

# WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

## Camels

**CAMELS** are very useful animals which have been carrying people and goods across deserts for several thousand years. They have been called “ships of the desert” and are specially designed to be able to live and travel in the desert.

In deserts there are sometimes fierce sandstorms, but camels have two rows of extra-long eyelashes to protect their eyes. They also have special muscles which close their nostrils to keep sand out of their noses! They have a very thick layer of fur, which protects them from the cold desert nights and the hot sun during the day. Their body temperature drops at night, and rises very slowly during the day, unlike humans, whose temperature varies very little between night and day. Camels have leathery pads on their knees to protect them from the hot sand when they kneel to lie down or stand up, and pads on their feet to stop them sinking into soft sand.



Wikipedia photo by John O'Neill



Wikipedia photo by S. Taheri

There are one- and two-humped camels, and any people believe that camels store water in their humps. This is not true; these humps are stores of fat which provide camels with extra energy when they have to go without food or water for a long time. Camels can live for many days without a drink, and even for several weeks if they can find some leafy plants to eat. They can lose as much as a quarter of their body weight, and still keep going. Then, when it finds water, a camel

may drink 120 litres (27 gallons) of water in 10 minutes!

**Camels are wonderful animals. Everything about them is just right for their tough way of life. Do you think camels evolved to be the way they are? Fossils show that they have always been much the same. Surely it makes more sense to believe that they were designed and created by God?**



# The Wonder of WATER

We use it every day, and even waste it. We couldn't live without it. But do we realise just how wonderful water is, and how fortunate we are to have so much of it?

## THREE FORMS OF WATER

Water can exist in three forms: as a gas (water vapour), as a solid (ice), or as a liquid. You can see all three in the photo (above right) — in the clouds, the iceberg and the sea.



When water is heated it produces steam. We see this when a kettle is boiled. The power of steam can be used to drive machines, such as the railway engine (left)

## OUR BLUE PLANET

Nearly ¾ (70%) of our planet is covered with water. This is why it is sometimes called the “blue planet.” Most of this water is in the oceans — the huge Pacific Ocean contains one third of this water. There is also a lot of frozen water in the polar icecaps and mountain glaciers, and a small amount in lakes, ponds and rivers. Earth is the only planet we know of that has a supply of liquid water. Other planets in our solar system have tiny amounts of water, usually in the form of ice. Surely it is no accident that Earth has so much water? God created the world as a home for us, and He knew we would need lots of water!



## Why water is special

When water cools it behaves differently than almost every other liquid. Most liquids contract (get smaller) when they cool. Water does, too — until it gets near freezing-point (0° C). — then it starts to expand (get larger). That's why water pipes sometimes burst in cold weather. If water behaved like other liquids then, when it froze, ice would sink to the bottom. In time, many lakes and ponds would turn to solid ice, and fish and other creatures that live in the water would die. But because of the special way water behaves, ice forms on the surface, acting like a blanket to keep the water below much warmer. Surely water must have been designed to behave in this special way? It's no accident!



The thick layers of ice which form on the sea, rivers and lakes, enable fish and other creatures to survive.

## Wonders in a drop of water

Place a drop of pond water under a microscope and you will see a wonderful hidden world. The tiny diatoms on the right are just some of the wonders you may find in a drop of water.



**ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:**  
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## WATER OF LIFE

In this magazine we have been thinking about water, and how important it is to all living things. We really couldn't live without it and become thirsty even after a few hours without a drink. So we should thank God for this precious liquid.

There is another kind of thirst, the thirst in our souls — that part of us that will never die. Ordinary water can't satisfy this thirst. When God created us, He gave us souls as well as bodies, so that we can really know God and have His life in us. The Bible tells us that the first people to be created disobeyed God, and became separated from Him. We have all done the same, and our sin cuts us off from the life of God.

Long ago, the Psalmist wrote: “A deer thirsts for a stream of water. In the same way, I thirst for you, God. I thirst for the living God.” (Psalm 42: 1-2). We often feel thirsty for something that we can't find in this world; like that Psalmist, we become “thirsty for God.”

God loves us all and wants us to know Him, so He came to us in the Person of Jesus, who died and rose again so that we can receive God's forgiveness and live for ever with Him. People try to satisfy their spiritual thirst in many ways, but only Jesus can give us what He called “living water”. He promised: “Whoever drinks the water I give will never be thirsty again.” (John 4: 14).



Photo: Corel photo-CD

**PUZZLE ANSWERS**  
 water of life freely.”  
 (Revelation 22: 17)  
 whoever wishes it may have the  
 “If anyone is thirsty let him come:  
 Bible verse:  
 1. Missing bird. 2. Extra plant  
 3. Hair colour changed. 4. Rucksack  
 colour changed. 5. Extra button on  
 rucksack. 6. Shirt colour changed.  
 7. Shoe colour changed.  
 8. Toad moved. 9. Sky darker.

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## In the beginning was... water!

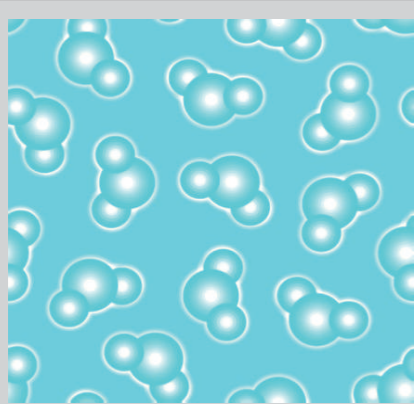
**M**ANY people believe that in the beginning the earth was a red-hot ball, but in the Bible, God — who created it — tells us: “The earth was empty and had no form. Darkness covered the ocean, and God’s Spirit was moving over the water.” (*Genesis 1: 2*). So our world began as a cool, water-covered globe before God began to create life. In the New Testament we read, “God spoke and made heaven and earth. He made the earth from water and with water.” (*2 Peter 3: 5*). We also read, “Then the world was flooded and destroyed with water.” (*2 Peter 3: 6*). This was at the time of the flood when Noah built the ark. After the flood, God promised that the world would never be covered in water again. Water plays an important part in our climate, because it cools down and warms up very slowly. As the seasons change, the sea temperature changes only gradually.



Our human bodies contain a lot of water — about 60% of our body weight. That’s why a cold drink cools us down, and why it’s important to drink enough liquid. We lose water from our bodies when we use the toilet, and when we

### Water — made of gas!

It may seem strange, but water is made of gas! Everything is made of extremely tiny particles called *atoms*, and in most things atoms are joined together in clusters called *molecules*. A molecule of water is made from two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen. In liquid water, the molecules are joined loosely, but can easily be pushed apart. When water boils or evaporates the molecules drift apart, but when water freezes, they join tightly together. Next time you drink some water, remember that God made it by joining hydrogen and oxygen together!



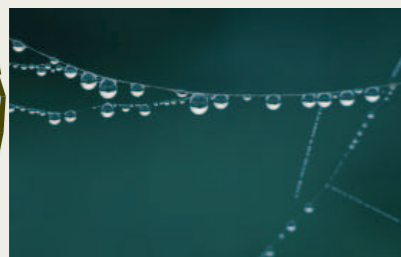
Water molecules magnified

sweat. On a very hot day, our bodies could lose nearly a litre (2 pints) of water an hour by sweating, and unless we drink enough our bodies would soon dehydrate (dry out) and most people would die within a few days. Our blood is mostly water, too.

So we need to make sure we drink enough, and although you may enjoy soft or fizzy drinks they are not a substitute for good, clean water. Water has been called “the fountain of life.” How true!

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## NATURE NOTES by the editor



Have you noticed how water forms drops? It may be on a leaf, twig or cobweb. This is because the tiny water molecules attract one another, and form a kind of film — scientists call it *surface tension*. You can test this with a simple experiment. Fill a glass with water, and let it settle. Then take a metal paper clip and drop it gently on to the surface, taking

care not to put your fingers into the water. You will be surprised to find that the paper clip will float on the invisible film (right). Now place a drop of soapy

water into the glass, and the paper clip will sink because the film is broken.

Some insects are able to literally walk on water by using the surface tension. These include water striders (left). Four of their legs are extra long, which allows them to spread their weight over the invisible surface film. Their feet are covered in microscopic hairs which helps them to stand on the water surface. In the photo you can see how the insects’ feet are pushing down the film on the surface of the water. Did these insects have to learn how to walk on the water? And how could they do it without those hairy feet? It looks like a good design!



—Geoff Chapman



Wikipedia photo by Isaka Yoji

## WATER – A PRECIOUS LIQUID!



Think of all the things we use water for, apart from drinking it: cleaning our teeth, washing our hands, bathing and showering, washing clothes and dishes, cooking, flushing the toilet, watering plants. The list seems endless. Most of us only have to turn on a tap to get all the water we need. And it has been through a long process to make it clean and pure. Water is very good at



dissolving things. If you fill a glass to the brim with water, then pour sugar or salt into it, the glass will not overflow. This is why it’s important not to allow harmful chemicals to get into rivers and oceans.

Most of the water on earth is in the sea, and too salty to drink. The salt can be removed, but this costs a lot of money. So saving fresh water, and making sure people can use it has always been important.

In many parts of the world large lakes (reservoirs) have been built to store water, and pipelines laid to take it to drier areas. The Romans were very good at finding ways to move water around. They built canals, with bridges called *aqueducts* to carry them across valleys. The one in the photo below is at Pont du Gard, France. Built around 19BC it is 49 meters (160 feet) high and 275 meters (900 feet) long. It carried 5 million gallons (20,000 cubic meters) of water every day from springs to the city of Nimes 31 miles (50 km) away!



The Pont du Gard Roman aqueduct in France, built around 19BC – one of many aqueducts built by the Romans to transport water over long distances

### Clean water saves lives!

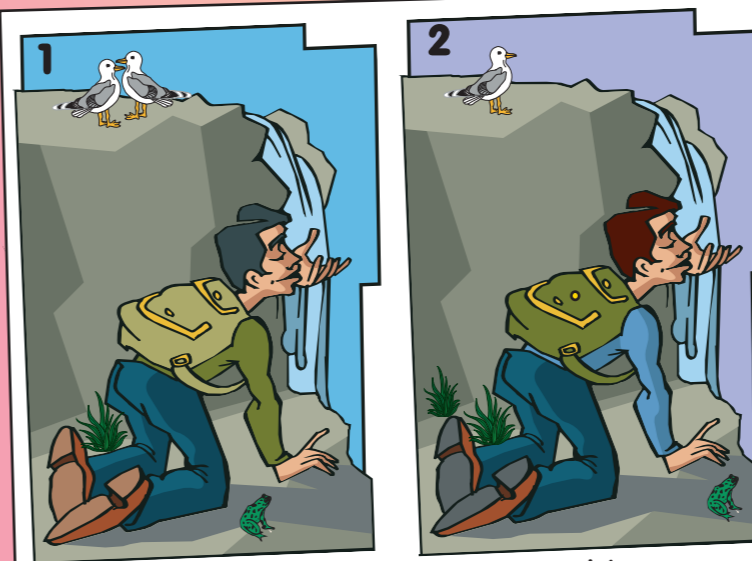


Many people have to walk miles to collect water which is often dirty

About one billion people in the world don’t have clean water. Many have to walk miles every day to collect water, which is often dirty and causes disease and death. In fact, around 14,000 people die every day from drinking dirty water, many of them children. Thousands more are made seriously ill. So what can we do? First off all, we must do all we can to save water. Then we can help those who are working to provide clean water for those who don’t yet have it. See the websites below to find out more

[www.samaritans-purse.org.uk](http://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk)  
[www.tearfund.org](http://www.tearfund.org)  
[www.wateraid.org](http://www.wateraid.org)

## PUZZLE CORNER



There are nine differences between pictures one and two. Can you spot them?

**A BIBLE PROMISE:**  
 Cross out the **first** letter, and then every **fourth** letter in the text below to find one of God’s promises from the Bible.

**P**IFAONYOSNEIMSTHOIR  
**S**HTYLDETHGIMCFOME;  
**I**WHONEVEBRWICSHEZS  
**T**OVMAHAWWETHPEWA  
**Y**TERYOFUIFEXASAHFR  
**E**XEGIUFT

(Answers on the next page)

