many times in each chloroplast or mitochondria.

*Sixth, Although humans can be evil whether they believe in God or not, one can make a case that rejection of belief in God can increase the amount of evil (if evil can be quantified) — as some creationists point out. Accepting God based on creation can matter.*

*Seventh, Belief in God should in no way halt the pursuit of scientific knowledge, including studies of evolution and possible atheistic origin of life.*

*Eighth, Faith should be more than accepting a "God of gaps." The gaps in our knowledge are certainly there, but there are better reasons to believe in God.*

From here I want to go on to appendix C titled photosynthesis, cellular respiration, and the ATP synthase motor. These expand on the concept of irreducible complexity that has been discussed so much to date. They all are absolutely spectacular going far beyond anything I ever dreamed or thought of in biology. I hope the reader finds them as intriguing as I. In the interest of space and time (my time, that is), I will leave out photosynthesis whose end product is the same as that of cellular respiration, namely ATP or andenosine tri-phosphate and will add little of significance for the reader. As Dr. Salisbury stated earlier, ATP is the currency of life. It is the product derived from our energy source to generate metabolism. In the case of plants, that energy source is sunlight. In the case of animals, it is the food we eat. Now, let me move on to Dr. Salisbury's description of the process.

*Virtually every metabolic reaction or the transport of some molecule involves an exchange of energy. For the most part, those reactions that require an energy input get their energy from andenosine tri-phosphate (ATP). Usually this means that one phosphate group is removed from the ATP, leaving ADP (andenosine diphosphate), with the energy of ATP being transferred to where it is required and with the phosphate being released. There must then be a mechanism to add the phosphate back to the ADP to restore ATP, and this mechanism will require an input of energy (because energy can neither be created nor destroyed), only transferred). We can think of three aspects of this process: photosynthesis (which captures the energy of light), cellular respiration (which burns various molecules, usually to produce $CO_2$ and $H_2O_2$, releasing the energy held in those molecules), and ATP synthase (which actually produces the ATP in response to conditions set up by the photosynthesis or by cellular respiration). Bio-chemists studied these processes during much of the twentieth century, and they proved to be fiendishly complex with many of the earmarks of Michael Behe's irreducible complexity.*

*Chapters and books have been filled with descriptions of this complexity. Here, we'll have to be restricted to very brief overviews plus some illustrations of photosynthesis, respiration and ATP synthase — the most marvelous molecular machine that I know about (with cilia and flagella running a close second). The following discussion is mostly condensed from a book by David Lawler (2001).* [Now skipping photosynthesis and moving to respiration we find the following in Dr. Salisbury's book.]

***CELLULAR RESPIRATION***

*Cellular respiration takes place within the mitochondria (or within prokaryotic cells that don't have mitochondria). There, all kinds of molecules, especially sugars (glucose) are broken down in a highly complex series of steps called glycolysis, the citric acid cycle, and the electron transport system. Over 50 enzymes are involved in these three systems. (It is possible for glycolysis alone to produce some ATP in the absence of oxygen; this is often called fermentation.) As electrons are passed along the electron transport system, $H^+$ ions are again pumped to one side of a membrane system, producing a much higher concentration of $H^+$ on one side of the membrane than the other. Eventually, the electrons are combined (by cytochromes) with $H^+$ and $O_2$ to form $H_2O$, the carbon atoms from the sugars and such being released as $CO_2$. Except for the spectacular functions of the plant pigments in capturing light energy, cellular respiration is as complex as photosynthesis. Again, we are dealing with highly organized groups of enzymes, each controlled by its gene (some genes in mitochondria, and some in the nucleus). A bottom line so far is that both photosynthesis and respiration cause a build-up of $H^+$ ions on one side of a membrane. And it is within those membranes that the amazing ATP synthase motor resides. Figure 22-3* [his C-3] *summarizes some of the complexity of cellular respiration.*

The diagram of figure 22-3 can be difficult in and of itself to wade through, or at least I found it so. Some of you brighter readers may not have a problem. Even so, I will now give my own short summary for following the cellular respiration diagram through from beginning to end with the hope that it will simplify the process for the reader. It's important, I believe, for one to appreciate the complexity of this respiration cycle to gain a real appreciation for the

complexity of life and the need for an intelligent creator.

We'll begin at the top of the diagram with the sugar and starch input, they being derived from our food intake. The sugar supplies the carbon ions, while the starch apparently supplies the phosphorous ion. These combine to form a molecule of 6 carbons and 2 phosphorous atoms. This molecule (I suppose) splits into 2 molecules composed of 3 carbons and 1 phosphorous each. As one follows the arrows around through the diagram, it appears to me that these latter molecules result in 2 products, namely NADH and the 3 carbon–1 phosphorous molecule. The former (which I'm not sure where it came from) goes into the membrane on the right side where 2 hydrogen atoms are stripped from it. It is expelled as NAD while the $H^+$ ions go through the membrane to add to the higher concentration of $H^+$ ions inside the membrane. Going back to the glycolysis cycle, we find the molecule of 3 C and 1P being added to with an additional P. Apparently some ATP is formed directly from this molecule (although not explained how) and the 3 Cs go into the Krebs cycle. Therein, 1 C combines with oxygen to form $CO_2$ and the other two combine with 4 additional Cs to form 6 Cs contained in citric acid. It appears the Krebs cycle is also referred to as the citric acid cycle. Therein the citric acid is apparently stripped of 2 Cs, which combine with oxygen to form more $CO_2$, while the 4 Cs go back to be recycled. Somehow (mysterious to me) the carbon produces NADH which goes out to the membrane to be stripped of its $H^+$ ion as before. It also appears that hydrogen can pass directly through the membrane by virtue of some mysterious combination of iron, sulfur and $Cyt_b$. I have given too much detail already but the end result is that a high concentration of $H^+$ ions is built up on the right side or inside of the nuclear membrane. There, they will be used, at least in part, to run the fabulous ATP synthase motor. Now, let's move on to that beautiful motor, my favorite part of a cell's wonderful complexity.

***THE ATP SYNTHASE MOTOR (ATPASE)***

*In 1963 M. Avron detected a protein (protein complex as it turns out) that when removed from the surface of certain membranes prevented ATP synthesis, which would resume when the protein complex was restored. This complex is called coupling factor one ($CF_1$). (The system couples* $H^+$ movement through the membrane to ATP synthesis) Then it was found that this complex was part of another complex that existed within the membrane itself, now called

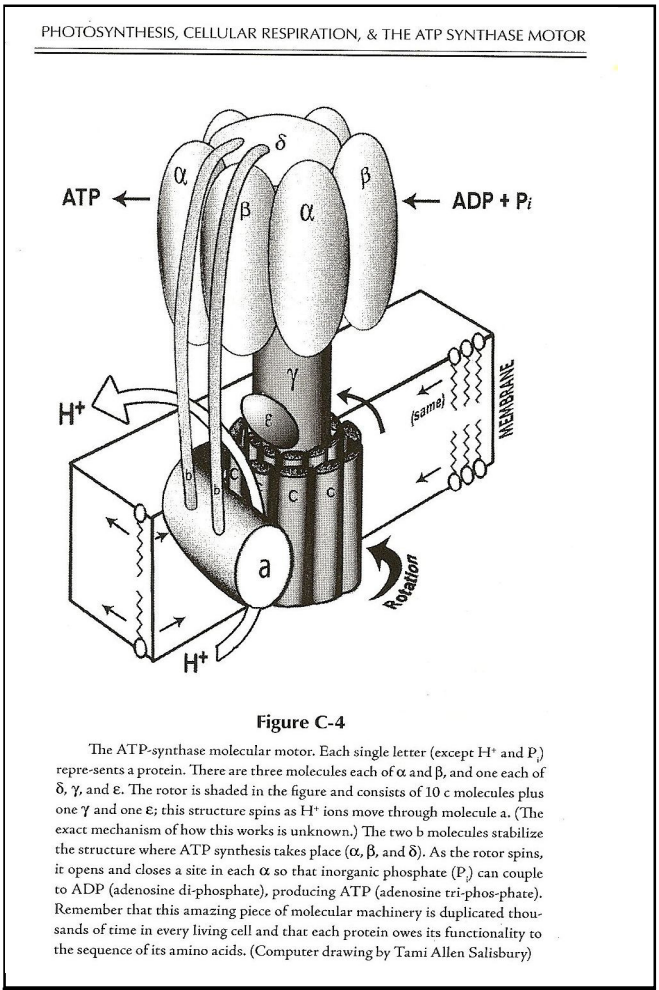


Figure 22-4 An illustration of the molecular Synthase Motor, taken from Dr. Salisbury's book (Figure C-4). I will add the caption in italic type for readability.
*"**The ATP synthase molecular motor.** Each single letter (except $H^+$ and $P_i$) represents protein. There are three molecules each of α and β, and one each of γ, ϑ, and ε. The rotor is shaded in the figure and consists of 10 c-molecules plus one γ and one ε ; this structure spins as $H^+$ ions move through the molecule a. (the exact mechanism of how this works is unknown,) The two b molecules stabilize the structure where ATP synthesis takes place (α, β, and ϑ). As the rotor spins, it opens and closes a site in each α so that inorganic phosphate ($P_i$) can couple to the ADP (andenosine diphosphate), producing ATP (andenosine tri-phosphate. Remember that this amazing piece of molecular machinery is duplicated thousands of time*[s] *in every living cell and that each protein owes its functionality to the sequence of its amino acids. (Computer drawing by Tami Salisbury)*

coupling factor zero ($CF_0$). By the 1990s, the various proteins of *$CF_1$ and $CF_0$ were well understood, and it was even possible to visualize the complete ATP synthase structure and mode of operation (Boyer, 1997; McCarty et al, 2000; Stock 1999 Although not everyone agrees on the details, here is a condensed description (See figure C-4)* [My figure 22-4]:

*The part of the complex that is on the surface of the membrane ($CF_1$) is composed of five kinds of protein labeled with Greek letters α (alpha), β (beta), γ (gamma), 9 (delta), and ε (epsilon) in a ration of 3:3:1:1:1. Their arrangements are shown in the figure. Much is known about the amino acid sequences of these proteins and how they relate to function. For example, the amino acids of the α and β subunits at the point where the elongated γ unit contacts them are highly hydrophobic* [no affinity for water]*, so there are no hydrogen bonds between them and the tip of the γ protein. This point where all the α and β subunits meet acts as a bearing such that the γ unit can rotate as shown in the figure. The amazing thing about the complex is that it is a rotary motor that spins about 1000 times per second, achieving rapid ATP synthesis. (Indeed, both the synthesis and the use of ATP in cells* [*are*] *rapid, with a complete turnover about every half second.)*

*The $CF_0$ part of the synthase complex consists of three proteins, a, b, c. in the ration of 1:1:9-12. The c proteins form a ring within the membrane and make up the rotor of this molecular machine. Thanks to the steep gradient in $H^+$ ions (and electrical charge), there is a strong tendency for the $H^+$* [ions] *to move through the $CF_0$ and the $CF_0$ is highly capable of allowing this to happen Indeed, 200,000 $H^+$ ions can move through each complex each second, which is about a thousand times faster than ATP can be synthesized; hence, the synthesis of ATP actually limits the rate at which $H^+$* [ions] *can move through $CF_0$. The $H^+$ ions move through a channel in the a-protein of the $CF_0$, and this movement is what causes the rotor, consisting of c-proteins, to spin. How that happens is not yet completely clear, although suggestions have been made. It appears that 9 to 12 $H^+$* [ions] *must move through $CF_0$ for a single rotation. In chloroplasts, a single rotation produces three ATP molecules, so three to four $H^+$ ions are required for each ATP molecule that is synthesized.*

*The b-proteins form the attachment between $CF_0$ and the 9 protein of $CF_1$, and rotation of the c-protein rotor causes the γ and ε proteins to spin along with the rotor. As the γ and ε-protein rotates, it acts as a cam to open and close active sites in the α-protein. There are three positions for each active site, and there is an active site on each of the three α-proteins of $CF_1$. In the first position of a given active site, the site is open, and in that configuration it can accept a molecule of ADP plus an inorganic phosphate. Then, as the cam spins by, the site is closed allowing the ADP and $P_i$ to bond, forming ATP. As the cam passes, the site opens, releasing the ATP. All of this is possible because of the detailed configuration of the active site caused by the amino-acid sequences that make it up. Because of that configuration, of the thousands of possible kinds of molecules in the vicinity of the active site, only ADP and $P_i$ will fit into their proper places where the energy of the spin can cause them to form the bond needed to make ATP. In photosynthesis, that energy was initially the energy of the photons absorbed by the chlorophyll and other pigment molecules, or it is the energy produced by oxidation in cellular respiration.*

#### *THE CHALLENGE OF ATP- SYNTHASE*

*David Lawlor (2001, p. 129) notes in his discussion of ATP synthase that it is "the first and smallest rotary known in biology". His description of the mechanism made me draw my breath in wonder. If ever there an irreducibly complex piece of machinery, the ATP synthase rotary motor in particular and photosynthesis in general should qualify. This never seems to occur to Lawlor, or if it did, he did not feel compelled to mention it. Instead, in virtually every chapter of his fine book, there is a sentence or two paying his respects to neo-Darwinian evolution. In Lawlor's ATP chapter, he says:*

*'It has been described by Boyer (1997) as a "splendid molecular machine", a fitting description of what is a nano-sized rotary motor, driven by protons* [$H^+$ ions] *and coupled to the active catalytic sites of ATP synthesis. Coupling factors are of very similar subunit structure in all organisms, with extensive homology in the amino acids of the polypeptides of the subunits. Clearly, the nature of the coupling factor and the mode of catalysis were developed early in evolution and, despite the great changes that*

*organisms have undergone since, the enzyme has not changed radically.'*

Now, let's go back to Dr. Salisbury. *So the complexity of the ATP machine and its presence in all living things merely indicates that it came into being so early in the game of evolution that all living things have descended from the cell where it first appeared (but in what cell that didn't need ATP?), as the result, of course, of tiny mutations, each with a selection value until eventually the whole system had evolved. Well, maybe so, but can you blame anyone for doubting? Whatever he might say in his excellent review of photosynthesis, Lawlor must not mention the possibility of an Intelligent Creation (and yes, that would be out of place). Yet the first article of faith of modern biology is that everything can be accounted for by neo-Darwinian mechanisms; that is simply taken for granted. Although his book is not about evolution, Lawlor feels compelled to pay homage to the doctrine anyway."* This last sentence demonstrates the power behind the Darwinian Theory. A great many in society, including educators, accept the Darwinian theory as fact.

Dr. Salisbury is extremely nice in his critique of Lawlor's remarks. I suppose it's hard to say just what he believes (and that isn't my place or anyone else's) but I can't help comparing his remark regarding the early evolution of such a cell with an earlier statement of Salisbury's. The latter had spoken of an intelligent engineer and likened our Creator's handiwork to it. Any engineer would use the same effective part he had over and over again, as long as it did the job efficiently. That is intelligent progression in an engineer's work. Why would any such engineer design a new part each time if some previously designed part would accomplish the job effectively? It staggers the imagination to take that as evidence that such a cell evolved early in evolution because it occurs in all living organisms. I think a verse from the Book of Mormon fits extremely well here and I repeat it for the reader's benefit. In 2 Nephi 9:28-29 we read:

*"O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsels of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish. But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God.*

If that doesn't fit this particular situation, I don't know where it would fit. Though Lawlor must be an extremely intelligent scientist, he either accepts evolution or speaks the politically correct dogma of Darwinism. I may not be as learned as such people but I have some measure of common sense and such statements indicate a complete lack thereof. More likely, it indicates the views of a confirmed atheist, expressing their complete faith in man-made theories. In my view, evolution theory is to be damned! I will hang my hat on faith in God and do my best to learn and obey his precepts.

Now then, just as you think, "Whew, I'm glad that's over", I'm going to hit you with another technical paper, which is just as deep but in a slightly different vein. I have had the goodness of placing the definitions of many of the more difficult words next to them, as taken from Webster and placed them in brackets [ ]. Though defining them was necessary for me to under-stand, I didn't have to be nice and include them here. Of course, I might have lost all reader-ship at that point if I hadn't and that probably means both of them.

**EVOLUTION AND INFORMATION THEORY**

I recently came across an article in the National Review by one, George Gilder, which proved to be another refutation of evolution or Darwinism by reputable scientific sources. Mr. Gilder appears to be a man of considerable scientific background, having obviously read numerous works by various recognized scientists. He is "Editor in Chief of Gilder Technology Report" and is co-founder of the Discovery Institute. His most recent book "The Silicon Eye" was a finalist for the Royal Society's Aventis Prize for science. The article I refer to is an essay entitled **"EVOLUTION AND ME"** with a subtitle or clarifying comment as follows. ***'The Darwinian theory has become an all-purpose obstacle to thought rather than an enabler of scientific advance.'*** By this, I assume he means that the supposition of "there is no God" sets up an artificial barrier, limiting possible explanations to those in harmony with Darwinian Theory but you can judge for yourself. Although he doesn't describe his theological stance, he does conclude the article by affirming the concept of "Intelligent Design", which is drawing a good deal of fire among educators these days.

Though it is five pages long, I have decided to include it in its entirety with the only modifications being word definitions and printing in bold italic his italicized titles. You see, like Mr. Sowell, he uses words in abundance that I'm unfamiliar with or at least was until I utilized Webster. I have included the definitions from Webster in regular type [enclosed in parentheses] to distinguish them from words of the article while making it easier for the reader of my story. There were a few words I couldn't even find in the dictionary. Their meaning is inferred by the context of the sentence, so I leave it up to the reader to draw his own conclusions. See, I do think of my posterity from time to time even though I do make snide remarks as well. Don't confuse this with kindness on my part, a trait I still seek. Now the article in regular font but converted to italic font.

*"I first became conscious that something was awry in Darwinian science some 40 years ago as I was writing my early critique of sexual liberation,* ***Sexual Suicide*** *(revised and republished as* ***Men and Marriage****). At the time, the publishing world was awash with such titles as Desmond Morris's* ***'The Naked Ape'*** *and* ***'The Human Zoo'*** *and Robert Audrey's* ***'African Genesis'****, which touted or pruriently probed the animality of human beings. Particularly impressive to me was* ***'The Imperial Animal'****, a Darwinian scholarly work by two anthropologists aptly named Lionel Tiger and Robin Fox that gave my theory of sex roles a panoply* [magnificent covering] *of primatological* [primate] *support, largely based on the behavior of patriarchal hamadryas baboons.*

*Darwinism seemed to offer me and its other male devotees a long sought tool – resembling the x-ray glasses lamentably found elsewhere in cartoons – for stripping away the distracting décor of clothing and political underwear of ideology worn by feminists and other young women of the day. Using this swashbuckling scheme of fitness and survival, nature "red in tooth and claw," we could reveal our ideological nemesis as naked mammals on the savannah to be ruled and protected by hunting parties of macho males, rather like us.*

*In actually writing and researching* ***'Sexual Suicide'****, however, I was alarmed to find both sides could play the game of telling just so stories. In* ***'The Descent of Woman'****, Elaine Morgan showed humans undulating from the tides as amphibious apes mostly led by females. Jane Goodall croodled about the friendliness of our closest relatives', the chimpanzees, and movement feminists flogged research citing the bonobo and other apes as chiefly matriarchal and frequently homosexual.*

*These evolutionary sex wars were mostly unresolvable because, at its root, Darwinian theory is tautological* [redundancy, needless repetition]*. What survives is fit; what is fit survives. While such tautologies ensure the consistency of any arguments based on them, they could contribute little to an analysis of what patterns of behavior and what ideals and aspirations were conducive to a good and productive society. Almost by definition, Darwinism is a materialistic theory that banishes aspirations and ideals from the picture. As an all-purpose tool of reductionism* [theory that all biological processes follow the same laws as do chemistry and physics] *that said that whatever survives is, in some way normative, Darwinism could inspire almost any modern movement, from the eugenic* [encouraging the production of healthy children] *furies of Nazism to the feminists crusades of Margaret Sanger and planned parenthood.*

*So in the end, for better or for worse, my book dealt chiefly with sociolological and anthropological arguments and left out Darwin.*

*Turning to economics in researching my 1981 book,* ***'Wealth and Poverty'****, I incurred new disappointments in Darwinism and materialism. Forget God – economic science largely denies intelligent design or creation even by human beings. Depicting the entrepreneur as a mere opportunity scout, arbitrageur* [a person involved in arbitration]*, or assembler of available chemical elements, economic theory left no room for the invention of radically new goods and services, and little room for economic expansion except by material "capital accumulation" or population growth. Accepted widely were Darwinian visions of capitalism as a dog-eat-dog zero sum* [meaningless] *struggle impelled by greed, where the winners consume the losers and the best that can be expected for the poor is some trickle down of crumbs from the jaws (or tax tables) of the rich.*

*In my view, the zero-sum caricature applied much more accurately to socialism, which stifles the creation of new wealth and thus fosters a dog-eat-dog struggle over existing material resources. (For example, look anywhere in the Socialist third world). I prefer Michael Novak's*

*vision of capitalism as the "mind centered system" with the word itself derived from the Latin* ***caput****, meaning head. Expressing the infinite realm of ideas and information, it is a domain of abundance rather than scarcity. Flouting zero-sum ideas, supply-side economics sprang from this insight. By tapping the abundance of human creativity, lower tax rate can yield more revenues than higher tax rates do and low-tax countries can raise their government spending faster than high-tax countries do. Thus free nations can afford to win wars without seizing resources from others. Ultimately, capitalism can transcend by creating rather than capturing wealth – a concept totally alien to the Darwinian model.*

*After* ***'Wealth and Poverty'****, my work focused on the subject of human creativity as epitomized by science and technology and embodied in computers and communications. At the forefront of this field is a discipline called information theory. Largely invented in 1948 by Claude Shannon of MIT, it rigorously explained digital computation and transmission by zero-one, or off-on codes, called "bits". Shannon defined information as* ***unexpected*** *bits or "news," and calculated its passage over a "channel" by elaborate logarithmic rules. That channel could be a wire or another path across a distance of space, or it could be a transfer of information across a span of time, as in evolution.*

*Crucial in information theory was the separation of content from conduit – information from the vehicle that transports it. It takes a low-entropy (predictable) carrier to bear high-entropy (unpredictable) messages. A blank sheet of paper is a better vessel for a new message than one already covered with writing. In my book* ***'Telecosm'*** *(2000), I showed that the most predictable available information carriers were the regular waves of the electromagnetic spectrum and prophesied that all digital information would ultimately flow over it in some way. Whether across time (evolution) or across space (communication), information could not be borne by chemical processes alone, because these processes merged or blended the medium and the message, leaving the data illegible at the other end.*

*While studying computer science, I learned the concept of a universal computing machine, an idealized computer envisioned by the genius Alan Turing. (After contributing significantly to the Enigma project for decrypting German communications in World War II, Turing committed suicide following shock therapy – "treatment" for his homosexuality.) A so-called "Turing machine" is an idealized computer that can be created using any available material, from beach sand to Buckyballs, from microchips to matchsticks. Turing made it clear that the essence of a computer is not its material substance but its architecture of ideas.*

**IDEAS SUPREME**

*Based as it is on ideas, a computer is intrinsically an object of intelligent design. Every silicon chip holds as many as 700 layers of implanted chemicals in patterns defined with nanometer precision and then is integrated with scores of other chips by an elaborately patterned architecture of wires and switches all governed by layers of software programming written by human beings. Equally planned and programmed are all the computers running the models of evolution and "artificial life" that are central to neo-Darwinian research. Everywhere on the apparatus and in the "genetic algorithms" appear the scientists' fingerprints: the "fitness functions" and "target sequences." These algorithms* [formula for solving a problem] *prove what they aim to refute: the need for intelligence and teleology (targets) in any creative process.*

*I came to see that the computer offers an insuperable* [that which cannot be overcome] *obstacle to Darwinian materialism. In a computer, as information theory shows, the content is manifestly independent of its material substrate. No possible knowledge of the computer's materials can yield any information whatsoever about the actual content of its computations. In the usual hierarchy of causation, they reflect the software or "source code" used to program the device; and, like the design of the computer itself, the software is contrived by human intelligence.*

***As I pondered this materialistic superstition, it became increasing clear to me that in all sciences I studied, information comes first, and regulates the flesh and the world, not the other way around.***

*The failure of physical theories to describe or explain information reflects Shannon's concept of entropy and his measure of "news". Information is defined by its* ***independence*** *from physical determination: If it is determined, it is predictable and thus by definition not*

*information. Yet Darwinian science seemed to be reducing all nature to material causes.*

*As I pondered this materialistic superstition, it became increasing clear to me that in all sciences I studied, information comes first, and regulates the flesh and the world, not the other way around. The pattern seemed to echo some familiar wisdom. Could it be, I asked myself one day in astonishment, that the opening of St. John's Gospel,* ***In the beginning was the word,*** *is the central dogma of modern science?*

*In raising the question I was not affirming a religious stance. At the time it first occurred to me, I was still mostly a secular intellectual. But after some 35 years of writing and study in science and technology, I can now confirm the principle empirically. Salient in virtually every technical field – from quantum theory and molecular biology to computer science and economics – is an increasing concern with the* ***word****. It passes by many names: logos, logic, bits, bytes, mathematics, software, knowledge, syntax, semantics, code, plan, program, design, algorithm, as well as the ubiquitous* [everywhere present] *"information". In every case, the information is independent of its physical embodiment or carrier.* Notice, he (Gilder) has established empirical data confirming his theory, as Mr. Sowell indicated was necessary to turn theory into fact.

*Biologists commonly blur the information into the slippery synecdoche* [a rhetorical technique wherein a part is taken for the whole, i.e. a species for a genus, the latter being a family within a given group] *of DNA, a material molecule, and imply that life is biochemistry rather than information processing. But even here, the deoxyribonucleic acid* [the nucleic acid found in the nuclei of all cells] *that bears the word is not itself the word. Like a sheet of paper or a computer memory chip, DNA bears messages but its chemistry is irrelevant to its content. The alphabets nucleotide "bases" form "words" without help from their bonds with the helical sugar phosphate backbone that frames them. The genetic words are no more dictated by the chemistry of their frame than the words in Scrabble are determined by the chemistry of their wooden racks or by the force of gravity that holds them.*

***In each of some 300 trillion cells in every human body, the words of life churn almost flawlessly through our flesh and nervous system at a speed that utterly dwarfs the data rates of all the world's supercomputers.***

*This reality expresses a key insight of Francis Crick, the Nobel laureate co-author of the discovery of the double-helix structure of DNA. Crick expounded and enshrined what he called the "Central Dogma" of molecular biology. The Central Dogma shows that influence can flow from the arrangement of the nucleotides on the DNA molecule to the arrangement of amino acids in the proteins, but not from proteins to DNA. Like a sheet of paper or a series of magnetic points on a computer's hard disk or the electrical domains in a random access memory – or indeed all the undulations of the electromagnetic spectrum that bear information through air or wires in telecommunications – DNA is a neutral carrier of information, independent of its chemistry and physics. By asserting that the DNA message precedes and regulates the form of the proteins, and that proteins cannot specify a DNA program, Crick's Central Dogma unintentionally recapitulates St. John's assertion of the primacy of the word over the flesh.*

*By assuming that inheritance is a chemical process, Darwin ran afoul of the Central Dogma. He believed that the process of inheritance "blended" together the chemical inputs of the parents. Seven years after Darwin published* ***'The Origin of the Species',*** *though, Gregor Mendel showed that genes do not blend together like chemicals mixing. As the Central Dogma ordains and information theory dictates, the DNA program is discrete and digital, and its information is transferred through carriers – but it is not specified by chemical forces. Each unit of biological information is passed on according to a digital program – a biological code – that is transcribed and translated into amino acids.*

**THE MEDIUM NOT THE MESSAGE**

*Throughout the 20th century and on into the 21st, many scientists and politicians have followed Darwin in missing the significance of the "Central Dogma." They have assumed that life is dominated by local chemistry rather than by abstract information codes. Upholding the inheritability of acquired characteristics, Jean Baptiste Lamarck, Trofim Lysenko, Aleksandr Oparin, Friedrich Engels, and Josef Stalin all espoused the primacy of proteins and thus of the environment over the genetic endowment.*

*By controlling the existing material of human beings through their environment, the Lamarckians believed that Communism could blend and breed a new Soviet man through chemistry. Dissenters were murdered or exiled. (The grim story is vividly told in Hubert Yockey's definitive 2005 book,* ***'Information Theory, Evolution, and the Origin of Life'****).*

*For some 45 years, Barry Commoner, the American Marxist biologist, refused to relinquish the Soviet mistake. He repeated it in an article in* ***'Harper's'*** *in 2002, declaring that proteins must have come first because DNA cannot be created without protein-based enzymes. In fact, protein-based enzymes cannot be created without a DNA (or RNA) program: proteins have no structure without the information that defines them. As Yockey explains, "It is mathematically impossible, not just unlikely, for information to be transferred from the protein alphabet to the* [DNA] *alphabet. That is because no codes exist to transfer information from the 20-letter protein alphabet to the 64-letter* [codon] [a collection of three nucleotide chemicals in DNA in a specific order, creating a genetic code for developing a particular amino acid] *alphabet of* [DNA].*" Twenty letters simply cannot specify the content of patterns of 64 codons.*

*But the beat goes on. By defrocking Lawrence Summers for implying the possible primacy of the genetic word over environmental conditions in the emergence of scientific aptitudes, the esteemed professoriat* [a body of professors] *at Harvard expressed its continued faith in Lamarckian and Marxian biology.*

*Over at NASA, U.S. government scientists make an analogous mistake in constantly searching for traces of protein as evidence of life on distant planets. Without a hierarchy of informative programming, proteins are mere matter, impotent to produce life. The Central Dogma dooms the NASA pursuit of proteins on the planet to be what we might call a "wild goo chase". As St. John implies, life is defined by the presence and precedence of the word: informative codes.*

*I began my 1989 book on microchips,* ***'Microcosm': The Quantum Era in Economics and Technology,*** *by quoting physicist Max Plank, the discoverer of quantum, on the resistance to his theory among the scientific establishment – the public scientists of any period whom I have dubbed the Panel of Peers. By any name they define the "consensus" of respectable science. At the beginning of the 20th century, said Plank, they balked at taking the "enormous step from the visible and directly controllable to the invisible sphere, from macrocosm to microcosm."*

*By the entrance into the "microcosm" of the once-invisible world of atoms, all physical science was transformed. When it turned out early in the 20th century that the atom was not a "massy unbreakable particle," as Isaac Newton had imagined, but a complex arena of quantum information, the classical physics of Newton began inexorably to break down. We are now at a similar point in the history of the sciences of life. The counterpoint* [a melody composed to accompany another melody] *to the atom in physics is the cell in biology. At the beginning of the 21st century it turns out that the biological cell is not a "simple lump of protoplasm" as long believed but a microcosmic* [vast microprocessor] *processor of information and synthesizer* [combining of parts to form a whole] *of proteins at supercomputer speeds. As a result breaking down as well is the established biology of Darwinian materialism.*

*No evolutionary theory can succeed without confronting the cell and the word. In each of some 300 trillion cells in every human body, the words of life churn almost flawlessly through our flesh and nervous system at a speed that utterly dwarfs the data rates of all the world's supercomputers. For example, just to assemble some 500 amino-acid units into each of the trillions of complex hemoglobin molecules that transfer oxygen from the lungs to bodily tissues takes a total of some 250 peta operations per second. (The word "peta" refers to the number ten to the 15th power – so this tiny process requires $250x10^{15}$ operations.)*

*Interpreting a DNA program and translating it through a code into a physical molecule, the cells collectively function at almost a thousand times the processing sped of IBM's new Blue Gene/L state-of-art supercomputer. This information processing in one human body for just one function exceeds by some 25 percent the total computing power of all the world's 200 million personal computers produced every year.*

*Yet, confined as they are to informational functions, the computer models stop after performing the initial steps of decoding the DNA and doing a digital-to-analog conversion of the information. The models do not begin to accomplish the other feats of the cell, beginning*

*with synthesis of protein molecules from a code, and then the exquisitely accurate folding of the proteins into the precise shape needed to fit them together in functional systems. The process of protein synthesis and "plectics"* [interwoven network] *cannot even in principle be modeled by a computer. Yet it is essential to the translation of information into life.*

**WORRYING THE WORD**

*Within the panel of peers, the emergence of the cell as a supercomputer precipitated a mostly unreported wave of consternation.* [surprise, alarm] *Crick himself ultimately arrived at the theory of "panspermia" in which he speculated that life was delivered to earth from other galaxies, thus relegating the problems of creation to a realm beyond our reach. Sensing a crisis in his then exclusively materialistic philosophy, neo-Darwinian Richard Dawkins of Oxford coined the word "meme" to incorporate information in biology, describing ideas as undergoing a Darwinian process of survival of the fittest. But in the end Dawkins' memes are mere froth on the surface of a purely chemical tempest, fictive* [imaginary] *reflections of materialistic reality rather than a governing level of information. The tongue still wags the mind.*

*These stratagems can be summed up as an effort to subdue the word by shrinking it into a physical function, whimsically reducing it to a contortion* [twisting] *of the pharynx reflecting a firing of the synapses following a memetic emanation of matter from a random flux of quanta* [small discrete packets of energy] *shaking physical atoms. Like the whirling tigers of the children's fable, the recursive loops of names for the word chase their tails around the tree of life, until there is left at the bottom only a muddled pool of what C. S. Lewis called "nothing buttery".*

*"Nothing buttery" was Lewis's way of summing up the stance of public scientists who declared that "life" or the brain of the universe is "nothing but" matter in motion. As MIT's Marvin Minsky famously asserted, "The brain is nothing but a "meat machine'." In DNA 2003, Crick's collaborator James Watson doggedly insisted that the discovery of DNA "proved" that life is nothing but or "merely chemistry and physics". It is a flat universe epistemology* [study of the origin of knowledge], *restricted to what technologists call the "physical layer", which is the lowest of seven layers of abstraction in information technology between silicon chips and silica fiber on the bottom of the programs and content at the top.*

*After 100 years or so of attempted philosophical leveling, however, it turns out that the universe is stubbornly hierarchical. It is a top down "nested hierarchy", in which the higher levels command more degrees of freedom than the levels below them, which they use and constrain* [compel]. *Thus, the higher levels can neither eclipse* [obscure] *the lower levels nor be reduced to them. Resisted at every step across the range of reductive sciences, this realization is now inexorable* [cannot be altered]. *We know now that no accumulation of knowledge about chemistry and physics will yield the slightest insight into the origins of life or the processes of computation or the sources of consciousness or the nature of intelligence or the causes of economic growth. As the famed chemist Michael Polanyi pointed out in 1961, all these fields depend on chemical and physical processes, but are not defined by them. Operating farther up the hierarchy, biological macro-systems such as brains, minds, human beings, businesses, societies, and economies consist of intelligent agents that harness chemical and physical laws to higher purposes but are not reducible to lower entities or explicable by them.*

*Materialism generally and Darwinian reductionism, specifically, comprise thoughts that deny thought, and contradict themselves. As British biologist J. B. S. Haldane wrote in 1927,* ***"If my mental processes are determined wholly by the motions of atoms in my brain, I have no reason to suppose my beliefs are true … and hence I have no reason to suppose my brain is composed of atoms".*** *Nobel-laureate" biologist Max Delbruck (who was trained as a physicist) described the contradiction in an amusing epigram* [a witty often paradoxical remark] *when he said that the neuroscientist's effort to explain the brain as mere meat "reminds me of nothing as much Baron Munchausen's attempt to extract himself from a swamp by pulling on his own hair".*

*Analogous to such canonical* [restricted to a given canon of information] *self-denying sayings as* ***the Cretan says all Cretans are liars****, the paradox of the self-denying mind tends to stultify* [to render useless] *every field of knowledge and art that it touches and threatens to diminish this golden age of technology into a dark age of scientistic reductionism and, following in its trail,*

*artistic and philosophical nihilism* [an attitude of rejecting all philosophical or ethical principles]. Don't you love his Cretan comment?

*All right, have a tantrum. Hurl the magazine aside. Say that I am some insidious charlatan of creation-lite", or, God forfend* [to forbid]*, "intelligent design". "In the beginning was the Word" is from a mystical passage in a verboten book, the Bible, which is not a scientific text. On your side in rebuffing such arguments is John E. Jones III of central Pennsylvania, the gullible federal judge who earlier this year made an obsequious* [submissive, fawning] *play to the Panel of Peers with an attempted refutation of what has been termed "intelligent design'.*

*But intelligent design is merely a way of asserting a hierarchical cosmos. The writings of the leading exponents of the concept, such as the formidably learned Stephen Meyer and William Dembski (both of the Discovery Institute), steer clear of any assumption that the intelligence manifestly present in the universe is necessarily supernatural. The intelligence of human beings offers an "existence proof" of the possibility of intelligence and creativity fully within nature. The idea that there is no other intelligence in the universe in any other form is certainly less plausible than the idea that intelligence is part of the natural world and arises in many different ways. MIT physicist and quantum-computing pioneer Seth Lloyd has just published a scintillating book called* ***"Programming the Universe"*** *that sees intelligence everywhere emerging from quantum processes themselves – the universe as a quantum computer. Lloyd would vehemently shun any notion of intelligent design, but he posits the universe as pullulating* [swarming] *with computed functions. It is not unfair to describe this ubiquitous intelligence as something of a Godlike force pervading the cosmos. God becomes* ***psi****, the "quantum wave function" of the universe.*

*All explorers on the frontiers of nature ultimately must confront the futility of banishing faith from science. From physics and neural science to psychology and sociology, from mathematics to economics, every scientific belief combines faith and facts in an inextricable weave. Climbing the epistemic* [the nature of knowledge] *hierarchy, all pursuers of truth necessarily reach a point where they cannot prove their most crucial assumptions.* This is obvious from the extracts taken from Salisbury's book, which preceded this particular article. You might want to re-read it, assuming you have the interest and time.

**IRREDUCIBLE**

*The hierarchical hypothesis itself, however, can be proven. Kurt Godel, perhaps the preeminent mathematician of the 20th century and Einstein's close colleague, accomplished the proof in 1931. He demonstrated in essence that every logical system, including mathematics, is dependent on premises that it cannot prove and that cannot be demonstrated within the system itself, or reduced to it. Refuting the confident claims of Bertrand Russell, Alfred North Whitehead, and David Hilbert that it would be possible to subdue all mathematics to a mechanical unfolding of the rules of symbolic logic, Godel's proof was a climactic* [moment of climax] *moment in modern thought.*

*The saga of mathematical discovery has been beautifully expounded in a series of magisterial books by David Berlinski, notably his intellectual autobiography* ***Black Mischief*** *(1986),* ***The Advent of the Algorithm*** *(2000), and* ***Infinite Ascent: A short History of Mathematics*** *(2005). After contemplating the aporias* [no Webster] *of number theory in* ***Black Magic****, he concluded, "It is the noble assumption of our own scientific culture that sooner or later everything might be explained: AIDS and the problems of astrophysics, the life cycle of the snail and the origins of the universe, the coming to be and the passing away. … Yet it is possible, too, that vast sections of our experience might be so very rich in information that they stay forever outside the scope of theory and remain simply what they are: unique, ineffable, insubsumable* [can't be included under a category]*, irreducible". And the irreducibility of mathematical axioms translates directly into similar irreducibility of physics. As Caltech physicist and engineer Carver Mead, a guiding force in three generations of Silicon Valley technology, put it: "The simplest model of the galaxy is the galaxy".*

*The irreducibility takes many forms and generates much confusion. Michael Behe, author of the classic* ***Darwin's Black Box*** *(1996), shows that myriad phenomena in biology, such as the bacterial flagellum* [a whip like or tail like part serving as an organ of locomotion in bacteria] *and blood-clotting cascade, are "irreducibly complex" in the sense that they do not function unless all their components are present. It's an all or nothing*

*system incompatible with an evolutionary theory of slow, step-by-step incremental change. Behe's claim of irreducible complexity is manifestly true, but it thrusts the debate into a morass of empirical biology, searching for transitional forms in the same way that paleontologists search for transitional fossils. Nothing definitive is found, but there are always enough molecules of smoke, or intriguing lumps of petrified stool or suggestive shards of bones or capsules of interesting gas, to persuade the gullible judge or professor that somewhere there was a flock of flying dragons or a whirling cellular rotaxane* [no Webster] *that fit the bill.*

*Science gained its authority from the successes of technology. When Daniel Dennett of Tufts wants to offer unanswerable proof of the supremacy of science, he writes, "I have yet to meet a post-modern science critic who is afraid to fly in an airplane because he doesn't trust the calculations of thousands of aeronautical engineers and physicists that have demonstrated and exploited the principles of flight". Dennett is right: Real science is practical and demonstrable, following the inspiration of Michael Faraday, Heinrich Hertz, Thomas Edison, William Shockley, Robert Noyce, Charles Townes, and Charles Kao – the people who built the machines of the modern age. If you can build something, you can understand it.*

***Observes Nobel-laureate physicist Robert Laughlin of Stanford: "The Darwinian theory has become an all-purpose obstacle to thought rather than an enabler of scientific advance".***

*The Panel of Peers, however, is drifting away from these technological foundations, where you have to demonstrate what you invent – and* ***now seeks to usurp the role of philosophers and theologians****.* [bold for emphasis] *When Oxford physicist David Deutsch, or Scientific American in a cover story, asserts the reality of infinite multiple parallel universes,* ***it is a trespass far beyond the bounds of science into the realm of wildly speculative philosophy****. The effort to explain the miracles of our incumbent universe by postulating an infinite array of other universes is perhaps the silliest stratagem in the history of science.*

*Darwin's critics are sometimes accused of confusing methodological materialism with philosophical materialism, but this is in fact a characteristic error of Darwin's advocates.* ***Multiverse theory itself is based on a methodological device invented by Richard Feynman, one that "reifies"*** [to treat an abstraction as a concrete object] ***math and sees it as a physical reality****. (It's an instant of what Whitehead calls "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness"). Feynman proposed the mapping of electron paths by assuming the electron took all possible routes, and then calculating the interference patterns that result among their wave functions. The method was a great success. But despite some dabbling as a youth in many worlds of theory, Feynman in his prime was too shrewd to suggest that the electron actually took all the possible paths, let alone to accept the theory that these paths compounded into entire separate universes.*

*Under the pressure of nothing buttery, though, scientists attempt to explain the exquisite hierarchies of life and knowledge through the flat workings of physics and chemistry alone. Information theory says this isn't possible if there's just one universe, and an earth that existed for only 400 million years before the emergence of cells. But if there are infinite numbers of universes all randomly tossing the dice, absolutely anything is possible. The Peers perform a prestidigitory* [the performance of tricks by sleight of hand] *shuffle of the cosmoses and place themselves, by the "anthropic* [man related] *principle", in a privileged universe where life prevails on Darwinian terms. The Peers save the random mutations of nothing buttery by rendering all science arbitrary and stochastic* [pertaining to chance, conjecture]

*Science still falls far short of developing satisfactory explanations of many crucial phenomena, such as human consciousness, the Big Bang, the superluminal quantum entanglement of photons across huge distances, even the bioenergetics of the brain of a fly in eluding the swatter. The more we learn about the universe the more wide-open the horizons of mystery. The pretense that Darwinian evolution is a complete theory of life is a huge distraction from the limits and language, the rigor and grandeur, of real scientific discovery. Observes Nobel-laureate physicist Robert Laughlin of Stanford:* ***"The Darwinian theory has become an all-purpose obstacle to thought rather than an enabler of scientific advance".*** [bold for emphasis again or a tactic of my weltanschauung].

*In the 21st century, the word – by any name – is primary. Just as in Crick's Central Dogma ordaining the precedence of DNA over proteins, however, the word itself is not the summit of the hierarchy. Everywhere we encounter information, it does not bubble up from a random flux or pre-biotic soup. It comes from mind. Taking the hierarchy beyond the word, the central dogma of intelligent design ordains that* ***the word is subordinate to mind****. Mind can generate and lend meaning to words, but words in themselves cannot generate mind or intelligence. Retorts the molecular biologist: Surely the information in DNA generates mind all the time, when it gives the instructions to map the amino-acids into the cells of the brain? Here, however, intercedes the central dogma of the theory of intelligent design, which bars all "magical" proteins that morph* [mutate] *into data, all "uppity" atoms transfigured as bits, all "miracles" of upstream influence. DNA can inform the creation of a brain, but a brain as an aggregation of proteins cannot generate the information in DNA.* ***Wherever there is information, there is a preceding intelligence.***

*At the dawn of information theory in 1948, MIT cybernetician Shannon and rival Norbert Weiner defined the new crisis of materialism: "The mechanical brain does not secrete thought 'as the liver does bile', as the earlier materialists claimed, nor does it put it out in the form of energy as the muscle puts out its activity. Information is information not matter or energy. No materialism that does not admit this can survive at the present day".*

*This constraint on the Munchausen men of materialistic superstition is a hard truth, but it is a truth none-the-less. The hierarchies of life do not stop at the word, or at the brain. The universe of knowledge does not close down to a molecular point. It opens up infinitely in all directions. Superior even to the word are the mind and the meaning, the will and the way. Intelligent people bow their heads before this higher power, which still remains inexorably beyond the reach of science.*

*Throughout the history of human thought, it has been convenient and inspirational to designate the summit of the hierarchy as God. While it is not necessary for science to use this term, it is important for scientists to grasp the hierarchical reality it signifies. Transcending its materialistic trap, science must look up from the ever-dimmer reaches of its Darwinian pit and cast its imagination towards the word and its sources: idea and meaning, mind and mystery, the will and the way. It must eschew* [shun] *reductionism – except as a methodological tool – and adopt an aspirational imagination. Though this new aim may seem blinding at first, it is ultimately redemptive because it is the only way that science can ever hope to solve the grand challenge problems before it, such as gravity, entanglement, quantum computing, time, space, mass, and mind. Accepting hierarchy, the explorer embarks on an adventure that leads to ever-deeper understanding of life, consciousness, cosmos and creation.*

The preceding thoughts and ideas, as taken from two weekly magazine publications previously mentioned, from Dr. Skousen's and Dr. Salisbury's fine books and from George Gilder's article in the National Review, should be more than sufficient to convince any average Joe Blow like myself that Darwinism has some very serious flaws and is nothing more than a theory, which again lacks empirical validation.

As Mr. Sowell said in his work **The Conflict of Visions,** *"Logic is an essential ingredient in the process of turning a vision into a theory, just as empirical evidence is then essential for determining the validity of that theory".* So far Darwinism doesn't have the empirical evidence that supports evolution from simpler species to more complex species as pointed out by Dr. Skousen and reiterated by both Dr. Salisbury and George Gilder. Yet by incessant repetition over a period of years, the theory of evolution as proposed by Darwin is now taken as fact in society and in our public schools. Now, it appears that through information theory, even the logic of Darwinism is left wanting. To the contrary, the existence of a higher power has numerous points of empirical evidence from various prophetic visions to numerous prophecies that have come true including the advent of Jesus Christ himself. The fact that the world in general doesn't accept such biblical facts as having credibility; doesn't make them any less valid except in the minds of the unbeliever who must see, feel and touch. They have no regard for the 6th sense or spirit of man because they have made no attempt to use it in communicating with God or investigating his reality.

Incidentally, in the next issue of the National Review, I read several responses to Mr. Gilder's article. All were favorable but one, which came

from a university professor with a PHD. My, how those letters are meant to impress the reader. He not only didn't agree with the article's conclusions but made several disparaging remarks about Mr. Gilder's knowledge. That seems to be a favorite tactic of such educated geniuses who set themselves up as the elite within humanity. This reminds me of Mr. Sowell's comments about those intellectuals who feel that they are the only ones who understand how society should be run and swear allegiance to the unconstrained theory of Mr. Sowell's book.

At the risk of boring the reader with excessive repetition, I will, once again, insert my theological views so as to contrast them with the foregoing chance based theories. The reader may want to skip down to the next sub-section titled "The Magnitude of the Universe". If you do read this page, don't say; Í didn't warn you.

The old idea of chance based progression from the simple to the more complex is, in my opinion, an attempt to make the average person believe there is no God and that we exist, as does the earth and the heavens, by pure chance. If that is so, of course, there is no need for God, there is no purpose to life and there is no life after death. We are then free to do whatever society allows, which means any standard set up may well be as fleeting as down on a thistle or the frost on a fall morning. There is no need for compassion, integrity or morality of any kind except to satisfy the demands imposed upon us by society. There is no right or wrong because there is no God or devil. Thus, there is no development of the inner man or our spirit as described by theology because we don't control ourselves but only react to society's laws. In fact, such an inner man must not exist because the only reality is our physical self, which came about by accident. The only control of our actions is society's laws while survival of the fittest becomes the golden rule. Evil is only a definition of society and need only be combated when threatening our lives. Our whole effort would logically be pointed towards self-gratification of the physical within the allowable limits of our ever-changing society. Why not is the question?

On the other hand, if we believe in God we must believe there is a purpose to life. A Being that would create such a magnificent entity, as the cosmos, would most assuredly have a purpose in mind. Since man is the most advanced organism this earth has seen, that Being must also have a purpose for our creation and logically, for all he has created. Our primary quest in life, it would seem, should then be to try to understand that purpose and fulfill any part we may have under his direction. It's not unthinkable that mankind has a role in such purpose, which might well extend into the eternities to come.

He, like modern man who creates smart devices of all kinds, would necessarily create a means of communication between himself and mankind so that we could receive direction and report back. Those vehicles are, of course, called the Holy Spirit and prayer. Our quest might well begin with a simple hope that God exists followed by an effort to understand and refine our function in his communication system. As we reach out in hope to him in search of that purpose, he will guide us to greater understanding, making our effort more effective. Faith in his omniscience and omnipotence as God is then born. As that faith is exercised, additional understanding is developed and as we act in harmony with the same, faith continues to grow. Such increasing faith will cause a person to search the writings of the prophets as he hungers after God's truths.

After all, a true prophet is directed by God and has obviously honed his communication with the same to an exceptionally high degree. He, the prophet, having dedicated his life to knowing God, is the recognized authority in theological matters. Just as one must find a legitimate expert in any field for accurate advice, one must find a true prophet or the unaltered writings of the same to receive legitimate theological advice. Even so, this quest for truth will strengthen the spirit within and as truth is found and acted upon, the spiritual self will begin to exert control of our actions rather than society alone. Our actions will then rise to meet that higher level defined by truth. Thus, God through faith has helped us develop a whole different basis for life, allowing us to build the inner self and weather life's storms in a more positive manner through realization of his purpose and the promise of a bright future.

The preceding discussion doesn't prove or disprove the existence of God but it does point out an important principle. Whether we choose to believe in God or not, is a choice we make and constitutes the foundation upon which we build. The framework we build for life, i.e. our virtues and values, is contingent upon the

inclusion or exclusion of that particular principle. Similarly, the virtues I spoke of, when energized by the Spirit, are brought to their apex of goodness and beauty. Ether God and the principles emanating from him buoy up our resulting life or only the mind of man with his logic secures it. Needless to say, I choose the first and hope the preceding discussion will help the reader understand why. This element of faith constitutes the reason driving my desire to pattern my life after the truths he has expounded through his holy prophets. Incidentally, this faith I speak of has blossomed in my own life with effort to live the principles I find in the Holy Scriptures. The beauty of God's plan for me increases in both scope and detail with each and every effort I make in my pursuit of truth. I have the greatest confidence that such effort will not only improve my capacity as an average citizen but will also lead me to all truth available to men as deemed appropriate by our Father in Heaven.

**THE MAGNITUDE OF THE UNIVERSE**

At this point, I feel inclined to include some thoughts on the magnitude of the universe, which stagger the mind, including, I believe, those involved in its scientific exploration. Don't worry though, because the verbiage and concepts therein don't assault the mind like the earlier material. As a popular LDS hymn informs us, "Gird up your loins, fresh courage take; the Lord will never you forsake". However, maybe I should change loins to mental faculties but you will have to be the judge.

My remarks will stem from a National Geographic article printed in August 1999. The article includes a map of the universe describing the relative sizes of such manifestations as a super cluster, the local group, our galactic realm, our sun's neighborhood and finally, our solar system. I will include simplified brief descriptions of the same as taken from the map, to stagger the reader's mind. It helps one have some concept of the vastness of the universe and the relative sizes of the aforementioned manifestations. In so doing, I can only exclaim of the greatness of our God, who is the creator of all things within it as well as the cosmos itself.

To begin with, let's talk about size in terms of both light years and miles. The numbers become so large with the latter unit that the term light year was coined. A light year is the distance light travels in one year, earth time. Since light travels at approximately 186,000 miles a second, a little multiplication will yield the magnitude of a light year in miles. One can determine the number of seconds in a year by multiplying 60 x 60 x 24 x 365.25, i.e. the number of seconds in a minute multiplied by the minutes in an hour times the hours in a day times the days in the year and get 31,557,600 seconds in a year. Now multiplying 31,557,600 x 186,000, we find a light year is approximately 5,869,713,600,000 miles. That is, a light year is 5 trillion, 869 billion, 713 million and 600 thousand miles. Wow, what a staggering thought in and of itself. That's about the size of the national debt in dollars. For ease of multiplication, we'll round the miles in a light year to 6 trillion. The little error that adjustment will make is insignificant in cosmic terms.

Our solar system seems mighty big in terms of man's measurements but taking its average distance from the sun and doubling that, we can get an approximate size of the solar system as it has been understood in the past, i.e. 7.4 billion miles. Of course, Pluto has now been relegated to a dwarf planet status and placed in the so-called Kuiper belt, as of the end of 2006. In 2005 another dwarf planet was discovered, which was slightly bigger than Pluto and was named Eris. Its average distance from the sun is 6.4 billion miles or the average orbital diameter is 12.8 billion miles. Compare that to the earth's average orbital diameter of 186 million miles and you can see it is 688 times larger. If that doesn't make you wonder a little, consider that the diameter of the Eris orbit is only 0.002 times the distance of a light year or a light year is 500 times the diameter of the orbit of Eris. That gives you an appreciation of the magnitude of a light year, the basic unit of measurement of the universe.

Now, let's move up to the size of the diameter of the sun's neighborhood, which is given as 40 light years, a mere 240 trillion miles. From there, we'll move up to the scale called our galactic realm within which we find our galaxy, the Milky Way, and of course, our sun's neighborhood within that galaxy. This realm is a mere 500,000 light years in diameter or 12,500 times that of our sun's neighborhood and 250 million times the size of the orbit of Eris. The size of the Milky Way itself is staggering to my mind, having a diameter in the neighborhood of 100,000 light years or $6 \times 10^{14}$ miles, which is 600,000 trillion miles. Now, that leaves the numbers of our budget deficit in the dust, doesn't it? But wait, we haven't yet approximated the size of our local group, which

has a diameter of 4 million light years or eight times that of our galactic realm. If my math is right, that makes it 24 million trillion miles across. According to the map of the universe, this group is a loosely bound group of about 30 galaxies of which the Milky Way and Andromeda are the largest. If your mind is still intact, follow me up to our super cluster, the next scale of measurement, which has a diameter of 150 million light years that is 150,000,000 light years or 900 million trillion miles. Now, I would hate to be paying for the gas of an SUV traveling across it at even $2 per gallon. If one considers it gets 15 miles to the gallon, it would take a mere ten million trillion gallons or 20 million trillion dollars, hardly mere change even for a rich guy like me. Even worse, think of the number of potty stops one would have to make, particularly if one had kids on board. Even at the speed of light, it would take a while. With that thought, I believe I'll make a stop myself.

Now that that chore is accomplished, I'm ready to take on the universe. You see, the super cluster just described is part of a mere sliver of the observable universe or about one percent, 0.01 times that which scientists have observed through the various telescopes available to them. To help the reader mentally visualize the universe as best he can, I will now include a quote taken from the map. *"So vast is space that just to find our solar system we must make five leaps of scale* [that was done with my previous description]. *In the background image on this sheet,* [i.e. the map I have been referring to], *we see a mere sliver of the sky – roughly one percent of the diameter of the observable universe – yet even the smallest dots represent not stars or galaxies but great concentrations of galaxies. Scattered clumps of dark matter and galaxies appear as bright colors in the image, which is based on a super computer simulation. Within this sliver lies our super cluster (right), mapped using the actual positions of its celestial elements.* Keep in mind, we haven't as yet, seen or defined the edge of the universe, which of course, doesn't stop the cosmologists from speaking in terms of a Multiverse being dissatisfied with just a single universe.

Another quote taken from elsewhere on the map may help in the visualization I spoke of earlier. *"As far as we can see with our ever improving telescopes, there are at least a hundred billion galaxies arrayed throughout the universe. Each, like the Milky Way, is an 'island universe' containing billions of stars. Nearly all galaxies are members of groups or clusters, which are part of even larger structures called super clusters. All of these large concentrations are connected by filaments or sheets of galaxies, which enclose huge, bubble-like volumes of empty space, the cosmic voids".*

Now, I'm confident that my previous poor description of the observable universe won't be of much help in your effort to assimilate such in your knowledge bank without further study on your part. Even then, you'll need to be somewhat smarter than I, to do so, which is, of course, quite possible and even probable. Even so, I hope I have helped the reader understand to a degree how insignificant man is in the ultimate scheme of things. Even the best minds of the scientific community are insignificant relative to the creations around us and, at best, can only observe and try to explain what is going on. The lack of unity among such people and their changing theories do little to establish their credibility, as has been previously pointed out. Wild assumptions, such as the multi-verse and accidentally creating something from nothing certainly detract from any credibility gained being nothing more than mere philosophy.

I don't claim to be on the same intellectual level as they but I am smart enough to judge the reasonableness of such theories and decide whether I want to place my faith in them or in the concept of God and his creations. They would require me to accept them, as all mighty in knowledge, even though they are only observers. They can't create such magnificent entities any more than I can and want to explain its creation as mere chance. They obviously have an axe to grind, i.e. fame and recognition along with a healthy income. They dismiss the idea of a prophet sent from God, counting his advice as being illogical because it isn't established through devices that allow man to evaluate it through his five senses. In their minds the only path to truth is through scientific means, which allows us to see, feel, taste, touch, hear or smell the item in question and then rely on the theories of those same self proclaimed experts. They fail to realize or accept the fact that there are undoubtedly additional laws in effect, which man has not yet discovered, much less tried to explain. They have no more knowledge of the means to communicate with God through his Holy Spirit than the average citizen has of the instruments of science. Yet they pronounce their findings as truth and ridicule the promptings of the Spirit and

other revelation a true prophet of God would have. At least, the prophets admit science has value in establishing truth.

The instruments of the Spirit are contained in a righteous life, such things as faith, humility, purity, etc. and the fruits of gospel study and service. Even I, an average member of Christ's Church, can achieve some expertise with such spiritual instruments and feel the promptings that a prophet speaks of, thereby validating prophetic direction in my own mind. I don't have to rely on a prophet's theories, wondering whether they are on the wild side or not. All of a prophet's utterances can be checked through obedience to righteous principles, leading to faith, the purifying of one's soul and gratefulness, the seedbed of humility. Thus, man has access to the same tools the prophet has, if he will but make an effort to acquire and use them.

**GENETIC DESTINY VS PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

In much of the world at large and the United States in particular, the virtue of tolerance has become the order of the day. To a degree, at least, this is as it should be, so mankind can follow their individual consciences. This is true no matter how reprehensible one's belief is to others as long as he abides by civil law. The danger lies in any one moral philosophy or religion imposing their values on other segments of society and denying them agency or the right to act according to conscience within the law. That's what freedom of religion is all about. Our forefathers left societies wherein religion was dictated by the state. We see such control today in Islamic societies. In our country we now see such subversion of rights taking place through reinterpretation of law, as described by the framers of the constitution, to achieve certain societal goals of a particular political group. We also see it through the redefinition of words as coined by various politicians and described as being politically correct. Anyone using the terms in some unacceptable way is quickly depicted as a bigot, a racist or even worse. Efforts are made to change some words, once more restrictive in meaning, to broader meanings, which cover moral activities reprehensible to past generations and large segments of society today. Such activities are meant to educate society to be more tolerant and acceptable of immoral life styles. Likewise, these educational activities take place in schools to mold the thinking of the young and eventually impose the philosophies of such groups on society through education and eventual changes in the law.

Members of society, who oppose the hijacking of various established words or terms through definition change or who oppose acceptance of certain life styles they believe harmful to society, are typically labeled intolerant, hate mongers or even worse. Though I differ from the so-called Christian right in many respects, I hold their views regarding morality to be generally correct and likewise oppose the efforts of many in our educational institutions to indoctrinate our youth with their views, be they political or moral in nature. They slant their teachings to reflect their own personal agendas or those of the NEA, which are frequently worse. So-called up-dated texts now reflect the views of the current administrators and malign long held societal views of patriotism and early patriots in their historical revisions. Likewise, they want to teach what many consider to be immoral life styles as being normal, thus demonstrating the intolerance of those who oppose them. Courses in sexuality usually concentrate on means of prevention of unwanted consequences rather than the benefits and moral implications of abstinence. All of this educational activity appears to be a joint effort to undermine long held religious views, which have been an integral part of this country's march to greatness. In many respects, they undermine the family whose values establish the underpinnings of society as a whole. Though the rampant freedom granted the purveyors of moral filth in this country have compounded the difficulties of moral parenthood, only the family and religious teachings can effectively counter the problems involved. This reality amplifies the responsibility of parents to teach their children proper moral choices by word of mouth, proper standards and appropriate example. There is nothing of more importance to society.

Scientific evidence is now being used to justify various types of behavior and remove personal responsibility for one's choices of the same by virtue of gene identification associated with people in these groups. The July 1999 issue of U. S. News and World Report carries an article, which discusses the impact of such on the country's politics as well as efforts of groups involved to use the conclusions therein for their own political advantage. That, of course, shouldn't surprise anyone even though the data is frequently skewed for his or her particular benefit. The article is entitled, **"Politics of**

**Biology"** and summarizes the data and conclusions that can be drawn at that particular point in time, i.e. 1999. I will draw liberally from that article in my remarks regarding this topic but only those points I believe important to the reader (I'll be lucky to have one reader now).

Those in society who refuse to take responsibility for the lifestyles they have chosen have sparked my interest in this article. Though it may not totally invalidate their claims of, *"I can't help it if I was born that way",* along with their refusal to accept responsibility for their conduct; it certainly applies a big question mark to their claims. So, let's get on with the article.

I can see that I will have difficulty including all that is meaningful because of the article's length. I'll try to be selective without damaging conclusions you might draw from those parts I do include. This will, undoubtedly, lengthen the excerpts chosen. The opening paragraph is entitled **"How the Nature Versus Nurture Debate Shapes Public Policy – and Our View of Ourselves".** After opening with a paragraph of one, Laurie Flynn and her work to destigmatize mental illness with members of congress, a general paragraph follows. As done earlier, I will include all quotes in italics as well as quotation marks for clarity.

*"The view of mental illness as a brain disease has been crucial to the effort to destigmatize illnesses such as schizophrenia and depression. But it's just one example of a much broader biologizing of American culture that's been going on for more than a decade. For both political and scientific reasons – and its often impossible to disentangle the two – everything from criminality to addictive disorders to sexual orientation is seen today less as a matter of choice than of genetic destiny. Even basic personality is looking more and more like a genetic legacy. Nearly every week there is a report of a new gene for one trait or another. Novelty seeking, religiosity, shyness, the tendency to divorce, and even happiness (or the lack of it) are among the traits that may result in part from a gene, according to new research.*

*This cultural shift has political and personal implications. On the personal level, a belief in the power of genes necessarily diminishes the potency of such personal qualities as will, capacity to choose, and sense of responsibility for those choices – if it's in the genes, you're not accountable. It allows the alcoholic, for example, to treat himself as a helpless victim of his biology rather than as a willful agent with control of his own behavior. Genetic determination can free victims and their families of guilt – or lock them in their suffering.*

*On the political level, biological determinism now colors all sorts of public policy debates on issues such as gay rights, health care, juvenile justice, and welfare reform. …*

*The search for genes for severe mental disorders has been inconclusive. Years of studies of families, adoptees, and twins separated at birth suggest that both schizophrenia and manic-depressive illnesses run in families. But if that family pattern is a result of genes, it's clearly very complicated, because most of the siblings of schizophrenics (including half of identical twins, who have the same genes) don't develop the disorder. Behavioral geneticists suspect that several genes may underlie the illness, and that some environmental stress – perhaps a virus or birth complications – also might be required to trigger the disorder. . . .*

*Some psychiatrists are pulling back from a strict biological model of mental illness. Psychiatrist Keith Russell Ablow has introduced the idea of "character" into his practice, telling depressed patients that they have the responsibility and capacity to pull themselves out of their illness. Weakness of character, as Ablow sees it, allows mental illness to grow. Such sentiment is highly controversial within psychiatry, where to suggest that patients might be responsible for some of their own suffering is taboo,*

***This second hit operates counter intuitively through the genes themselves to sculpt the brain.***

*Besotted Genes.*

*The best that be said about the research on the genetics of alcoholism is that it is inconclusive, but that hasn't stopped people from using genetic arguments for political purposes. … What this means is that those seeking help for excessive drinking are told they have a disease (though the exact nature of the disease is unknown), that it is probably a genetic condition, and that the only treatment is abstinence. Some researchers identify alcoholics by their drunk-driving record, while others focus on withdrawal symptoms or daily consumption. This is what geneticists call a "dirty phenotype"; people drink too much in so many different ways*

*that the trait itself is hard to define, so family patterns are all over the place, and often contradictory. … The issues of choice and responsibility come up again and again in the discussion of alcoholism` and other addictive disorders. Even if scientists were to identify a gene (or genes) that creates a susceptibility to alcoholism, it's hard to know what this genetic loading would mean. It certainly wouldn't lead to alcoholism in a culture that didn't condone drinking – among the Amish, for example – so it's not deterministic in a strict sense. Even in a culture where drinking is common, there are clearly a lot of complicated choices involved in living an alcoholic life; it's difficult to make the leap from DNA to those choices. …*

***Synapses of Desire.*** *It would be a mistake to focus only on the biological explanations of psychopathology; the cultural shift is much broader than that. A generation ago the gay community was at war with organized psychiatry, arguing (successfully) that sexual orientation was a lifestyle choice and ought to be deleted from the manual of disorders. Recently, the same community was celebrating new evidence that homosexuality is a biological (and perhaps genetic) trait, not a choice at all. …*

*These concerns are probably justified, but there are also signs that we may be on the crest of another important cultural shift. More and more experts, including dedicated biologists, sense that the power of genetics has been oversold and that a correction is needed. What's more, there is a glimmer of evidence that the typical American may not be buying it entirely. According to a recent U.S. News/Bozell poll, less than 1 American in 5 believes that genes play a major role in behavior; three quarters cite environment and society as the more powerful shapers of our lives. …*

***"No genetic potential can become reality", says Bronfenbrenner, "unless the relationship between the organism and its environment is such that it is permitted to be expressed".***

*Whatever is going on, it's clear that the new mistrust of genetic power is consonant with what science is now beginning to show. … For example when geneticists say they have found a gene for a particular trait, what they mean is that people carrying a certain allele [allelomorph, a pair of contrasting characters inherited alternately according to Mendelian law] – a variation in stretch of DNA that normally codes for a certain protein – will develop the given trait in a standard environment. The last few words – "in a standard environment" – are very important, because what scientists are not saying is that a given allele will necessarily lead to that trait in every environment. Indeed, there is mounting evidence that a particular allele will not produce the same result if the environment changes significantly; that is to say, the environment has a strong influence on whether and how a gene gets "expressed".*

*It is hard to emphasize too much what a radical re-thinking of the nature-nurture debate this represents. When most people think about heredity, they still think in terms of classical Mendelian genetics; one gene, one trait. But for most complex human behavior, this is far from the reality that recent research is revealing. A more accurate view very likely involves many different genes, some of which control other genes, and many of which are controlled by signals from the environment. To complicate matters further, the environment is complicated in itself, ranging from the things we typically lump under nurture (parenting, family dynamics, schooling, safe housing) to biological encounters like viruses and birth complications, even biochemical events within cells.*

*The relative contributions of genes and the environment are not additive, … that's the old view, no longer credited. Nor is it true that full genetic expression happens once, around birth, after which we take our genetic legacy into the world to see how far it gets us. Genes produce proteins throughout the lifespan, in many different environments, or they don't produce those proteins, depending on how rich or harsh or impoverished those environments are. The interaction is so thoroughly dynamic and enduring that, as psychologist William Greenough says, "To ask what's more important, nature or nurture, is like asking what's more important to a rectangle, its length or its width.*

*… The emerging view of nature-nurture is that many complicated behaviors probably have some measure of genetic loading that gives some people a susceptibility. … But the development of the behavior or pathology requires more, what National Institute of Mental Health Director Stephen Hyman calls a "second hit". This second hit operates counter intuitively through the genes themselves to sculpt the*

*brain. So with depression, for example, it appears as though a bad experience in the world – for example, a devastating loss – can actually create chemical changes in the body that effect certain genes, which in turn affect certain brain proteins that make a person more susceptible to depression in the future, Nature or nurture? Similarly, Hyman's own work has shown that exposure to addictive substances can lead to biochemical changes at the genetic and molecular levels that commandeer brain circuits involving volition* [power to will] *– and thus undermine the very motivation needed to take charge of one's destructive behavior. So the choice to experiment with drugs or alcohol may, in certain people, create the biological substrate* [substance that is acted upon] *of the addictive disorder. . . .*

**Nurturing Potentials.** *Just as bad experiences can turn on certain vulnerability genes, rich and challenging experiences have the power to enhance life, again acting through the genes. … Talent and intelligence appear to be extraordinarily malleable.*

*Everything from lively conversation to games to reading of stories can potentially get a gene to turn on and create a protein that may become a neuronal receptor or messenger chemical involved in thinking or mood. "No genetic potential can become reality", says Bronfenbrenner, "unless the relationship between the organism and its environment is such that it is permitted to be expressed". Unfortunately, as he details in his new book, "The State of Americans", the circumstances in which many American children are living are becoming more impoverished year by year.*

***It seemed to me that the dependency it fostered might ultimately prove as diabolical as segregation, permanently condemning poor people to the lowest rungs of the socioeconomic ladder by cannibalizing the values without which they had no long term hope of improving their lot.***

*If there is a refrain among geneticists today, it's this: The harder we work to demonstrate the power of heredity, the harder it is to escape the potency of experience. It's a bit paradoxical because in a sense we end up with the old pre-1950s paradigm, but arrived at with infinitely more sophisticated tools: Yes, the way to intervene in human lives and improve them, to ameliorate mental illness, addictions, and criminal behavior, is to enrich impoverished environments, to improve conditions in the family and society.*

*So assume there is a cluster of genes somehow associated with youthful violence. The kid who carries these genes might inhabit a world of loving parents, regular nutritious meals, lots of books, safe schools. Or his world might be a world of peeling paint and gunshots around the corner. In which environment would those genes be likely to manufacture the biochemical underpinnings of criminality? Or for that matter, the proteins and synapses of happiness?*

The reader can draw his or her own conclusions from the article but for me it further emphasizes the importance of the family and parenting including the inclusion of God and the teaching of virtue via instruction and example. Likewise, it points out the importance of avoiding any environment with unwholesome activities, be they of a mental-moral nature or substances of an addictive nature. It seems that "old time religion" of the pre-1950s applies here. Of course, one has to have some understanding of it to develop such appreciation.

## REFLECTIONS ON POLITICS

For those who can't already detect my political leanings from foregoing discussions in preceding chapters, I unabashedly declare them as conservative in nature. I lean in that direction because I don't trust big government and believe strongly in individual freedom of which religious freedom is but one facet. I see those freedoms originally guaranteed by the constitution and bill of rights as being continually eroded by big government under the guise of "freedom of speech, separation of church and state, political correctness, etc. Court decisions are becoming political in nature through reinterpretation of the constitution and other sacred documents rather than application of the principles expounded therein by their framers. The so-called "Living Constitution" is nothing more than an attempt to justify the insertion of various Supreme Court Justices' political views in that particular document. They tout their views as being superior to those of the framers of that sacred document who were inspired by God. We definitely need more justices of Clarence Thomas's ilk, i.e. living by the original statements of the constitution and not trying to re-interpret what our founders meant.

Generous salaries and retirement benefits in the political arena along with gifts from lobbyists make the desire to retain a political office all consuming in the mind of the politician. This results in earmarks and other forms of pork barrel legislation as well as welfare state spending, with little thought for the real value of the item, the tax burden of citizens at large or the long term impact on the economy in general. They constantly push the concept of security in all areas of life at the expense of independence of the individual. Consequently, we now have the American populace, in general, preferring protection from consequence to the freedom our forefathers fought and died for.

In general, we want the security provided by the fortress of big government more than we want freedom. It is becoming their responsibility to provide for our old age, our health, our schooling at all levels and any other significant item of cost in addition to the basics of law and order or defense. We prefer to live with limited freedoms within the walls of the big government fortress over individual freedom outside those walls, with its risk of exposure to the arrows of responsibility and consequence. We are being brainwashed with the socialistic concept of government control of everything and, unfortunately, the average American is buying it. Such control breeds dependency rather than responsibility, the real motivation for freedom.

Having lived through the rigors of the great depression and watching my parents provide for the family while going without many of life's comforts, I find this appalling. Somehow, we weathered the storms of life and were a happy family. We wished for a better life but were taught to secure the same through hard work and responsibility. I know of none of my siblings who took the easy way. I, myself, took responsibility for my college education, paying the majority of the expense through work, going without and saving. Likewise, I took responsibility for my own family's medical requirements as well as preparing for retirement. As I look back on life, I count this effort required of me as a blessing, being instrumental in building the minimal good character I have. It likewise provided the soil in which my interest in the gospel has flourished.

Another quote from Clarence Thomas's book seems appropriate here to punctuate the ills foisted upon the citizens of this nation by big government. In this case, Mr. Thomas is speaking of government programs for the blacks and other disadvantaged people. Quote; *"On the other hand, I don't think it's a good idea to make poor blacks, or anyone else, more dependent on big government. That would amount to a new kind of enslavement, one which ultimately relied on the generosity — and the ever-changing self interests — of politicians and activists. It seemed to me that the dependency it fostered might ultimately prove as diabolical as segregation, permanently condemning poor people to the lowest rungs of the socioeconomic ladder by cannibalizing the values without which they had no long term hope of improving their lot. At the time, these ideas seemed to me a logical extension of my distrust of 'the man', though in fact they were rooted in the lessons daddy had taught me."* 'The man' he speaks of was white society and the power it wielded over the black community. It is, of course, a logical extension to the power of big government and their control over our lives as we are seduced by government handouts in its various forms.

I believe the prosperity, from my generation on, has drained the resolve of the average American to provide for self and family. Big government has taken advantage of our lust for material blessings and fear of sacrifice by convincing us that they can so provide if we will turn our lives over to them. In our lust for entertainment and comfort in place of risk and responsibility, we have forfeited many of our basic freedoms and are well on our way to giving up the rest. We feel we have a basic right to the latest advances in health care regardless of how we conduct our lives. We feel the government should care for our elders rather than family. Young adults should have the right to a college education without sacrifice and responsibility on their part. That everyone has a right to a reasonable standard of living without effort and in spite of terrible decisions on their part. All of these consequences should be the responsibility of big brother who siphons off the necessary money through taxes and gains control of society. Unfortunately, the result will be economic stagnation with the government unable to fund the services demanded and society will suffer.

It's not that these consequences aren't real and even terrible but they could and would be handled to a reasonable degree by our affluent society, which would probably become increasingly benevolent. I say that because such responsibility would quite possibly promote

spiritual growth and, to an extent, de-emphasize the secular side of life, the nemesis of the latest generation. It's not that affluence is bad, in and of itself, but history seems to indicate that mankind, in general, is incapable of spiritual ascendancy in the midst of prosperity. Prosperity and pride preceding the fall, is a reoccurring theme in the scriptures as well as secular history.

Making political choices isn't always that easy, as I have found out. Being politically conservative, I have generally been attracted to the Republican Party but found myself with moments of doubt in the 2006 election as well as at other times. It seems that party is now betraying their conservative roots of late, becoming a party of big government with considerable corruption. I'm rapidly reaching the opinion that the only cure lies in term limits, which should include both houses of congress and the Supreme Court as well. It seems a large part of our public servants are primarily interested in serving themselves. The GOP's only redeeming values seemed to be a tax cut and standing up to terrorism. Other than that, they look a lot like the democrats. I saw a recent cartoon that well described this trend. It was titled **"The New GOP",** displaying an elephant with the ears and tail of a donkey. My choice was essentially voting for the lesser of two evils, which still turned out to be the GOP. I worry a good deal about the direction our country is headed, not because of my future but that of my grandchildren. As a result, I will include an article from the weekly, "Human Events" hoping they will digest the same and live in accordance with the principles stated therein.

**TEN PRINCIPLES OF CONSERVATISM**

A gentleman by the name of Terrence P. Jeffrey wrote the article, commenting that these were ten principles worth pondering. Thus, I offer them along with a portion of his abbreviated remarks to my posterity for their consideration. I hope they appreciate them. I think they are worth the time taken and can help an individual understand where he stands and possibly change course.

***"God's Law Governs Nations as Well as Man***

*As the Founders acknowledged in the Declaration of Independence, laws and policies that violate the natural law are abuses of government power that must be resisted and reversed.*

***Life is the First God-Given Right***

*It is always wrong to deliberately take an innocent human life. When this principle is abridged, violence escalates. Thus, we have aborted 47 million unborn babies in the past three decades, begun to accept euthanasia and doctor assisted suicide, and stand at the threshold of cloning human beings for the specific purpose of killing them.*

***Marriage and Family Come Before the State and Deserve Its Protection***

*The marriage of one man and one woman is the natural foundation of all human society, and the means by which children ought to be brought into the world and taught the basic values of our civilization. Government has a duty to recognize and protect the family and must not grant alternative relationships the same status and privileges.*

***Freedom of Conscience is the Soul of Liberty***

*Understanding that freedom of conscience is at the heart of liberty, the Framers protected freedom of religion and assembly in the 1st amendment.*

***Private Property is the Servant of Freedom***

*The more that individuals, families and businesses can acquire and control the goods necessary to sustain and advance themselves, the more autonomy they will have from the state and others who may unjustly restrict their freedom. The free and responsible use of private property tends to create greater wealth and greater freedom for greater numbers of people.*

***Government Dependency Is the Seed of Tyranny***

*The more that individuals, families and businesses are dependent upon the state for the goods necessary to sustain and advance themselves, the less autonomy they will have from the state and others who may wish to unjustly restrict their freedom. This is why expanding the welfare state is bad, and Social Security personal saving accounts, Health Savings Accounts and school choice are good.*

***The Constitution Means What It Says***

*Believing in the God given rights of man and understanding the imperfect nature of human beings, the Framers crafted a constitution designed to protect the former from the latter.*

***Taxes Are Justified Only to Fund Necessary Government***

*A massive and complex tax code has become a powerful weapon politicians can use to pressure citizens to behave as the politicians, or the interest groups that support the politicians wish. The correct function of taxation is to equitably collect only that revenue needed to fund the legitimate activities of a constitutionally limited government.*

***National Defense Is Just That***

*The first duty of the federal government is to defend the American people against foreign enemies. While advancing freedom in the world is good in itself – and, where it prudently can be done, would advance the interests of the United States – ultimately, the mandate for our national leaders is to use whatever moral means they can carve out of that path in our relations with foreign powers that is most likely to lead to enhanced security, prosperity and freedom for this nation.*

***We Should Strive to Give Our children a Better Country***

*America is more than just an expanse of territory or a set of laws. It is a culture whose art, architecture, journalism, music, movies, television, schools and universities should reflect and reinforce the traditional values that made this country great. We owe this to our children, who will build the America of tomorrow on the foundation of the America we teach them to love today."*

Maybe we can do little by ourselves but if we are informed and vote in accordance with our beliefs, we can influence the future. I could not give an equivalent discourse of my own on the above principles and find them in more harmony with my views, which have been obtained through study and experience. I believe that they are basic to freedom and responsibility, which in turn are basic to agency and our pursuit of the gospel with its purpose for our existence. Over the years, I have come to realize that our understanding and involvement with such principles is fundamental to that purpose. I hope my grandchildren become more involved than I did and their reward is more significant because of that involvement.

**A SPEECH BY MITT ROMNEY**

I had concluded this particular section was long enough, maybe too long, and had counted it complete until I ran across the text of Mitt Romney's speech of February 7, 2008 to CPAC or the "Conservative Political Action Conference". Because it was in harmony with the direction I believe this country should move, I have decided to include it in its entirety. Once again, it is for the benefit of my posterity, whom I hope will develop their own clear view of a future they wish for the United States, one which fosters freedom and the responsibility it entails. Though other good men are striving for the office of President, I sincerely believe Mitt Romney has the vision this country needs to carry out the fore-ordained purpose God has given it and hope, with all my heart, that he runs for that office again after John McCain's tenure in office, should he be fortunate enough to win.

*"We face a new generation of challenges, challenges that threaten our prosperity, our security and our future. I am convinced that unless America changes course, we will become the France of the 21st Century — still a great nation, but no longer the leader of the world, no longer the superpower. And to me, that is unthinkable.*

*Simon Peres, in a visit to Boston, was asked what he thought about the War in Iraq. 'First' he said, 'I must put something in context. America is unique in the history of the world. In the history of the world, whenever there has been a conflict, the nation that wins takes land from the nation that loses. One nation in history — and this during the last century — laid down hundreds of thousands of lives and took no land. No land from Germany, no land from Japan, no land from Korea. America is unique in the sacrifice it has made for liberty, for itself and for freedom loving people around the world.'*

*The best ally peace has ever known, and will ever know, is a strong America!*

**RISE TO THE OCCASION**

*And that is why we must rise to the occasion, as we have always done before, to confront the challenges ahead. Perhaps the most fundamental of these is the attack on American culture.*

*Over the years, my business has taken me to many countries. I have been struck by the enormous differences in the wealth and well-being of people of other nations. I have read a number of scholarly explanations for the disparities. I found the most convincing was that written by David Landes, a professor emeritus*

*from Harvard University. I presume he is a liberal — I guess that's redundant. His work traces the coming and going of great civilizations throughout history. After hundreds of pages of analysis, he concludes with this:*

*'If we learn anything from the history of economic development, it is that culture makes all the difference. Culture makes all the difference.'*

*What is it about American culture that has led us to become the most powerful nation in the history of the world?*

*We believe that hard work and education. We love opportunity: almost all of us are immigrants or descendents who came here for opportunity — opportunity is in our DNA. Americans love God, and those who don't have faith, typically believe in something greater than themselves — 'a purpose driven life'. And we sacrifice everything we have, even our lives, for our families, our freedoms and our country. The values and beliefs of the free American people are the source of our nation's strength and they always will be!*

*The threat to our culture comes from within. The 1960s welfare programs created a culture of poverty. Some think we won that battle when we reformed welfare, but the liberals haven't given up. At every turn, they try to substitute government largesse for individual responsibility. They fight to strip work requirements from welfare, to put more people on Medicaid, and to remove more and more people from having to pay any income tax whatsoever. Dependency is death to initiative, risk taking and opportunity. Dependency is a culture killing drug — we have got to fight it like the poison it is! The attack on faith and religion is no less relentless. And tolerance for pornography — even celebration of it — and sexual promiscuity, combined with twisted incentives of government welfare programs have led to today's grim realities: 68% of African American children are born out of wedlock, 45% of Hispanic children, and 25% of White children. How much harder it is for these children to succeed in school — and in life. A nation built on the promises of the founding Fathers cannot long stand when its children are raised without fathers in the home.*

*The development of a child is enhanced by having a mother and a father. Such a family is the ideal for the future of the child and for the strength of the nation. I wonder how it is that unelected judges, like some in my state of Massachusetts, are so unaware of this reality, so oblivious to our millennia of recorded history. It is time for the people of America to fortify marriage through a constitutional amendment, so liberal judges cannot continue to attack it!*

*Europe is facing a demographic disaster. That is the inevitable product weakened faith in the creator, failed families, respect for the sanctity of human life and eroded morality. Some reason that culture is merely an accessory to America's vitality — we know it is the source of our strength. And we are not dissuaded by the snicker and knowing glances when we stand up for family values, and morality, and culture. We will always be honored to stand on principle and to stand for principle.*

**ECONOMIC CHALLENGES**

*The attack on our culture is not our sole challenge. We face economic challenge unlike any we have ever known before. China and Asia are emerging from centuries of poverty. Their people are plentiful, innovative and ambitious. If we do not change course, Asia or China will pass us by as the economic superpower, just as we passed England and France during the last century. The prosperity and security of our children and grandchildren depend on us.*

*Our prosperity and security also depend on finally acting to become energy secure. Oil producing states like Russia and Venezuela, Saudi Arabia and Iran are siphoning more than 400 billion per year from our economy — that's almost what we spend annually for defense. It is past time for us to invest in energy technology, nuclear power, clean coal, renewable sources and energy efficiency. America must never be held hostage by the likes of Putin, Chavez and Ahmadinejad.*

*And our economy is also burdened by the inexorable ramping of government spending. Don't focus on pork alone — even though it is indeed irritating and shameful. Look at the entitlements. They make up 60% of Federal spending today. By the end of the next President's second term, they will total 70%. Any conservative plan for the future has to include entitlement reform that solves the problem, not just acknowledges it.*

*Most politicians don't seem to understand the connection between our ability to compete and our national wealth, and the wealth of our*

*families. They act as if money just happens — that it's just there. But every dollar represents a good or service produced in the private sector. Depress the private sector and you depress the well-being of Americans.*

*That's exactly what happens with high taxes, over-regulation, tort windfalls, mandates and overfed, over spending government. Did you see that today, government workers make more money than people who work in the private sector? Can you imagine what happens to an economy where the best opportunities are for the bureaucrats?*

*It's high time to lower taxes, including corporate taxes, to take a weed-whacker to government regulations, to reform entitlements, and to stand up to the increasingly voracious appetite of the unions in our government!*

**THREAT OF JIHAD**

*And finally, let's consider the greatest threat facing America — and facing the entire civilized world: the threat of violent, radical Jihad. In one wing of the world of Islam, there is a conviction that all governments should be destroyed and replaced by a religious caliphate. These Jihadists will battle any form of democracy — to them, democracy is blasphemous for it says that citizens not God shape the law. They find the idea of human equality to be offensive. They hate everything we believe about freedom just as we hate they believe about Jihad.*

**I believe the adversary works through people by any means whereby he can seduce people. This includes political means that encourage unwise governing that stifles personal responsibility and initiative.**

*To battle this threat, we have sent the most courageous and brave soldiers in the world. But their numbers were depleted by the Clinton years when troops were reduced by 500,000, when 80 ships were retired from the Navy, and when our human intelligence was slashed by 25%. We were told that we were getting a peace dividend. We got the dividend, but we didn't get the peace. In the face of evil in radical Jihad and given the inevitable military ambitions of China, we must act to rebuild our military might. Raise military spending to 4% of our GDP, purchase the most modern armament, re-shape our fighting forces for the asymmetric demands we now face, and give the veterans the care they deserve.*

*Soon the face of liberalism will have a new name. Whether it is Barack or Hillary, the result will be the same if they were to win the presidency. The opponents of American culture would push the throttle, devising new justifications for judges to depart from the constitution. Economic neophytes would layer heavier and heavier burdens on employers and families, slowing our economy and opening the way for foreign competition to further erode our lead.*

**SUSPENDING MY CAMPAIGN**

*Even though we face an uphill fight, I know that many in this room are fully behind my campaign. You are with me all the way to the convention. Fight on, just like Ronald Reagan did in 1976.*

*But there is an important difference from 1976: Today — we are a nation at war.*

*And Barack and Hillary have made their intentions clear regarding Iraq and the War on Terror. They would retreat and declare defeat. And the consequences of that would be devastating. It would mean attacks on America, launched from safe havens that make Afghanistan under the Taliban look like child's play. About this, I have no doubt.*

*I disagree with Sen. McCain on a number of issues, as you know. But I agree with him on doing whatever it takes to succeed in Iraq, on finding and executing Osama bin Laden, on eliminating al Qaeda and terror. If I fight on in my campaign, all the way to the convention, I would forestall the launch of a national campaign and make it more likely that Sen. Clinton or Obama would win. And in this time of war, I simply cannot let my campaign, be a part of aiding a surrender to terror.*

*This is not an easy decision for me. I hate to lose. My family, my friends and our supporters — many of you right here in this room — have given a great deal to get me where I have a shot at becoming president. If this were only about me, I would go on. But, I entered this race because I love America, and because I love America, I feel I must now stand aside, for our party and for our country.*

*I will continue to stand for conservative principles. I will fight alongside you for all the things e believe in. And one of those things is that we cannot allow the next President of the*

*United States to retreat in the face of evil extremism!*

*It is the common task of each generation — and the burden of liberty — to preserve this country, expand its freedoms and renew its spirit so that its noble past is prologue to its glorious future.*

*To this task — accepting this burden — we are all dedicated, and I firmly believe, by the providence of the Almighty, that we will succeed beyond our fondest hope. America must remain, as it has been, the hope of the earth.*

*Thank you, and God bless America.*

I believe this man, Mitt Romney, is a man who truly loves America and wants to serve our country and the people therein rather than serve his own self interest. This places him a cut above the average politician. He is economically better off than he would be as president, which would serve no interest other than power and prestige. I believe his campaign suspension is indicative that such was not his motivation. His vision for America embraces all the elements I see for our country and I hope my grandchildren read and re-read this speech to provide them with their own elements of belief. Though I believe the ultimate fate of this country is in the hands of 'God, he may well chastise us through our unwise choices, political and otherwise. Freedom to exercise our agency is our choicest possession, which can only take place in a free society where personal responsibility is exercised.

I believe the adversary works through people by any means whereby he can seduce people. This includes political means that encourage unwise governing that stifles personal responsibility and initiative. These are essential to character development as are various moral choices. I see the ultra left as being the adversary's agents in today's world, knowingly or unknowingly. The end result makes little difference. Advocating big government as the solution to life's problems, with no need to develop the inner being, discourages the development of those attributes essential to moral advancement. Instead, all their policies of permissiveness advance the adversary's agenda and discourage citizens from assuming personal responsibility. Their policies are behind the breakdown of the family as well as the general deterioration of society. For the welfare of this country and its citizens, may my posterity so arm themselves with responsibility and moral certitude as to help bring about the defeat of the liberal left with all their empty promises of security through government.

Oops, I just ran across a couple more articles, which I believe my posterity and others must read to clearly understand the politics of 2009. Where the policies of the preceding paragraph lead is vividly portrayed in writing by Alexis de Tocqueville who lived from 1805 to 1859. It was reproduced in "The Weekly Standard" a few weeks ago. I decided to include it in its entirety to provide a picture of where I believe we are heading with the socialistic policies now advanced by so-called progressive democrats.

**BARACK OBAMA'S AMERICA**

*"It seems that if despotism came to be established in the democratic nations of our day, it would have other characteristics: it would be more extensive and milder, and it would degrade men without tormenting them.*

*When I think of the small passions of the men of our day, the softness of their mores, the extent of their enlightment, the purity of their religion, the mildness of their morality, their laborious and steady habits, the restraint that almost all preserve in vice as in virtue, I do not fear that in their chiefs they will find tyrants, but rather schoolmasters, …*

*I want to imagine with what new features despotism could be could be produced in the world: I see an innumerable crowd of like and equal men who revolve on themselves without repose, procuring the small and vulgar pleasures with which they fill their souls. …*

*Above these an immense and tutelary power is elevated, which alone takes charge of assuring their enjoyments and watching over their fate. It is absolute, regular, far seeing, and mild. It would resemble paternal power if, like that, it had as its object to prepare men for manhood; but on the contrary, it seeks only to keep them fixed irrevocably in childhood; it likes citizens to enjoy themselves provided they think only of enjoying themselves. It willingly works for their happiness; but it wants to be the unique agent and sole arbiter of that; it provides for their security, foresees and secures their needs, facilitates their pleasures, conducts their principal affairs, directs their industry, regulates their estates, divides their inheritances; can it not take away from them entirely the trouble of thinking and the pain of Living?*

*So it is that every day it renders the employment of free will less useful and more rare; it confines the action of the will in a smaller space and little by little steals the very of it from each citizen. …*

*Thus, after taking each individual by turns in its powerful hands and kneading him as it likes, the sovereign extends it arms over society as a whole; it covers its surface with a network of small, complicated, painstaking, uniform rules through which the most original minds and the most vigorous souls cannot clear a way to surpass the crowd; it does not break wills but it softens them, bens them and directs them; it rarely forces one to act, but it constantly opposes itself to one's acting; it does not destroy, it prevents things from being born; it does not tyrannize, it hinders, compromises, enervates, extinguishes, dazes, and finally reduces each nation to being nothing more than a herd of timid and industrious animals of which government is the shepherd. …*

*I have always believed that this sort of regulated, mild, and peaceful servitude, whose*

**Though written almost 200 years ago, I believe that picture portrayed by Alexis de Tocqueville illustrates the direction in which we, as a society, are heading.**

*picture I have just painted, could be combined better than one imagines with some of the external forms of freedom, and that it would not be impossible for it to be established in the very shadow of the sovereignty of the people.*

Though written almost 200 years ago, I believe that picture portrayed by Alexis de Tocqueville illustrates the direction in which we, as a society, are heading. It essentially describes most European countries today. The primary quest in life for most citizens of such countries is a safe and secure existence in a society that takes care of virtually all their secular needs. Religion with its associated worship, according to my understanding, is now embraced by about 10% or less of the people in European countries. They see nothing in their existence beyond the temporal joys of mortality, which makes satisfaction therein the only real goal to pursue. Many in this country are on the same path and would trade freedom to exercise their own free will or agency for security throughout their mortal life. Many others who profess a belief in God have no real vision of the purpose of man, whom God created. It is no wonder we are now a nation of numerous psychologically disturbed people who seek answers in life by popping pills of various kinds to alleviate stress or simply cloud reality in some sort of a stupor or dream world with the many more dangerous drugs. In my mind, this stems from a lack of purpose, of a lack of personal responsibility and of an understanding of life's purpose. Such is being brought about by the general prosperity of the country and our trend towards socialism, which promises to satisfy our every need in life. I reiterate that I fear for my posterity who will live in such a society of family disruption and moral decay. Even so, I know the Lord will guide and protect those who are faithful and, as a result, I now counsel my posterity to stay close to him, keep his commandments, live worthy of the Holy Spirit's companionship and make scripture study and prayer a part of your life as well as temple covenants and ordinances. In so doing, I know you will be guided and protected.

I want to leave one more rather lengthy article that characterizes my political standing. As with all of my quotations, it will be italicized with bold italics where I feel a statement is particularly important. I have taken it from an issue of the Imprimis, which is published by Hillsdale College. It is adapted from a lecture by Mark Steyn, a former Canadian who now lives in New Hampshire and has several well known books to his credit. I will use his title. It seems to define my feelings for freedom, which I need to act on more diligently.

**LIVE FREE OR DIE**

***My remarks** are titled tonight after the words of General Stark, New Hampshire's great hero of the Civil War: "Live free or die"! When I first moved to New Hampshire, where this appears on our license plates, I assumed General Stark had said it before some battle or other—a bit of red meat to rally the boys for the charge; a touch of the old Henry V – at Agincourt routine. But I soon discovered that the general had made his famous statement decades after the war, in a letter regretting that he would be unable to attend a dinner. And in a curious way I found that even more impressive. In extreme circumstances, many people can rouse themselves to rediscover the primal impulses: The brave men on flight 93 did. They took off on what they thought was a routine business trip, and, when they realized it wasn't, they went into the General Stark mode and cried" Let's roll!" But it's harder to live the "Live free or die" spirit*

*when you're facing not an immediate crisis but just slow, remorseless, incremental, unceasing ratchet effect. "Live free or die" sounds like a battle cry: We'll win this thing or die trying, die an honorable death. But in fact it is something far less dramatic: It's a bald statement of the reality of our lives in the prosperous West. You can live as free men, but, if you choose not to, your society will die.*

*My book* ***'America Alone'*** *is often assumed to be about radical Islam, fire breathing imams, the excitable young men jumping up and down in the street doing the old "Death to the Great Satan" dance. It's not. It's about us. It's about a possibly terminal manifestation of an old civilizational temptation: Indolence, as Machiavelli understood, is the greatest enemy of a republic. When I ran into trouble with the so-called "human rights" commissions up in Canada, it seemed bizarre to find the progressive left making common cause with radical Islam. One half of the alliance profess to be pro-gay, pro-feminist secularists; the other half are homophobic, misogynist theocrats. Even as the cheap bus 'n truck road tour version of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, it made no sense. But in fact what they have in common overrides their superficially more obvious incompatibilities:* ***Both secular Big Government progressives and political Islam recoil from the concept of the citizen, of the free individual entrusted to operate within his own societal space, assume his responsibilities, and exploit his potential.***

*In most of the developed world, the state has gradually annexed all the responsibilities of adulthood—health care, child care, care for the elderly—to the point where it has effectively severed its citizens from humanity's primal instincts, not least the survival instinct. Hillary Rodham Clinton said it takes a village to raise a child. It's supposedly an African proverb—there is no record of anyone in Africa ever using this proverb, but let that pass. P. J. O'Rourke summed up that book superbly: It takes a village to raise a child, The government is the village, and you're the child. Oh, and by the way, even if it did take a village to raise a child, I wouldn't want it to be an African village. If you fly over West Africa at night, the lights from one giant megalopolis: Not even the Africans regard the African village as a useful societal model. But nor is the European village. Europe's addiction to big government, unaffordable, entitlements, cradle to grave welfare, and a dependence on mass immigration needed to sustain it has become an existential threat to some of the oldest nation states in the world.*

*And now the last holdout, the United States, is embarking on the same grim path: After the President unveiled his budget, I heard Americans complain, oh, it's another Jimmy Carter, or LBJ's Great Society, or the New Deal. You should be so lucky. Those nickel-and-dime comparisons barely begin to encompass the Europeanization that's underway. The 44th president's multi trillion budget, the first of many, adds more to the national debt than all the previous 43 presidents combined, from George Washington to George Dubya. The president wants Europeanized health care, Europeanized day care, Europeanized education, and, as the Europeans have discovered, even with the Europeanized tax rates you can't make that math add up. In Sweden, state spending accounts for 54% of GDP. In America, it was 34%—ten years ago. Today it's about 40%. In four years time, that number will be trending very Swede-like.*

*But forget the money, the deficit, the debt, the big numbers with the twelve zeros on the end of them. So-called physical conservatives often miss the point. The problem isn't the cost. Those programs would still be wrong if Bill Gates wrote a check to cover them each month.* ***There are wrong because they deform the relationship between the citizen and the state.*** *Even if there were no financial consequences,* ***the moral and even spiritual consequences would still be fatal.*** *That's the stage Europe's at.*

*America is just beginning the process. I looked at the rankings 'Freedom in the 50 states' published by George Mason University last month. New Hampshire came in Number One, the freest state in the Nation, which all but certainly makes it the freest jurisdiction in the Western world. Which kinda depressed me. Because the granite state feels less free to me than it did when I moved there, and you always hope there's somewhere else out there just in case things go belly up and you have to hit the road. And way down at the bottom in the last five places were Maryland, California, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and the least free state in the Union by some distance, New York.*

*New York! How does the song go? "If you can make it there, you'll make it anywhere!" If you can make it there, You're some kind of genius.*

*"this is the worst physical downturn since the Great Depression" announced Governor Paterson a few weeks ago. So what's he doing? He's bringing the biggest tax hike in New York's history. If you can make it there, he can take it there—via state tax, sales tax, municipal tax, a double beer tax, a tax on clothing, a tax on cab rides, an iTunes tax, a tax on haircuts, 137 new tax hikes in all. Call 1-800-I HEART-NEW-YORK today and order your new package of state tax forms, for just 199.99, plus 12& tax on tax forms and the 4% tax form application fee partially refundable upon payment of the 7.5% tax filing tax. If you can make it there, you'll certainly have no difficulty making it in Tajikistan.*

*New York, California… These are the great iconic American states, the ones we foreigners have heard of. To a penniless immigrant called Arnold Schwarzenegger, California was a land of plenty. Now Arnold is an immigrant of plenty in a penniless land. That's not an improvement. One of his predecessors as governor of California, Ronald Reagan, famously said, "We are a nation that has a government, not the other way around. In California it's now the other way around. California is increasingly a government that has a state. And it's still in the early stages of the process. California has thirty something million people. The province of Quebec has seven million people. Yet California and Quebec have roughly the same number of government workers. "There is a great deal of ruin in a nation," said Adam smith, and America still has a long way to go. But it's better to jump off the train when you're leaving the station and still picking up speed than when it's roaring down the track and you realize you've got a one way ticket on the Oblivion Express.*

***"Indolence,"** is Machiavelli's word: There are stages to the enervation of free peoples. **America**, which held out against the trend, **is now in stage one: The benign paternalist state promises to make all those worries about mortgages, debt, and health care disappear.** Every night of the week you can switch on the TV and see one of those ersatz "town meetings" in which free born citizens of the republic (I use the term loosely) petition the Sovereign to make all the bad stuff go away. "I have an urgent need "a lady in fort Myers beseeched the President. "We need a home, our own kitchen, our own bathroom." He took her name and ordered his staff to meet with her. Hopefully, he didn't insult her by dispatching some no-name deputy assistant associate secretary of whatever instead of flying in one of the big time tax avoiding cabinet honchos to nationalize a Florida bank and convert one of its branches into a desirable family residence with a swing set hanging where the drive-thru ATM used to be.*

*As all of you know, Hillsdale College take no federal or state monies. That used to make it an anomaly in American education. It's in danger of becoming an anomaly in America, period. Maybe it's time for Hillsdale College to launch the Hillsdale Insurance Company, the Hillsdale Motor Company and the First national Bank of Hillsdale. The executive supremo of Bank America is now saying, oh, if only he had known what he knows now, he wouldn't have taken the government money. Apparently it comes with strings attached. Who knew? Sure, Hillsdale College did, but nobody else.*

*If you're in business, when government gives you 2% of your income, it has a veto on 100% of what you do. If you're an individual, the impact is even starker. Once you have government health care, it can be used to justify almost any restraint on freedom: After all, if the state has to cure you, it surely has an interest in preventing you needing treatment in the first place. That's the argument behind, for example, mandatory motorcycle helmets, or creepy teams of government nutritionists currently going door to door in Britain and conducting a "health audit" of the contents of your refrigerator. They're not just confiscating your Twinkies; they just want to take a census of how many you have . So do all this for the "free" health care—and in the end you may not get the "free" health care anyway. Under Britain's National Health Service, for example, smokers in Manchester have been denied treatment for heart disease, and the obese in Suffolk are refused hip and knee replacements. Patricia Hewitt, the British Health Secretary, says that it's appropriate to decline treatment on the basis of life style choices. "Smokers and the obese may look at their gay neighbor having unprotected sex with multiple partners and wonder why his "life style choices" get a pass while theirs don't. But that's the point: Tyranny is always whimsical.*

*And if they can't get you on grounds of your personal health, they'll do it on grounds of planetary health. Not so long ago in Britain it was proposed that each citizen should have a government approved travel allowance. If you take one flight a year, you'll pay just the*

*standard amount of tax on the journey. But, if you travel more frequently, if you take a second or third flight, you'll be subject to additional levies—in the interest of saving the planet for Al Gore's polar bear documentaries and that carbon-offset palace he lives in Tennessee.*

*Isn't this the very definition of totalitarianism lite? The Soviets restricted the movement of people through the bureaucratic apparatus of "exit visas." The British are proposing to do it through the bureaucratic apparatus of exit taxes—indeed, the bluntest form of regressive taxation. As with the Communists, the nomenklatura—the Prince of Wales, Al Gore, Madonna—will still be able to jet about hither and yon. What's a 20% surcharge to them? Especially as those for whom vast amounts of air travel are deemed essential—government officials, heads of NGOs, environmental activists—will no doubt be exempted from having to pay the extra amount. But the ghastly masses will have to stay home.*

*"Freedom of movement" used to be regarded as a bedrock freedom. The movement is still free, but there's now a processing fee of $389.95. And the interesting thing about this proposal was that it came not from the Labour Party but the Conservative Party.*

***That's stage two of societal enervation—when the state as guarantor of all your basic needs becomes increasingly comfortable with regulating your behavior.*** *Free peoples who were once willing to give their lives for liberty can be persuaded very quickly to relinquish their liberties for a quiet life. When President Bush talked about promoting democracy in the Middle East, there was a phrase he liked to use: "Freedom is the desire of every human heart." Really? It's unclear whether that's really the case in Gaza and the Pakistani tribal lands. But it's absolutely certain that it's not the case in Berlin and Paris, Stockholm and London, New Orleans and Buffalo. The story of the Western world since 1945 is that, invited to choose between freedom and government "security," large numbers of people vote to dump freedom every time—the freedom to make your own decisions about health care, education, property rights, and a ton of other stuff. It is ridiculous for grown men and women to say: I want to be able to choose from hundreds of cereals at the supermarket, thousands of movies from Netflix, millions of songs to play on my iPod—but I want the government to choose for me when it comes to my health care. A nation that demands that the government take care of all the grown-up stuff is a nation turning into the world's wrinkliest adolescent, free only to choose its record collection.*

*And don't be too sure you'll get to choose your record collection in the end.* ***That's stage three: When the populace has agreed to become wards of the state, it's a mere difference of degree to start regulating their thoughts.*** *When my anglophone friends in the Province of Quebec used to complain about the lack of English signs in Quebec hospitals, my response was that, if you let the government be the sole provider of health care, why be surprised that they're allowed to decide the language they'll give it in? But, as I've learned during my year in the hell hole of Canadian "human rights" law, that's true in a broader sense. In the interest of "cultural protection," the Canadian state keeps foreign newspaper owners, foreign TV operators, and foreign bookstore owners out of Canada. Why shouldn't it in return, assume the right to police the ideas disseminated through those newspapers, bookstores and TV networks it graciously agrees to permit? When Maclean's magazine were hauled up in 2007 for the crime of "flagrant Islamophobia," it quickly became very clear that, for members of a profession that brags about its "courage" incessantly (far more than, say firemen do), an awful lot of journalists are quite content to be the eunuchs in the politically harem. A distressing number of Western journalists see no conflict between attending lunches for World Press Freedom Day every month and agreeing to be micro-regulated by the state. The big problem for those of us arguing for classical liberalism is that in modern Canada there's hardly anything left that isn't on the state drip feed to one degree or another: Too many of the institutions healthy societies traditionally look to us as outposts of independent thought—churches, private schools, literature, the arts, the media—either have an ambiguous relationship with the government or are downright dependent on it. Up north, "intellectual freedom" means the relevant film funding agency—Cinedole Canada or whatever it's called—gives you a check to enable you to continue to make so-called "bold, brave, transgressive" films that discombobulate state power not a whit.*

***And then comes stage four in which dissenting ideas and even words are labeled***

***as "hatred."*** *In effect the language itself becomes a means of control. Despite the smiley-face banalities, the tyranny becomes more naked: In Britain, a land owner with rampant property crime, undercover constables nevertheless find time to dine at curry restaurants on Friday nights to monitor adjoining tables lest someone in private conversation should make a racist remark. An author interviewed on BBC Radio expressed, very mildly and politely, some concerns about gay adoptions and was investigated by Scotland Yard's Community Safety Unit for Homophobic Racists and Domestic Incidents. A Daily Telegraph columnist is arrested and detained in a cell over a joke in a speech. A Dutch legislator is invited to speak at the Palace of Westminster by a member of the House of Lords, but is banned by the government, arrested on arrival at Heathrow and deported.*

*America, Britain, and even Canada are not peripheral nations: They're the three anglophone members of the G7. There are three of a handful of countries that were on the right side of the great conflicts of the last century. But individual liberty flickers dimmer in each of them. The massive expansion of government under the laughable euphemism of "stimulus" (Stage One) comes with a quid pro quo down the line(Stage two): Once you accept you're a child in the government nursery, why shouldn't Nanny tell you what to do? And the —Stage Three—what to think? And —Stage Four—what you are forbidden to think. …*

*Which brings us to the final stage: As I said at the beginning, Big Government isn't about the money. It's more profound than that. A couple of years back Paul Krugman wrote a column in 'The Hew York Times' asserting that while Parochial American Conservatives drone on about 'family values,' the Europeans live it, enacting policies that are more 'family friendly.' On the Continent, claims the professor, 'government regulations actually allow people to make a tradeoff—to modestly lower income in return for more time with friends and family.'*

*As befits a distinguished economist, Professor Krugman failed to notice that for a cont*inent *of 'family friendly' policies, Europe is remarkably short of families. While America's fertility rate is more or less at replacement level—2.1—seventeen European nations are at demographers call 'lowest low' fertility—1.3 or less—a rate from which no society in human history has ever recovered. Germans, Spaniards, Italians and Greeks have upside down family trees: four grandparents have two children and one grandchild. How can an economist analyze 'family friendly' policies without noticing that the upshot of these policies is that nobody has families?*

*As for all that extra time, what happened? Europeans work fewer hours than Americans, they don't have to pay for their own health care, They're post Christian so they don't haver to go to church, they don't marry and they don't ave kids to take to school and basketball and the 4-H stand at the county fair. So what do they do with all that time?*

*Forget for the moment Europe's lack of world-beating companies: They regard capitalism as an Anglo-American fetish, and they mostly despise it. But what about the things Europeans supposedly value? With so much free time, where is the European art? Where are Europe's men of science? At American universities. Meanwhile, Continental governments pour fortunes into prestigious white elephants of Euro-identity, like the Airbus A-380, capable of carrying 500, 800, a thousand passengers at a time, if only somebody somewhere would ordr the darn thing, which they might consider doing once all the airports have built new runways to handle it.*

*'Give people plenty and security and they will fall into a spiritual torpor,' wrote Charles Murray in 'In Our Hands.' 'When life becomes an extended picnic, with nothing of importance to do, ideas of greatness become an irritant. Such is the nature of the European syndrome.'*

*The key word here is 'give.' When the state 'gives' you plenty—when it takes care of your health, takes care of your kids, takes care of your elderly parents, takes care of your primary responsibility of adulthood—it's not surprising that the citizenry cease to function as adults: Life becomes a kind of extended adolescence—literally so for those Germans who have mastered the knack of staying in education till they are 34 and taking early retirement at 42. Hillaire Belloc, incidentally, foresaw this very clearly in his book 'The Servile State' in 1912. He understood that the long term cost of a welfare society is the infantilization of the population.*

*Genteel decline can be very agreeable—initially: You still have terrific restaurants, beautiful*

*buildings, a great opera house. And once the pressure's off it's nice to linger at the sidewalk table, have a second café au lait and a pain au chocolat, and watch the world go by. At the Munich Security Conference in February, President Sarkozy demanded of his fellow Continentals, 'Does Europe want peace, or do we want to be left in peace?' To pose the question is to answer it. Alas, it only works for a generation or two. And it's hard to come up with a wake-up call for a society as dedicated as latter day Europe to the belief that life is about sleeping in.*

*As Gerald ford liked to say when trying to ingratiate himself with conservative audiences, 'A government big enough to give you everything you want is big enough to take away everything you have.' And that's true. But there is an intermediate stage: A government big enough to give you everything you want isn't big enough to get you to give to give anything back. That's the position European governments find themselves in. Their citizens have become hooked on unaffordable levels of social programs which in the end will put those countries out of business. Just* to get the Social Security debate in perspective, projected public pension liabilities are expected to rise by 2040 to about 6.8% of GDP in the US. In Greece, the figure is 25%—*ie,, total societal collapse. So what? Shrug the voters. Not my problem. I want my benefits. The crisis isn't the lack of money, but the lack of citizens—in the meaningful sense of the word.*

*Every democrat running for election tells you they want to do this or that 'for the children.' If America really wanted to something 'for the children,' it could try not to make the same mistake as the rest of the Western world and avoid bequeathing the next generation a leviathan of bloated bureaucracy and unsustainable entitlements that turns the entire nation into a giant Ponzi scheme. That's the real 'war on children' (to use another democrat catchphrase) —and every time you bulk up the budget you get make it less and less likely they'll win it.*

*Conservatives often talk about 'small government,' which in a sense is framing the issue in leftist terms: they're for big government. But small government gives you big freedoms—and big government leaves you very little freedom. The bailout and the stimulus and the budget and the trillion dollar deficits are not merely massive transfers from the most but big government leaves you very little freedom. The bailout and the stimulus and the budget and the trillion dollar deficits are not merely massive transfers from the most dynamic and productive sector to the least dynamic and productive. When governments annex a huge chunk of he economy, they also annex a huge chunk of individual liberty. You fundamentally change the relationship between citizen and the state into something closer to that of junkie and pusher—and you make it very difficult ever to changer it back. Americans face a choice: they can rediscover the animating principles of the American idea—of limited government, a self reliant citizenry, and the opportunities to exploit your talents to the fullest—or they can join the rest of the world in terminal decline. To rekindle the spark of liberty once it dies is very difficult. The inertia of the ennui, the fatalism is more pathetic than the demographic decline and physical profligacy of the social democratic state, because it is subtler and less tangible. But once in a while it swims into very sharp focus. Here is the writer Oscar van den Boogaard from an interview with the Belgian paper 'De Standaard'. Mr. van den Boogaard, a Dutch gay 'humanist' (which is pretty much the trifecta of Eurocool), was reflecting on the accelerating Islamification of the Continent and concluding that the jig is up for the Europe that he loved. 'I am not a warrior, but who is?' he shrugged. 'I have never learned to fight for my freedom. I was only good at enjoying it.' In the famous Kubler –Ross five stages of grief, Mr. van den Boogard is past denial, anger. bargaining and depression, and has arrived at a kind of acceptance.*

*'I have never learned to fight for my freedom. I was only good at enjoying it.' Sorry, doesn't work—not for long. Back in New Hampshire, General Stark knew that. Mr. van den Boogaard's words are an epitaph for Europe. Whereas New Hampshire's motto—'Live free or die!' —is still the greatest rallying cry for this state or any other. About a year ago, there was a picture in the papers of Iranian students demonstrating in Tehran and waving placards. And what they'd written on those placards was: 'Live free or die!' They understand the power of those words, so should we."*

The reader might wonder why I have gone to the trouble of including this talk by Mr. Steyn in my autobiography. It is because it has tremendous implications for the people of this country in my opinion. Do we really want freedom and its associated responsibility or do we want to be taken

care of as life long adolescents? This country was founded by men inspired of God and it seems we have very few in our country's leadership now who can sincerely say the same. They are reflections of our modern society and differ very little if any from the average citizen. We elect those who share the views of the majority of the citizenry. The principles Mr. Steyn describes in the above also have implications for the spiritual side of life. That's a subject for another chapter and I will make reference to his remarks when I write my thoughts on religion and the gospel's restoration.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF SECULAR LIFE

I should probably reiterate the fact once again, even though it is painfully obvious, that I don't pretend to be an expert on any of the topics that come up in this section. I only present them as they come to mind because I deem the general subjects to be of importance to mankind and feel a concern for my posterity and how they choose to deal with them. Obviously, I can't and don't want to control their activities but I feel an obligation to spout off my views as developed during my 8 decades of life. If they even read what I have to say, let alone consider the same in depth, my effort will be of value, at least in my estimation. As I have previously done, when I come across sources that seem to support me, I will include them to help make a point. I may even modify my views because of such sources but I doubt that any single one will have been the individual source of said views.

**Secularism has inundated our spiritual beings, leaving them to drown in the floodwater of work and entertainment through a lack of spiritual oxygen.**

### FAMILY

In past chapters, I have pointed out that I considered the family into which I was born, a major milestone and blessing in my life. As I have pondered life since retirement, such feeling has been significantly strengthened. As siblings, we were fortunate indeed to have parents with strong values of morality, religion, work and responsibility who provided examples of the same. That background, I am convinced, prepared me well for adulthood, marriage and a family of my own. The principles I observed in my parents were gospel principles and provided the example I followed in the early years of my marriage. The restored gospel, which I was fortunate enough to become involved in some 12 years after marriage, verified the veracity of such conduct and its associated blessings. It has also given meaning to such conduct and has made me realize the need for continued improvement. Paraphrasing a statement from the First Presidency of our church, *"I believe successful families form the bulwark of society. Where the family unit languishes, society falters. Where society falters, so likewise does the nation as a whole".* Similarly, political leaders have made this a point of emphasis in recent elections, even though their conduct in office is often contradictory to what they pretend to espouse.

It is within the family unit where virtues and values are most effectively taught by example, instruction and application. Parental example is, without a doubt, the most effective means of teaching virtues and values. It is through the conduct of parents that the credibility of verbal instruction is established. Where these moral aspects of life are visible in parental conduct within and outside the family, the children better understand their value and application in their own personal lives. Consequences for improper conduct are better understood and instruction regarding proper conduct is more readily accepted because of the environment. Where parents treat these things lightly, making exception for some of their own conduct as well as acting as though their own posterity can do no wrong, disobedience as well as resentment for consequences, are bound to follow. My mother's typical comment when we complained of discipline by a teacher was, *"Well, I suspect you deserved it",* which was often followed with an explanation of our error unless we chose not to reveal it. Similarly, I remember no instances where she or dad bragged about getting away with breaking a law or taking advantage of someone. I believe the rampant immorality today of all kinds is primarily due to poor parental example including a dearth of religious commitment and a failure to insist upon children being held responsible for their actions.

An affluent society has tended to divert many individuals from upholding spiritual values and to feed upon temporal pleasures through the many forms of entertainment available. Sunday is no longer held as the Lord's Day but as a day for work or recreation. Secularism has inundated our spiritual beings, leaving them to drown in the floodwater of work and entertainment through a lack of spiritual oxygen. Society's main concern appears to be the type of entertainment

available this weekend as opposed to one of worship. Very few in our society have to worry about how to put bread on the table or keep a roof over one's head as in more stressful times. Now, I'm not damning our land of plenty or the freedoms we enjoy but I do question the inability or lack of commitment of much of society to balance their temporal consumption with sincere worship of the God who makes it all possible. This dearth of spirituality among so many, coupled with technology, has made possible the rampant flood of suggestive advertising and sensual, as well as violent, movies that can now enter our homes at the flick of a button. If not controlled, these become difficult for even the more conscientious parents to overcome, regardless of example.

Parents cannot leave such instruction up to experience in society or its institutions because of the many voices that are calling. Even positive moral instruction in churches can only reinforce instruction in the home. It cannot replace it. The voices of temporal pleasure and irresponsibility are almost sure to get the first recognition by the inexperienced youth. Only after irreparable consequences have made their mark are the more restrictive moral values apt to be considered. These values must be taught early with love and patience and in gradually ascending terms of complexity as the child matures. This, coupled with proper parental example, will provide a clearer view of the reality involved and allow a better choice before irreversible consequences set in. Of course, parents can only teach that which they know and practice with any degree of effectiveness. Thus, immorality of any kind, ranging from integrity issues through abuse to indolence and dependency will weaken or destroy any positive instruction given, no matter how well intended. That is, parents must practice what they preach and preach what they practice.

With these thoughts in mind, I will include for my posterity a publication by the LDS Church, which is, I believe, the best general guide available to parents for establishing and maintaining a stable and wholesome family life. The principles therein deserve a close examination by anyone believing the family is the basic unit of society. Though one may disagree with some of the doctrine, I believe they will agree with the principles, which are expounded. There may be some items within it not easily understood by some. I will try to clarify by commentary, these and other items, I deem of interest, after the entire inclusion of this document is complete. In the meantime, as you read the document, stop and ponder the statements made therein and see if they don't make sense from a practical standpoint. I can assure you that all gospel precepts make practical sense when pondered regarding one's own experiences in life.

***THE FAMILY***

***A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD***

***THE FIRST PRESIDENCY AND COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS***

"We, THE FIRST PRESIDENCY and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of his children.

*ALL HUMAN BEINGS – male and female – are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual pre-mortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.*

*IN THE PRE-MORTAL REALM, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshipped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress towards perfection and ultimately realize his or her divine destiny as an heir of eternal life. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally.*

*THE FIRST COMMANDMENT that God gave to Adam and Eve pertained to their potential for parenthood as husband and wife. We declare that God's commandment for His children to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force. We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.*

*WE DECLARE the means by which mortal life is created to be divinely appointed. We affirm the sanctity of life and its importance to God's eternal plan.*

*HUSBAND AND WIFE have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. "Children are an heritage of the Lord" (Psalms 127:3). Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, to teach them to love and serve one another, to observe the commandments of God and to be law abiding citizens wherever they live. Husbands and wives – mothers and fathers – will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations.*

*THE FAMILY is ordained of God. Marriage between a man and women is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities. By divine design, Fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners. Disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation. Extended families should lend support when needed.*

**I hold this marvelous document as revelation from God to provide guidance in these latter days to all who believe in the sacred nature of the family.**

*WE WARN that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.*

*WE CALL UPON responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as a fundamental unit of society.*

The first paragraph harmonizes with the idea that the heavens and the earth were created by a supreme Intelligence whom we call our God. That is, such a Divine Being endowed with that capability certainly would have a purpose in mind for something as grand as the universe. As indicated earlier, man is apparently his greatest creation on this earth and consequently we should expect man to be a part of his divine plan. Likewise, it's not difficult to conceive such a Being as the possessor of all truth, which has also been mentioned. The facts, as we know them, appear to substantiate the existence of God as indicated by Allen Sandage, an astronomer of renown. The paragraph under discussion, clearly points out a purpose of both marriage and the family, which places them on a level where common sense would show them respect and would lead a person to pursue the truth behind them. Anything else is unthinkable and displays pride, selfishness and a refusal to investigate probable truth. Anything less than this seems to define the individual as being one who is satisfied with the status quo and reluctant to seek and live in harmony with the truth.

The second paragraph also makes some startling statements. It confirms Moses' statement in Geneses wherein he tells us that both male and female are created in the image of God but goes on to tell us we are sons and daughters of heavenly parents. This, of course indicates we have a heavenly mother, though such isn't stated in the scriptures. They likewise state that God has a purpose in creating the two genders, male and female. This is, of course, quite logical, which may scare some people off. Acceptance of this concept would support the idea of latter day prophets, which the LDS Church, as well as myself, claim as true. It speaks of a divine destiny, which one might wonder about. One might compare it to the comment of Freeman Dyson, a *physicist,* who once wrote, "***like the cosmos itself, the human prospect is, infinite in all directions."*** He undoubtedly has a concept in mind somewhat different than that taught by the LDS Church but he apparently feels the destiny of humankind is something glorious and even beyond human comprehension. However, he doesn't explain himself as far as I know. This 2nd paragraph also speaks of a three-part existence of mankind, a preexistence where we lived in God's presence, mortality and the resurrected estate awaiting all mankind regardless of the type of lives they lead. These estates are

described by Paul as discussed in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 15).

After mentioning our worship of God in the pre-existence, the third paragraph dwells on our mortal experience and the opportunity we have to obtain eternal life through ordinances available in holy temples given mankind by the grace of God. It also mentions the eternal nature of the family, giving additional emphasis on its part in the plan of our Father. This plan, described as the plan of happiness, is also known as the plan of redemption and the plan of salvation.

Paragraph four describes the sacred nature of the family and gives instruction regarding the responsibilities of parents. It also speaks of our accountability before God for the way we handle our obligations. The need for a loving relationship between husband and wife as well as between parents and children is made evident by the general authorities.

Paragraph five re-emphasizes the sacred nature of marriage as well as the family and the right of children to be born into a moral atmosphere where they can learn about the gospel plan and prepare to meet the challenges of life. It also provides additional guidance on the roles of husband and wife, the most likely way of obtaining a happy family atmosphere, the equality of husband and wife in the marriage covenant and those virtues, which will bring marriage to a successful conclusion. Now, stop just a moment and ponder the thought of what society would be like if all parents were to look upon marriage and family responsibilities in the manner described in these last two paragraphs. Wouldn't we have a different society around us? Wouldn't there be less anger, less abuse and less crime? Wouldn't all members of society be happier and face other problems with optimism?

**Marriage may well be the most important decision a young man or young woman makes in life. It should be based more on virtues and values than beauty, physique or popularity.**

The sixth paragraph warns against abuse of children or spouse, infidelity and failure to carry out responsibilities by holding mankind accountable before God.

The last paragraph is a call to responsible parents and governments everywhere to promote programs designed to strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society. In the LDS Church, the family is also considered as the basic unit of the Church. Most people regard it as the fundamental unit of society, as well.

I hold this marvelous document as revelation from God to provide guidance in these latter days to all who believe in the sacred nature of the family. The principles contained therein will, obviously, promote love, virtuous growth and responsibility in all families who apply them. They know no denomination except where temple blessings are concerned. These are only available through the restored gospel, wherein the sealing power has been made available to mankind by virtue of the priesthood. These beautiful and most wondrous blessings, of course, have come to mankind through the prophet, Joseph Smith, who received the keys, which have since been conferred upon succeeding prophets. Oh, how beautiful is this most wonderful plan called in various scriptures the plan of happiness, redemption or salvation, provided by the grace of God or as Isaiah puts it, *"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!*. He, of course, is referring to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, through whose atoning sacrifice the plan receives efficacy.

**MARRIAGE**

The Proclamation on the Family sets forth the principles of a successful marriage in a few short words better than I could ever hope to. Even so, I want to add a few comments of my own, which I think you will find in agreement with the principles given therein. They are related more to the virtues and values I intend to cover in chapter 21 in some detail. By the time you have completed this particular section, assuming you do, you may well question my sanity. Whatever your reaction, be assured I have, once again, given you a little more personal view of my understanding of life's purpose and thus the virtues and values I strive for. You can then weigh their reality and value in considering them for your own life.

Marriage may well be the most important decision a young man or young woman makes in life. It should be based more on virtues and values than beauty, physique or popularity. After all, once the shine of courtship wears off, the couple must settle down to the rigors of

everyday life. To be successful, they must face life's challenges together. A unified approach to the various problems that are bound to occur is essential for continuation of harmony in the home. Each having the necessary virtues and values also goes a long way in preventing discussions from boiling over into arguments. First, they minimize the impact of important personal differences. Second, they promote respect for one another. This latter quality provides the room for personal talents to flower and add beauty to a relationship with its attendant joy. Of course, similar or at least compatible personalities help in this regard as well. In fact the couple's inner selves far outweigh the physical characteristics, which probably attracted the two. Over the years I have observed schisms develop in relationships of some couple's I have known because of sharply different personalities and values. Obviously, schisms can be eliminated through respect and compromise but such differences can place a strain on marriage via such differing desires. I feel quite confident that married life would be smoother without such differences, other elements being equal. However, developing compatibility would be a major accomplishment.

Mutual respect and kindness do much in maintaining a loving relationship. I have found that kindness and thoughtfulness shown by one spouse is usually reciprocated and both spouses benefit. Such attributes promote communication and a desire to work out differences rather than one of the pair seeking dominion through verbal or physical abuse. Of course, respect is earned through caring about each other as well as through each spouse fulfilling their particular role of providing or caring for a home. Where the wife stays at home, she has as much responsibility for maintaining a neat respectable home as does a husband for providing a reasonable income. Having said that, I think it is a mistake to speak of his job or her job around a home because circumstances often require exceptions. Even though some jobs are typically carried out by the father and others by the mother, each should be willing to help in times of sickness or excessive stress. Helping each other attend to the particular task at hand in view of circumstances involved symbolizes common goals and helps build unity. Where unity is achieved, many other issues had to have been successfully addressed. As a result, one might say that unity in marriage is a reflection of proper use of the virtues applicable to the marriage relationship.

A shared sense of responsibility will likewise promote unity in facing the challenges that always arise in a marriage. Both husband and wife should strive to live within the income provided and make joint decisions on any large expenditure. Credit cards are bad news, in that they promote spending for things the family's income can't sustain. This is particularly true in the early years of marriage when sacrifice is necessary to reach common goals. Budgets agreed upon between the couple are invaluable in maintaining control of spending regardless of the number of years that have gone by. Being able to say, "We can't afford this or that", is essential in facing the realities of life. The advertising community is bent upon creating uncontrolled desires within the populace to over extend themselves financially through buying beyond their means, as well as take vacations they can't afford. They offer no interest deals for 3 and maybe more years to tempt people to buy with the hope that they will be able to pay when the freebie expires. Our whole economy thrives on stimulating consumption and the couple that doesn't maintain control is headed for trouble. Interest is a hard driving taskmaster. Interest takes no days off, no breaks and no vacations. It even works weekends. Couples are wise to avoid it wherever and whenever possible. The desire for instant satisfaction is one of the curses of today's society. Control and delayed satisfaction are critical for the family who wishes to maintain solvency. For one or the other or even both to disregard a realistic budget to assuage his or her appetite invites certain disaster and possibly divorce. Apparent temporary joy turns into grief and despair.

**Our whole economy thrives on stimulating consumption and the couple that doesn't maintain control is headed for trouble.**

Acceptance of personal responsibility by each spouse for their individual roles as husband and wife, mother and father as well as their joint responsibilities as partners in life is essential for real success in marriage. In turn, responsibility is learned through being held accountable for one's decisions. Hopefully such accountability was learned in the homes we grew up in. Unfortunately, we now live in a time of affluence, wherein parents are able to cushion their children by diverting or even assuming the consequences of a child's unwise actions. As

mentioned earlier, this is most unwise on the parents' part because it robs their children of the essential virtue of responsibility. I know of no other way to adequately teach responsibility than to hold children accountable for their mistakes. In some cases, it may be wise and loving to soften such consequences but mistakes must remain distasteful and even painful to youth if they are to have any teaching benefit.

Young people should live far enough from parents, once married, so the latter cannot interfere with their daily activities. They often pick up the broken pieces produced from unwise decisions. Likewise, it becomes more difficult for the couple to run to mother or dad to solve their problems. Though seeking parental advice by young married adults may have some value, utilizing it or condoning it in run of the mill situations is detrimental to the couple's maturation. These growth experiences are better learned earlier in life before a family of any size arrives so that expertise in addressing life's problems is available when needed more urgently. Well meaning parents may well stifle such growth in their eagerness to help out and prevent suffering, thus showing love, or so they will rationalize. A few mishaps where challenges are met by modifying and adjusting budgets or daily practices will be indispensable to life's later daily experiences. Becoming competent in this department is part of the joy in life and when accomplished by a couple together, such experience becomes another unifying force in their relationship. They have become one in at least that particular joint responsibility they have conquered, thus establishing an important base.

**Success in the home far outweighs any success in the temporal aspects of life, be they acquired recreational skills, artistic skills or simply success in the work place.**

Marriage and parenthood are, without doubt, the greatest examples there are of OJT (on the job training). Their success includes not only the reward of staying together but also maintaining a healthy and joyful life. The degree with which each person has acquired the virtues and other healthy values of life, as described earlier, is probably the only means of real preparation. Though I haven't attended any courses on "marriage and the family", I doubt such instruction can be very helpful without personal assimilation of such virtues and values. This re-emphasizes the need for parents to encourage development of the same in their children through proper example and wise instruction. I reiterate again that I have come to believe, though belatedly, that real joy, happiness and peace come from within. It would seem that the temporal trappings of life as well as our day-to-day actions are only symbolic of what our inner-selves hold dear and that these latter items are only a reflection of our real values in the mirror of life.

If that is the case, we might ask ourselves, "Is it more important, when rearing our children, to emphasize that "the good life" comes through material acquisitions rather than by acquiring those virtues and values, which lie at the roots of happiness? We know that temporal knowledge and ability constitute the key to temporal prosperity but is not happiness the real object of life? I believe it is and such happiness originates with the inner being. This being so, it becomes our responsibility, as parents, to promote the growth of that inner being as well as help our children understand its importance to their happiness. Because of the general failure of society to recognize this principle and their effort to find meaning in materialism, we now have one or more generations whose sole objective is to achieve the good life, defined as a nice home, car and significant recreation. Such prosperity, by itself, turns out to be hollow and meaningless. This, I believe, has much to do with the rampant use of drugs and other devices designed to chisel out some purpose to existence. In terms of life's meaning, we are a society, which has lost its way, walking in spiritual darkness.

I got a little off course in my ranting and ravings and will now try to make the necessary correction. Children usually begin to arrive soon after marriage and place an increased strain on the couple's relationship, even though they are a source of joy, as well. Like all good things in life, they come at a price, which only begins with birthing expenses. Their differing personalities and talents can present a range of challenges to a couple, not the least of which is a unified approach in raising them. Their accompanying expenses usually place a strain on the family's budget, requiring sacrifice of varying degrees for both mother and father. Health issues of each child are yet another demanding area the couple must face. Hopefully, these will be minimal for most families but even in the average situation,

a sick child can tax the physical and emotional well being of one or both parents'. Such a situation can complicate other divisive issues that might be plaguing a given marriage. Likewise, the invasive negative effects of society, such as TV and the latest teen-age fads, which enter the home uninvited, will add to the stresses facing a couple. The reality of such factors in family life emphasizes the need to establish and maintain unity in the couple's marriage. The degree to which a couple has common virtues and values established in their lives will determine, to a large extent, how detrimental these traumas of married life become. Mutual respect and sincere listening are the glue that promotes unity with one another as well as joy in the home by establishing a nurturing atmosphere essential to a child's complete development.

A successful home life, in my humble opinion, is one in which a loving relationship between husband and wife continues to exist throughout life and is joyfully extended to any and all arriving children, whether by birth or adoption. I believe that such a life is more likely to be attained when marriage includes belief in a Divine Creator and daily experiences are guided by the principles embodied in such belief. Success in the home far outweighs any success in the temporal aspects of life, be they acquired recreational skills, artistic skills or simply success in the work place. A degree of success in the latter is obviously important to a family's well being but when over emphasized, can diminish the success and joy of family life. In fact, such success may primarily stroke the ego of the breadwinner, while detracting from the overall happiness of a couple. I believe and in fact, bear witness, that families can and will exist throughout eternity as described in the third paragraph of the "Proclamation to the World" on the family, which has been previously included. Any success of a temporal nature is terminated at death whereas the joys of a successful marriage can continue beyond the grave, as described therein. This necessarily makes a successful marriage in life far more valuable to our eternal existence than any material success.

**As time ravages their physical beauty, their vision becomes more attuned to the spiritual beauty they have come to love in each other.**

I have almost beaten the importance of example by parents to death but would like to add one more thought regarding their individual and combined roles as parents. Children do need role models, a thought that permeates society regarding children in unfortunate circumstances. Certainly a son observes the conduct of his father and establishes his own concept of that role as he develops in life. So likewise does the daughter observe her mother while gaining an understanding of a mother's role. Similarly, sons observe their mothers and daughters observe their fathers in framing their concepts of the roles of the opposite sex. Of equal importance, in my view, is their observation of how mother and father work together while filling their individual roles in marriage. The respect each shows the other is paramount in the children's own future relations with their husbands or wives. Likewise, the parents' ability to work together portrays the model the children will probably try to follow as they enter that blissful but trying state of marriage. Surely the concept of a beautiful marriage relationship for the children will grow out of the example demonstrated by unified parenting. Such unified parenting, in my opinion, is a powerful tool for helping children develop their own vision and desire for a future family based on love and respect, while bringing joy and happiness to one's current family.

I suppose the unity I have been speaking of for the last few pages necessarily pre-supposes a loving relationship between husband and wife. Certainly that is a prime requirement for a successful marriage but it can hardly be maintained without respect derived through the virtues of our inner selves. Like a flowering bush, marriage requires both pesticides and fertilizer if one expects the blossoms of love to remain profuse, healthy and beautiful. If not cared for properly, such blossoms become fewer in number, even spotted with defects and are often eaten by marauding insects. It seems that society itself is at war with the marriage relationship through its feeding of ongoing competition between the sexes and its recognition of other types of unions. It also seems that marriage is often thought of as a short-term contract that can be easily terminated for the least little provocation. Both man and wife often enter into it with the concept of "what's in it for me" as a primary objective rather than how can we nurture our relationship to make it a satisfying experience for both individuals. With such attitudes, they are asking for failure.

This attitude fosters the blight of selfishness rather than the nourishment of respect for the growing bush of marriage and family and soon spots of discontent begin to appear on the once lovely blossoms of love that adorned the freshly planted shrub. Over time, both man and wife often push harder for the satisfaction they sought with little thought of the needs, desires and rights of the other. Of course, this is akin to further depriving the bush of essential nutrients and this very act of thoughtlessness for one's spouse aggravates the fading beauty each once enjoyed with the other. Repentance or the changing of one's ways is the pesticide needed to eliminate the blight that has attacked the delicate bush. Communication and an attitude of selflessness are the fertilizer or answers both parties should seek to sustain the bush's beauty.

Had one or the other reversed their thought pattern with kindness and respect for the other, a reciprocal action might well have been experienced. Such a double dose of nutrition would have caused the spots of discontent to fade and eventually disappear. The original blossoms would thrive and additional buds would begin to appear, fully blossoming with time. Then, much to their common joy, the bush now exceeds the expectations each spouse originally entertained. As each member of the union begins to think and act in terms of we and of us with frequent applications of you and only a smidgeon of I or me, the bush unfolds its beauty to all in the vicinity. That beauty of love then generates a reserve of respect and kindness, which is automatically and gladly applied by both spouses as a positive feedback to the marriage union. They can then act more effectively in unison towards common goals while providing individual freedom for their different roles and both are then able to find joy and satisfaction in the shrub they have nurtured together. The beautiful blossoms of unity now thrive in the atmosphere of love and respect and guide the couple through life.

**It seems to me that the object of parenting is to provide one's children, as best one can, with an effective understanding of life and its many opportunities, as well as potential problems.**

As time ravages their physical beauty, their vision becomes more attuned to the spiritual beauty they have come to love in each other. The shrub they planted together takes on an ethereal glow, providing the warmth of love and respect for their many friends and relatives as well as for their own sacred relationship. The option is there, for all who will, to take such a beautiful relationship beyond the veil of death to be enjoyed throughout eternity through sacred temple ordinances. Of this I testify through both experiences in life and in the temple as well as the privilege of holding the sacred sealing power in the House of the Lord. The process described is one of God's great blessings.

Now, I fully realize that most marriages have spots of discontent because of the reality of human weakness. Some couples, however, learn with time the need for fostering the health of their union. Others can't get over their personal selfishness that aggravates the majority of humanity. Those who learn and eventually find the restored gospel can, indeed, experience the reality of the analogy I have drawn because it is eternal in nature. For those whom the analogy strikes as being self righteous and/or idealistic, I'll offer a brief explanation. I reviewed the analogy and had some doubts about leaving it in but considered my feelings on the subject as derived through experience and temple service this last twenty years and decided to leave it as is. You see, the flowering bush concept provides a nice summary of my sincere and innermost feelings on this subject of the marriage covenant regardless of how ridiculous it may sound to those who don't understand marriage beyond the grave. I don't claim to have had marriages completely free of discontent but I have learned and applied my understanding to this relationship ordained of God. I believe it to be part of the learning experience God has given us, as his sons and daughters, as we strive for eternal life. I hold it to be true in an overall sense and bear witness of that process's healing power for marriages that might be experiencing severe trauma. Now, let's move on to another subject on which I also speak with limited experience.

### THE OBJECT OF PARENTING

Since I have provided a rather lengthy as well as questionable treatise on marriage, I might just as well be a little more specific regarding parenting. Actually, it's more of a generalized overview of a parenting objective, as I see it, with no real solutions and thus it lays more in the domain of a personal theory than a treatise. It's really an outgrowth of my previous remarks regarding marriage. My only intent in this effort is to

provide my posterity with an idea of the philosophy of parenting that I ascribe to.

It seems to me that the object of parenting is to provide one's children, as best one can, with an effective understanding of life and its many opportunities as well as potential problems. This effort then becomes the foundation for successful living upon which they can build as they undergo experiences through their agency. Helping them become successful adults is the end result that we, as parents, want and should strive for. The understanding mentioned will necessarily develop over their childhood and young adult years through the example, instruction and responsibility, as well as the consequences allowed by thinking parents. As mentioned earlier; responsibility must be turned over to each child in gradually increased doses as they mature and demonstrate its acceptance. This acceptance is acquired by understanding the consequences of their actions. They must necessarily experience them (consequences) or responsibility is simply a word without meaning. When very young, we shield them from dangerous consequences by fences and various rules. As they grow in understanding, those rules and fences are dismantled and replaced with responsibility. The restrictions will necessarily disappear, either through our own desire as parents or through their disobedience as they mature. We can only assure their proper replacement with responsibility by allowing each child to suffer both negative consequences and rewards for their various acts. To provide this opportunity for growth without disastrous consequences, as well as watching the flowering of a successful adult, becomes both the mark of success and the eternal reward for struggling parents. Truly, such an experience is symbolic of that which our Parents in Heaven must suffer as they watch each of us struggle through mortality. In their wisdom they realize the need for consequences in our lives to help us acquire humility and understanding. These vary in the degree of pain inflicted by a consequence according to the severity and continued repetition of unrighteous acts. I believe this fact explains the disasters that come among mankind, even though many people claim such is an indication of there being no God. They, in their darkened minds, feel that God could and would prevent such occurrences because of his love and mercy. In actuality such things are acts of love as God tries to prevent mankind from self destruction. We learn responsibility through such things and order our lives to try to prevent them. For many, such things cause them to turn to a more righteous life. We, as parents, should be able to see the importance of such things in preparing our own children. Such experience, then, becomes an important part of our and their development and thus preparation for eternal life with its associated rewards and responsibilities.

**LIFE'S LITTLE REALITIES**

I want to do a little mental meandering, a questionable virtue of mine, among some additional concepts, which seem important in life and crop up from time to time. I don't suppose this effort has any particular purpose other than to give my posterity a peak into my thought process from a little different perspective.

I believe deeply that all human kind is aware of their personal frailties and weaknesses as well as their talents. The proud may be hesitant to admit such frailties but even they, along with the more humble members of society and even unbelievers, will agree that, at best, Jesus Christ was the only individual described as perfect to ever walk this earth. Thus, talking about virtues and values, particularly of a spiritual nature, may seem unrealistic and pointless. Actually, any detailed thought on my part will be left for the next chapter called "Reflections of a Religious Nature" but I mention it here because some of my mental meandering may include remarks that pertain to that part of our nature. Some individuals will question the need of any discussion regarding virtue except as it pertains to our mortal existence. They describe truth as relative and basically subscribe to the attitude of letting it all hang out or doing whatever feels good to one's physical being. In short they worship the physical man and the environment he is in without recognition of their relationship to the inner man or spirit being and likewise to a Supreme Being. This stultifies both their ability to acquire a meaning for life beyond mortality and any real experience of joy from within. Their only pleasure (not real joy) is feeding the appetite of the physical being, whether in power, lust, fun or some other immoral or sadistic pleasure.

As indicated earlier, though a fullness of virtue has existed in only one mortal already named, I believe its very existence serves as a beacon urging mankind towards becoming a more complete and productive being. The very act of striving to become better in one or several

characteristics of virtue, or to more fully exemplify it in our lives, represents constructive growth. Desire to improve necessarily precedes the actual change, acting as a catalyst to our efforts. Where effort is sustained, improvement will occur and even though incremental at first, will eventually blossom into reality. Such reality can act as a stimulant in other languishing areas of character through the fruit of satisfaction and joy in the success of one's effort. Though my own experience with this principle may be rather small, it is sufficient to see the wisdom of Isaiah's comment regarding such growth, *"For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little".* The success of one's life is best expressed, in my opinion, by the extent or degree to which he or she has applied this marvelous principle in both a physical and spiritual sense. My primary regret in life, as I edge into my ninth decade, is my late discovery and realization of its power to change one's circumstances.

**A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT**

I thought I would begin this little segment with an article from the Church News, a weekly publication of the LDS Church, which deals with the spiritual environment our families face on a daily basis. Even so, it isn't particularly religious in nature but points out the impact a decadent society can have upon its people and how we, the United States, have allowed the purveyors of filth to peddle their wares under the guise of "freedom of expression". It isn't obvious what we, the individual citizen, can do other than to shield our families through moral instruction and example. I include it because much of my remaining remarks in this chapter relate to the same problem or problems the article points out. Also, I have taken the title of the article as the title of this section for simplicity's sake, I suppose, but it may be more for my benefit than that of the reader.

*"You could call it straining at a gnat while swallowing a camel.*

*Or maybe it is better characterized as missing the forest because of the trees.*

*Either way a young man, out for a jog while visiting Las Vegas, Nevada, found more than just a little irony in the words of a sign – complete with a little smiling fish – adjacent to storm drains in a city street.*

***'Don't pollute, drains to Lake Meade'.***

*In and of itself, the sign held no irony. Certainly protecting our physical environment is a worthy cause. In fact, this earth is a precious resource given to us by a wise and kind Heavenly Father. And, while in mortality, we may appropriately enjoy the wondrous beauties that a generous God has created for our benefit. And, we should do all we can to preserve and protect those creations.*

*No, in and of itself, there is no irony in the storm drain sign. The irony comes from the surrounding smut that litters the street near the storm drain. The scene is common in many cities.*

*One need walk or run only a few steps in any direction to step on cheap publications, disseminated via free vending machines that seem to be everywhere, depicting scantily clad or nude women and touting services that, ultimately, will destroy those who indulge.*

***How ironic that a society worries about dirty stream water while apparently ignoring the pollution of the soul.***

*The contrasting issues bring to mind the admonition given by the Savior to the Scribes and Pharisees, who were careful to pay their tithes of mint, anise and cumin, but rejected the weightier matters of the law. Both, said the Savior, are important and neither should be left undone. (See Matthew 23:23 and Luke 11:42)*

*As true as it was when Jesus taught it, the principle suggests that we moderns should not salve ourselves by attending to our physical surroundings while ignoring our spiritual environment.*

*While it can, perhaps, be rationalized that these street-corner publications do not meet the U.S. legal definition of pornography and are, therefore, acceptable, honest individuals will readily agree that the material is trash, that it brings nothing of value to society and that the promulgation and spread is harmful to children and adults alike.*

*While many countries have laws guaranteeing freedom of expression – laws that are absolutely necessary to create, in this telestial existence, a free society – nothing requires a society to take those freedoms to such absurd extremes.*

*Reasonable people can and should disagree on what might pollute our physical environment, or, for that matter, on any of the hundreds of other secular issues that face our society. In such*

*dialogue, diversity of opinion should be highly valued and no one should randomly run rough-shod over someone else.*

*But no matter one's religious – or non-religious persuasion – no valid argument can be made to support the supposed benefits of unbridled appeal to sexual appetites.*

*In this mortal existence, there is no easy way to grant freedoms necessary to allow good and honest people to achieve their best while disallowing those who seek evil to propagate their ideas and actions. So the same laws and constitutional mandates that allowed Joseph Smith to publish the Book of Mormon allows profiteers and rogues to publish smut, filth and garbage.*

*Freedom, then, depends – utterly depends – on people making good choices. Latter Day saints know that preserving the freedoms promised to our Nephite forefathers requires our choosing to serve the God of the land, who, of course, is Jesus Christ. But even beyond the religious context, all can recognize that we must choose to keep our communities free of that which causes harm.*

*Agency, the principle that provides that we have choice, is one of God's greatest gifts to mankind. Used to its full advantage, agency's choices are really quite simple:* ***We must choose that which is noble and right.****"*

Bold type was added to those sentences, so identified, for emphasis. The last one refers to spiritual elements or characteristics of our inner beings, items, which are virtually non-existent in much of society today. The middle one speaks of the irony displayed in our concern with the physical being only, that is things pertaining to mankind's mortal tenure only, with little concern for the spirit of man. Our laws are stringent in terms of the environment but languish regarding the unseen spirit realm. The article is quite correct in emphasizing our need to reject the spiritual filth peddled by the adversary's servants through our individual agencies by the choices we make. Without buyers, the business of pornography and similar products would fold. We then, as a society, are at fault for allowing it to be profitable. Just as drug trafficking would dry up without a market, so likewise would the pornographic market. The large segment of society rejecting such products must do all within its power to not only maintain its numbers but also expand them through example, instruction and all avenues of legality. I believe that most people want a moral environment but aren't sure how to bring it about or claim it. That is why we, as the citizenry, must support each other in promoting a moral environment for our families.

**PRIDE, STRESS AND HARMONY**

Like most English words, pride has multiple definitions according to Webster. The first one listed in my dictionary is an unduly high opinion of one's self, haughtiness or arrogance. The others relate to satisfaction in one's own accomplishments or in those of some loved one or maybe in those of close friends.

These latter ideas might better be termed gratefulness for worthwhile accomplishments in that they recognize a person's dedicated and proper use of his or her God given talents. That is, the accomplishments resulted from God given talents, which may have been honed to a greater degree and properly applied for the results obtained but which, in the final analysis, originated at birth. So-called developed talents, or excellence in various skills, also spring from dormancy, as innate individual characteristic abilities. We then have every right to express gratefulness for that person's proper use of his or her talent but in so doing, we recognize the gift from God. We don't really know why some people come into this life with unusual or multiple talents but these very differences in people at birth give credence to a pre-existent state wherein they were nurtured and developed.

**I firmly believe that a home that has become a haven of peace and harmony in a child's life will always be remembered and ultimately become an objective in his or her own life as they develop into adulthood.**

The first definition reserves all accomplishment in life as coming from one's own effort without regard for a Supreme Being. It derives satisfaction through comparison of one's own accomplishments with those of another person rather than in the achievement of a given objective. Thus, paraphrasing President Benson, a former president of the LDS Church, "this form of pride actually displays enmity for fellow beings because it feeds on the idea of being better than or in some cases, the best among humans. It pits one person against another rather than simply enjoying the success of one's personal accomplishment". It leaves no

room for another to excel, measuring its excellence against the performance of others rather than against some non-personal standard. It revels in overcoming others rather than in the value of the actual accomplishment. It reserves all accolades for itself, leaving no room for a Supreme Being, genetics or blessings from a pre-existent state. Continued happiness can only be sustained by remaining the best, placing stress on the individual to maintain or raise their level of performance, sometimes belittling others to maintain the position of "best". It often results in artificial means to establish a record, whether through drugs or distorted reporting. It promotes the worst in character development rather than encouraging individual excellence, placing value of the physical above the spiritual.

A certain amount of stress in one's life seems beneficial, in that it motivates one to act in the correction of problems or in the promotion of his or her individual interests. However, we are constantly reminded that excessive stress in our lives often promotes poor emotional and physical health. Thus, its occurrence in our lives should be relegated to those areas where it can produce real beneficial results whenever possible. By this, I simply mean emotional control of desires; false pretenses and questionable actions can eliminate much self-generated stress, which in my view has little or no value. In fact such stress often motivates us to unworthy actions.

**My purpose is one of demonstrating that, for every step forward in making life easier and more interesting, a new challenge rears its ugly head.**

Harmony, in a general sense, denotes pleasing relationships. When we are in harmony with our surroundings, we exist in a peaceful state that promotes joy and satisfaction. It is a state to be desired where stress and contention are eliminated. Though most people desire such a state, it is difficult to obtain and even more difficult to maintain because of individual differences and worldly pressures. We can't control others and thus our individual desire for harmony must be achieved through our own acts and social relationships.

From my own limited experience in life, I believe such harmony is obtained and preserved longer through selfless acts and kindness towards others. Getting outside one's self and acting with sincere concern for the welfare of others seems to be the key. Such concern seems to generate cooperation and reciprocal acts of kindness by others. The principle of like begetting like seems to apply among all reasonable people. That is, kindness begets kindness; selfishness begets selfishness; etc. This is particularly true of the home, which should be a bastion of harmony for all members to take refuge from a hectic world. Obviously, the key lies with the parents who, when unified in purpose, provide both the example and the instruction for the younger members involved. This emphasizes their need to have similar virtues and common goals, which provides the basis for such unity, thus the importance of some unifying spiritual force. Materialistic goals and purposes will never provide the glue required for harmony.

I firmly believe that a home that has become a haven of peace and harmony in a child's life will always be remembered and ultimately become an objective in his or her own life as they develop into adulthood. It will also provide the husband with respite from his work life and moments of peace for the harried housewife. Obviously, even the most harmonious homes will have hectic times as children multiply with their varied problems. Even so, where parents are unified in purpose, problems are faced in unity and solutions, acceptable to all, will be found. Consequently, even mother can find moments of solitude to pause and reflect on life's purpose and experience the joy of unity with a caring and cooperative husband. When faced together with purpose and understanding, the problems of life become solvable and the intervening moments of peace and solitude become a harmonious source for their relationship. Such a relationship is obtained through the spiritual being where virtues unify rather than the physical where selfish desires tend to separate.

**SOME CONSEQUENCES OF CHOICE**

I believe I'll let my mind wander through some of the choices, which have become available to young people since I reached adulthood back in the late forties. In anticipation of your comments, I remind you it wasn't the 1840s, smarty pants but the 1940s. My purpose is one of demonstrating that, for every step forward in making life easier and more interesting, a new challenge rears its ugly head. One might call it a subset of the adage "No Pain, No Gain or "There's no Free Lunch". I'll try not to bore you

but I don't intend to worry about it if I do and will only mention a few, which I think are particularly dangerous for the younger generation. The reader, whether old or young, can shake his or her head in disgust or, hopefully, nod their approval gained from their own experience.

**THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF TELEVISION**

The world of television didn't really materialize until the early 1950s or so when I was in my early twenties. I joined the air force in 1951 and was introduced to the phenomena at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. Since then, both cable and then satellite TV has mushroomed in the market place giving the TV addict hundreds of choices. Along with the available choices, the average morality level of even prime time shows has slipped into an abyss. What we thought was shocking, the young people of today see as normal. Their frame of reference is completely different from ours making it hard for them to understand our stance. Certainly there are many good shows available with choices in almost every facet of life. However, the wide range of choices make monitoring of shows our children watch essential, to weed out those programs one finds offensive. Even then, the range of choices, require a degree of self-discipline in selecting good, better and best from among them and even more so, to elect to hit the off button. Movie theaters, of course, require similar control.

Even though one could spend a good deal of time talking about the positive side of TV, I want to point out those aspects that I see affecting family life in a negative manner because of the danger they impose. The suggestive, crude, licentious standards of Hollywood now enter a home at the touch of a button in a manner more graphic than I could have found on the street during the mid-twentieth century. Because they are often portrayed as normal, they are accepted in that sense by the younger generation. Such acceptance results in a lowering of personal standards in society as a whole with its associated negative impact on family life.

A second danger to a growing family is the discouragement in developing reading skills. As a young boy my primary source of entertainment was reading and I spent many hours so involved. This interest, developed as a young boy, still lingers in my subconscious and I still prefer reading to watching TV. The child that doesn't learn to read effectively will never enjoy the activity because of boredom and the laborious process involved. Consequently, he or she becomes a victim of those who produce the shows, which are shallow at best. Cognitive reading, i.e. that which brings the full flavor of the story involved, requires mental activity to picture the scene and the action going on. TV, on the other hand, provides both picture and action, requiring little or no effort from the viewer. He or she truly becomes a couch potato when such activity dominates their life.

Yet a third danger is the lack of physical exercise when TV opportunities are unlimited. I am confident that the excessive weight problem plaguing today's youth as well as adults is related to a sedentary life style, much of which takes place in front of TV. The only entertainment I had as a youth, in addition to reading was playing various games, usually outside. They ranged from cowboys and Indians to anti-I-over or football, all of which kept us running. We did occasionally play mumble-peg or our version called root-the-peg. Today's plethora of games, requiring only the mind and the manipulation of coordinated fingers, deprive kids of the natural exercise obtained through the simple games of yesteryear or in the days of yore as coined by my grandkids. Though they may have their place, burning calories certainly isn't one of them.

Likewise, the marvelous work-saving machines, in our workplaces and households, have denied adults the need for physical activity. Instead of physical labor, we invent other exercise machines to replace the physical effort of past work. Or we run, walk, dance, and do aerobics, etc. to help work off the calories of our ready prepared meals coming from an almost infinite supply of choices suiting everyone's taste. This curse of plenty comes, of course, at a price. Most families have two working parents to provide the necessary monetary base, which places a severe strain on both moral and spiritual teaching in the family. Material rewards replace the spiritual. Is this really progress? The required manipulation of choices is, of course, up to individual families and there is no magic solution. It distills down to a matter of priority with the parents involved.

**The financial community is at war with the American public, offering all types of easy payment-plans to tempt the unwary consumer to buy things they can't afford.**

**THE WIZARDRY OF THE COMPUTER**

Of course, the computer is tied to the TV in terms of the types of physical exercise it discourages. It's a wonderful tool for mankind and opens up all kinds of frontiers not available in my day. It is a tool now essential to society but along with its marvels as a tool of composition, is its gaming wizardry and in its access to the Internet. It too poses serious danger unless a family has rules controlling its use. Though there are obviously more pluses than minuses regarding computer use, the Internet poses a grave moral danger. I am told there are more pornography sites available than sites for any other subject. Likewise, chat rooms often connect unsuspecting children up with unsavory characters. We are counseled in our Church and many other places in society, to keep all computers in family areas so they can't be used in secrecy. Even then, all safeguards against such trash should be employed. Time on the computer should be limited and monitored to assure parents of its proper use and as well as children of getting adequate physical activity. Like good food, too much of a good thing here can bring undesirable and unintended results. I, like many others, can bear witness to the reality of this concept.

A new breed of the computer, i.e. the PDA or personal digital assistant, I assume, provides yet additional opportunities for increased efficiency through communication and portability. The new smart phones complete with photo capability and other features I am not even familiar with, provide additional advantages for a complex society. However, they also pose serious danger for youth with their curiosity and naivety. Easy access to the Internet from virtually any location places their use outside of parental control and leaves the youth at the mercy of his own judgment. Cell phones with all the bells and whistles can be used in inappropriate ways such as allowing visiting via text messaging when other duties should have priority. Even worse, such communication can provide vulgar and even immoral communication with other youth of lesser standards. A cell phone with limited features may be more appropriate and still provide the necessary security in today's dangerous society. Obviously, much more moral instruction is needed for today's youth to safely negotiate our more tolerant and licentious society than was necessary in my day. Even with such instruction, I don't believe parents can assume all is well. A great deal of interaction between children and parents along with appropriate surveillance seems in order. Without it, even the best of young people can get into serious trouble because of naivety and the number of perverts stalking society. Now, let me remind my posterity to beware of those promising easy payment.

**Once again the largess of government fosters such irresponsibility by holding a gun or its equivalent to the taxpayers' heads to raise the necessary funds.**

**THE DANGER OF EASY CREDIT AND ITS COUSIN DEFERRED PAYMENT**

The financial community is at war with the American public, offering all types of easy payment-plans to tempt the unwary consumer to buy things they can't afford. Couple these plans with the desire for instant gratification, credit cards, tempting photos, the sophistry of a glib salesman and you have disaster waiting to happen. The evidence of such is reflected in the average credit card debt of the American consumer as being in the tens of thousands of dollars. Financial institutions can't wait to get their hooks into them. So what if they (the customer) get in over their heads and have to declare bankruptcy. In the meantime the financial institutions suck all the money they can from their limited earnings through outrageous interest rates. Then, if bankruptcy occurs, they'll write it off as a business loss and forget about the poor sucker who fell for their schemes. Deferred payment is a means of sucking in those people who can't afford their product with the sophistry of "buy now and pay later". Those silly enough to fall for it probably don't have the brainpower, skills or work ethic required to earn any additional money in a couple of years over and above their current earnings. Couple their limited mental capacity with their need for instant gratification and you have a fish asking to be caught. Maybe my statement of such people having limited brainpower is a little strong but one can be certain their need for gratification outstrips their intelligence and the self-discipline necessary to maintain solvency.

Even more outrageous is the concept of young couples buying a house they can't afford by offering them a yearly payment equal to some fraction of the annual interest of the loan, such as one quarter or one third of the going market rate of real estate. I believe this is one form, at

least, of sub-prime lending we hear so much about today. The culprits involved are both the lending institution and the unwary recipient. Couples are tempted to buy beyond their present means and when the crunch comes, as it always does, they run to papa Washington, the feds, for help. In reality, the problem was their own, they being seduced by lax lending practices, which bred the disaster. Then, the tax payer, current and future, has to divvy up his share to bail them out.

We now find (in 2008) that the politicians are heavily involved as well by requiring Fannie May and Freddie Mac to buy up high risk mortgage paper. Couple this with the greed of many in the business community and the result is the current economic crash. The problem for the individual, however, began in their parents' home with a failure to teach personal responsibility and proper budgeting. Instead, the message was consume, consume, consume. Buy whatever you want through lax credit policy including a house beyond your means if the financial community allows it. Don't bother to evaluate your own situation in the light of common sense and restrict purchases to that which is reasonable. No, live it up and keep up with the Jones, which brings a positive self image and thus real happiness. That is, until the crash comes as it has in 2008. After all, consumption is the engine that powers the economy and that's the means of achieving the good life. The teaching of such a message far outweighs the concept of real happiness being derived from within and in a secular sense living within one's income. People so engaged are now learning the consequences and should suffer it in totality, rather than uncle bailing them out. That isn't to say that some people innocent of the above abuses aren't caught in the crunch but even they may well have been living on the edge to keep up with the Jones. Of course, even the big corporations and certainly the financial institutions are running to the feds for help in correcting their own abuse of financial integrity. All of this bail out mentality, as opposed to personal responsibility, moves us as a nation closer and closer to Socialism in which big brother calls the shots and dictates the dos and don'ts of the populace.

Only the hard knocks of real life really teach people the principle of living within their income. Of course, if they do go belly up in bankruptcy, they can become free and clear of debt, which leaves the bank holding the bag. That isn't much of a problem for the bank, however, because they can just add it to their expenses for the year and adjust their interest rates for those who pay their bills upward to cover the losses. Thus, such financial stupidity is a form of intellectual dishonesty because those individuals enter into an agreement they know they can't handle. Then again, I may be overstating their intellect. Admittedly there are reasonable situations involving financial reversal, such as job loss, etc. which may end in bankruptcy but here we are talking about supposedly intelligent people who take unacceptable risks as a fix for their addiction to gratification and simply allow others to pay for their imbecilic spending when the roof falls in. In my mind, it's a form of dishonesty because they knowingly take such a risk. This ridiculous policy is now in fruition with the present mortgage crisis and, as one would expect, uncle is bailing people out. Is it any wonder personal responsibility is in such short supply? I don't think so.

This is akin to the welfare mindset that society must take care of everyone because all people have dignity and deserve decent housing as well as free medical care, etc. Of course, in this case, most such individuals are too lazy to work for a living or they have blown their minds with alcohol or drugs. Others simply take advantage

**They came with no guarantees of any kind; even subjecting them-selves to paid servitude to provide the future opportunity for personal freedom.**

of the government's left wing policies, which provide free medical care to the so-called unfortunate. In reality, such people incur medical expenses they could control through securing an education, better life styles or postponing pregnancies they can't afford to pay for. Instead, they live above their income without planning and preparing financially for medical expenses such as insurance of some type. Once again the largess of government fosters such irresponsibility by holding a gun or its equivalent to the taxpayers' heads to raise the necessary funds. Thus society continues to encourage irresponsibility that probably began with well meaning but unwise parents who only wanted the best for their dear little lambs.

We seem to think that an all-important self-image is obtained through accumulation of material items, no matter how obtained, rather

than through character or the development of the inner being. Such ridiculous thought comes from a materialistic society, which has little concept of the real purpose of life. Likewise, we seem to think the biggest homes; the most expensive cars; the latest styles and dinner in an upscale restaurant are barometers of self-image and thus happiness. Yet, there is just as much discontent including marriage problems among the affluent as among the struggling average citizen. In reality, we know that development of character and its associated accomplishments feed the inner being or spirit, which is the source of such image. It is the framework of our character, which establishes our integrity, our charity, our self-discipline, our sense of responsibility and all the other forms of virtue I hope to describe in the next chapter.

I personally believe that belief in a Supreme Being is the greatest catalyst, for motivating people to develop their inner being with its sense of purpose and its associated positive self-image. The stronger one's faith is in such a being and the clearer their understanding of the purpose of life, the stronger their inner being with its associated positive self image. Such development results from a genuine quest for truth, whose reward in part is the virtues of life. Though not their primary purpose, such virtues are often helpful in achieving temporal prosperity because of the innate fairness they involve. Even those in which such virtues are only partially developed usually admire them and prefer to do business with such people because they are sure to receive a fair shake. Of course, the virtuous individual must be on guard in such dealings, being sure he isn't being taken advantage of by the unscrupulous. .

**We find older men and women with their bellies and bosoms half exposed in the name of comfort while the young men have their jeans drooping below their buttocks and the young women are wrapped so tightly there's little to imagine.**

### VIEWS ON FREEDOM AND HUMANITY

An interesting phenomenon has taken place in America since our founding fathers established this great country. Those who came here to settle this land had freedom as their primary objective because of the tyranny they had experienced in Europe. They came with no guarantees of any kind; even subjecting themselves to paid servitude to provide the future opportunity for personal freedom. They had experienced the rigors of war, heavy taxation and state mandated religion, which produced a willingness to risk all for freedom of choice. They understood that the trip would be difficult, not to speak of life on the frontier. Having little, they asked for nothing more than the opportunity to fend for themselves. Life was, undoubtedly, difficult but where help was necessary, the same was provided through private citizens and institutions. Such help was far from guaranteed and probably only sufficient to sustain life but it came through the beneficence of society. No one looked to government as a source of help other than providing the opportunity to make one's way in freedom. Certainly there was injustice and physical suffering, even various forms of greed but most of all there was opportunity to make one's own life according to one's talent and means. The primary difference between America and Europe was freedom. Other human frailties and shortcomings were undoubtedly the same. Even though this description is overly simplified, it none-the-less provides a base with which we can compare society's attitude today. In contrast to this paragraph and the preceding section, I want to paraphrase a popular talk-show host as follows; *"Americans don't really want freedom today, they want to be taken care of by the government".* He went on to say freedom requires responsibility for one's self and family, not handouts. It seems we will trade our freedom for security in life, not fully appreciating that such security breeds control by others, big government in the socialistic sense. That is a reiteration of the earlier remarks included by Alexis de Tocqueville.

### A PARODY ON TODAY'S SOCIETY

I doubt that anyone today would vote for a return to the days of yesteryear. The technological explosion has transformed our society from one of physical survival to one of spiritual survival. Our challenge today isn't one of staving off hunger or marauding Indians but one of staving off the commercials, propaganda, crime and wantonness of so-called entertainment and other means of physical gratification that bombards our homes. Our major fear of physical injury comes through overeating, crime or vehicle accident while drug addiction, pornography, salacious movies and other forms of entertainment, including some, but not all advertising, inundate our five senses. A major segment of society has been ransacked by this

assault on our inner being as evidenced by the various types of crime and the steady deterioration of dress throughout the country. People dress as they please without any thought of the effect it may have on other people. We find older men and women with their bellies and bosoms half exposed in the name of comfort while the young men have their jeans drooping below their buttocks and the young women are wrapped so tightly there's little to imagine. The latter two are, of course, in the name of style or being cool while the former group has given up on it. In short, self-image is sought through physical expression rather than the development of the inner being. All of this has come about because advertising and the all mighty dollar has dulled our senses as to the purpose of life. Of course, we don't have to accept that but to oppose takes thought and effort on our part.

In addition, the technological marvels available in today's world provide for all types of sensual gratification, with little demand or effort on our part to participate. No thinking or even judgment is necessary, simply lean back and enjoy. Good books, including the scriptures, require thought and imagination to mentally visualize the story being told. Visually inviting TV shows or movies require nothing but a ticket or a flick of a button. Of course, they portray what the maker wants portrayed, which is his interpretation of a book with only the high points or items of interest to the viewer included along with the producer's message and exaggerations. Thus, the viewer is necessarily subject to the propaganda of the producer as he sees it. While a book may also be a piece of propaganda, there are two differences, namely the details are included for individual assessment and more importantly, thought is required on the part of the participant. Such thought may challenge what is portrayed therein as one visualizes the story, further developing our sense of right versus wrong.

Our age of technological marvels has provided more than enough food for members of our society with almost an unlimited choice. If one can stand it, he or she doesn't even have to cook, simply grab something from the freezer and pop it in the microwave. With unlimited food and unlimited entertainment, mankind is severely tempted to watch a good show while eating his/her favorite treat. The reward includes something more than enjoyment, unfortunately. Inactivity and excess calories has the effect of nurturing one's figure beyond the desirable proportions necessary for a good impression in the latest fashions. Woe is me. What do I do now? Ah, the commercial sector has the answer. We'll invent a machine to provide the exercise one would normally have obtained through physical labor back in pioneer times or even my dad's day.

That opens up a whole new market and, with the latest electronic gadgets; we can even monitor our heart rates, our blood pressure, our calories burned, etc. Then we can talk about what we have accomplished with others by quoting all the statistics we monitored. Of course, we also have the lazy set in society or maybe I should say the less active set, which simply find that exercise isn't their cup of tea. My goodness, why not develop a pill that will induce weight loss and such people won't have to put up with the strain of exercise or self control. We can also develop a variety of diet foods, which can be eaten intermittently to allow people to discuss the latest diets they are on. By swinging between a season of enjoying your treats and favorite TV shows and a season of dieting, one can have the best of both worlds. Yes sir, mankind has really advanced in the last hundred years. Meanwhile, our inner self must still deal with yesterday's technology, which involves study, prayer, service to others, self-control and other boring things. Is it any wonder in our day that worship of the physical has swamped mankind?

**If husband and wife have love and respect for each other after 30, 40 or 50 years of marriage, that's success of the highest kind because they had to develop certain characteristics which make such a relationship possible.**

Now, of course, all this advancement in the realm of physical comfort, unlimited entertainment and an almost inexhaustible food supply as well as liberal government policies have changed the concepts of freedom and responsibility among the majority of our citizenry. Oh, we still want freedom to do as we please, we just don't want to be responsible for our actions as we often criticize our teenagers of. After all, everyone has the right to a positive self image, which is obviously contingent upon the latest styles, decent housing and proper nourishment including the right and means to regularly eat out, our choice of entertainment and other comforts of life. Of course, these rights are necessarily exercised through the beneficence of "Big Brother" who siphons his

resources from the working force through taxation. The poor working slob, who happens to have prepared himself to obtain good employment and puts in a solid and then some workweek, has a responsibility to help those of us who are less fortunate. We simply can't generate enough income to obtain the necessities for a positive self-image and thus receive the respect all human beings deserve.

After all, it takes time to engage in a little recreational drug therapy, which is essential to coping with the realities of life. Successful businesses simply don't understand our needs and demonstrate the same by refusing us employment or canning us when we can't perform to their standards. Likewise, exercising our individual right to a little recreational sex often brings unexpected side effects. Associated diseases are obviously "Big Brother's" responsibility since everyone deserves a healthy life style. Unexpected babies also present a problem. Getting rid of them isn't so difficult but the associated cost is more than a guy or gal can handle by their selves. It seems only right that society provides the funds for abortion because responsibility for raising such a child is more than people in our circumstances can bear. How can one afford a decent car, a big screen TV, a cell phone and a few other necessities while raising children? Society should obviously help us out. Of course, there is some advantage for we unwed mothers to have several children so we can receive a decent check from welfare. It matters little that the children are raised in squalor or the government extracts the necessary funds by force from those crazy enough to work. It's just one of those realities necessary to fund image maintenance for those of us unfortunate enough to have these genetic tendencies. We can't help it. After all, it's not our fault.

Then, of course, there are those young people who expect an education and decent job without sacrifice. We were brought up in relatively affluent homes and expect to maintain that life style during the early years of marriage. What do you mean, sacrifice. Society owes us a good life style while we prepare to become responsible citizens. They should fund our babies as well as provide adequate housing so we can have those necessities for a good life as listed earlier. Yes, we believe in freedom and want to enjoy its fruits as long as someone else pays for it. In this day and age, no one should have to suffer while preparing for life. After all, it's tough enough to study for exams and pop quizzes, without having the pressure of a job. The extra time required to finish college while providing for a family is barbaric because of postponing graduation. Then we are forced to spend even a longer time in student housing, having only one car and no time or money for entertainment. That kind of life was for our grandparents who weren't smart enough to play the system or should I say didn't have the system. Our superior intelligence should exempt us from such archaic conditions. Let's just consider it as another step in the evolution of mankind, a distinct truth discovered by Darwin and as discussed earlier.

This country's affluence coupled with a liberal government has produced a generation of people who want the good life without responsibility. They would rather trade a little freedom for a personal caretaker, as long as someone else pays the necessary salary. Yep, we don't mind crossing the plains as long as we have a decent car with air conditioning, a global positioning device, a radio, even a TV and ride on a four-lane highway with adequate restaurants and motels. In short, we don't mind making our way through life as long as no sacrifice is required. After all character has nothing to do with self image, peace of mind and genuine happiness. No siree, the key to happiness is convenience, consumption and a caretaker such as the feds to handle the more perplexing problems. Let's eat, drink and be merry and leave character building up to the Lord whose responsibility it really is. After all, he sent us here.

If the preceding parody seems a little strong to you, consider the source. After all, I didn't take an oath to tell the truth, the whole truth or nothing but the truth, so help me God. None-the-less, I believe it describes an attitude prevalent in today's society. We, who don't subscribe to it must do all we can to prevent a further slide towards a government run society, which can and will eventually evolve into socialism. That's a legitimate application of Darwinism.

## THE JOY OF BECOMING

As I feel sure I have already said several times before, any real joy in life comes through accomplishment of some kind. It may be the accomplishment of someone you care for or something you did yourself. That isn't to say one might not be happy, at least initially, for

some windfall such as winning the lottery but such an event has no sustaining joy. Real character growth, on the other hand, is something one continues to enjoy because of increased capability. Each learning step in life is a step in becoming a more capable individual. Passing each grade in school is a step as long as something significant was achieved. Graduating from high school or college is such a step. Increasing one's capability in the workplace is such a step and though the accompanying salary increase is welcome, the real joy comes through the accomplishment. A husband and wife will find joy in the success of their family where such success is measured by accomplishment. If the children turn out to be responsible citizens, that's an indication of success. If husband and wife have love and respect for each other after 30, 40 or 50 years of marriage, that's success of the highest kind because they had to develop certain characteristics which make such a relationship possible. We could go on and name almost an infinite number of accomplishments that bring real joy but in each case it is in the character growth that such joy is founded upon and not the associated temporal rewards.

The purpose of this little tirade is to point out that as life matures, real satisfaction and joy come from what she or he has become over the preceding years. If a life has been wasted, one could hardly be joyful even if some windfall or the largess of government has sustained them. Looking back he or she would be saddened to realize they had found little purpose in life and accomplished nothing of note. Material possessions mean nothing as the end of life approaches, unless they are passed on for some worthy cause. Such an act is an act of love or compassion and constitutes character growth. On the other hand, if one has established and maintained loving relationships with family and friends, they will pronounce life as good even if their material possessions are minimal. Skills of various kinds would add to such satisfaction. Likewise real knowledge, which leads to real truth, constitutes an important part of one's accomplishments. In fact, as the intellect resides with the spirit, such knowledge and character growth represents the sum total of what we can take to the other side and includes both relationships and what we have become.

**The purpose of this little tirade is to point out that as life matures, real satisfaction and joy come from what she or he has become over the preceding years.**

As mentioned earlier and repeated here, it is expressed well in Doctrine and Covenants 130: 18-19 wherein we are told, ***"Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection. And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come".*** Our progress in this life depends upon our obedience to the various laws that govern the universe. Though we may not believe in God and fail to accept Him as our Creator but follow certain laws we believe to be true, we will be blessed accordingly as described in the next two verses of 130: 20-21. Therein we read, ***"There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundation of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated – And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated".*** None of us live perfect lives or as Paul tells us in Romans 3:23, ***"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*** However, even the vilest sinner can be blessed through obedience to a given law. Thus, he might well be blessed, secularly speaking, through studying certain scientific laws pertaining to our secular lives or by hard work in harmony with them. I believe this explains why many unbelievers seem to be richly blessed in a temporal sense. Of course, temporal gain will cease at death, as will our enjoyment of them and our eternal reward will be based on the spiritual growth we have achieved in life.

Certain types of knowledge are more valuable than others, depending upon what one's goals are in life. If one is an atheist, he will still benefit by learning the laws that govern secular advancement and applying them in his life. Hard work coupled with knowledge of laws pertaining to medicine, engineering, science finances, etc. will bring such an individual success in his chosen field but life may appear to have no meaning other than material gain. Likewise a devout believer in God may gain a high degree of spiritual understanding through hard work and obedience to laws governing spiritual knowledge. However, if he has no working skills or knowledge, he will probably have little success in secular activities. Because

God is the source of all truth, a person seeking both spiritual and secular growth will apply himself in both areas. His secular knowledge provides the understanding necessary to achieve a degree of success in temporal things to provide for self and family. His spiritual growth helps him understand and conduct his life in harmony with principles and laws governing spiritual progress.

Knowledge of secular principles, which are based on truth, will be of value to the resurrected being but may have little value in establishing one's ultimate reward in the eternal world. Spiritual principles based on truth help one to better adapt his/her conduct in this life to that acceptable to God and thus receive through divine grace the blessings promised to the faithful. Any such gain, as the scripture previously quoted indicates, allow him/her to have so much the advantage in the world to come. This is true, I believe, because our ultimate perfection as described in Matthew 5:48, will occur through the divine grace we merit in this life and the eternal world.

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A part of that grace is given to all men/women by virtue of the resurrection, while other portions depend upon the glory of that resurrected body, i.e. whether the person merits a CELESTIAL, TERRESTRIAL or TELESTIAL body or that which pertains to the kingdom the Lord has judged we merit. They are described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:40-42. Perfection, in the sense given in Matthew 5:48, is reserved for those who have been resurrected as CELESTIAL Beings.

## SOME PARTING COMMENTS

I realize, after re-reading this chapter, that I have spent an inordinate amount of time contrasting the inner being or spirit with the physical being. I may well have alienated everyone who has had the perseverance to make it this far in this marvelous work. The thoughts therein obviously express my position today rather than things I have known and felt throughout my life. Whether you are in agreement or not with said position, you will better understand the results of my search for some small degree of truth.

Likewise, I realize I sometimes seem to spout my opinions as facts, which isn't necessarily so. None-the-less, they represent my belief and feelings at this point in time, giving some understanding of my thoughts on society in 2008. As I have stated repeatedly, I don't count myself as an expert in any field except possibly well logging of the 1960s, which expertise is now obsolete. Consequently, my expertise is dated therein and my comments questionable in that field, as well as any other.

Even so, I extend my thoughts and comments to my posterity and any other interested individual primarily in hope they will look at their own lives, examine their own purposes and ascertain whether a course correction is needed. Obviously, they have the right to ignore my counsel on life and even express disdain regarding the same. However, the words at least represent the parting thoughts of one who has traveled the river of life and is now approaching the falls we all face at the end of our mortal trip. Though I know a certain amount of discomfort and maybe even pain awaits me as I tumble over the precipice, I look forward to the quiet pools of paradise where I know I will land. I'm confident that during my later years, I have done my best to identify that branch of the river leading through paradise unto life eternal where my Savior and my Father reside. Therefore, I commend my soul and its ultimate reward to the grace of them in whom I know I can place my trust for I know I will receive that reward which they deem me worthy of. Of this, I bear sincere, firm and confident witness, in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.