WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

The Bowerbird

ANY birds go to a lot of trouble to attract a mate, but few can match the efforts of the male Bowerbird. He will sometimes spend weeks collecting thousands of twigs and sticks to build a “bower” to impress the female bowerbird. The bower may be 1–2 metres (3–4 feet) tall. It is made from thin sticks which are usually arranged in the shape of a dish. Some species even build a roof over the top.

The male bowerbird decorates his bower with leaves, flowers, berries, feathers, coloured stones, snail shells, and even things stolen from humans, such as car keys. They also seem to have a special liking for blue objects, such as bits of plastic, glass bottle caps and drinking straws! They often arrange stones and shells to make an “avenue” leading to the entrance. Eventually a female Bowerbird, suitably impressed, will enter the bower, and he will have found a mate. The bower isn’t a nest, and the female later flies off to build her nest in a nearby tree, where she lays her eggs and hatches the young.

Did bowerbirds gradually evolve the skill to build their amazing bowers? This seems unlikely, and they never have the chance to learn by watching others do it. It’s not even necessary for their survival, since most birds manage quite well without going to such trouble. It seems more likely that God created them to do it, so that we could admire another of His created wonders!

We are not robots!

We should be thankful that God has given us a book that tells us the true history of the world. It explains that life began when God spoke, and that He created everything, including human beings. The Bible teaches us that we have descended from Adam and Eve, not ape-like ancestors. When God created human beings in the beginning He gave them a precious gift: freewill. He could have created us as robots, programmed to live the way He wanted. But then we would never be able to choose to obey and love Him. The Bible also explains how the world was spoiled when humans misused that gift, and chose to break God’s laws.

God gave us rules because He made us, loves us, and knows what is best for us. When we sin against God we harm ourselves and others. Sin broke the friendship between humans and God, and resulted in all the pain and suffering we see in the world today. God’s rules are like the warning signs. We can’t blame God for the troubled state of the world.

However, even when the first people sinned, God promised that He would defeat evil so that people could be His friends again. That promise came true when God’s Son, Jesus, came to earth 2,000 years ago. He lived a perfect life, and taught us to love one another, and not to be afraid of our enemies. People killed Him by nailing Him to a cross, but God raised Him from the dead. By dying, Jesus conquered sin, and by rising again He conquered death. If we accept what Jesus did for us, we can have a new beginning, free from the power of “very good” creation was spoiled. So we can’t blame God for the troubled state of the world.

Why do “bad” things happen?

People have been asking this question for thousands of years. In a world where there is sickness and pain, suffering and disaster, this is no surprise. But has the world always been like this? If so, if there is a God, how can He be good? There is an answer! See the next page.
How did it all begin?

Two different stories

How do we know what happened in the beginning? Did all life on earth begin with a single cell like a bacteria, then evolve over millions of years until human beings arrived? That’s the story according to people who believe in evolution. The problem is: they were not there when it all began! Several thousand years ago God asked a man named Job, “Where were you when I made the earth’s foundation?” (Job 38: 4). That’s a very good question to ask those who say they know that life came through evolution.

The Bible tells us that “the world was made by God’s command.” (Hebrews 1: 3). The very first page of the Bible, Genesis chapter one, tells us how. How do we know which story is true? Well, God knows how He did it, but if we can’t simply believe His word in the Bible, there are clues to help us. We don’t see things evolving from one kind to another on earth today, and fossils don’t show that they did in the past. The creation story fits the facts best!

Life’s story according to evolutionists — who were not there in the beginning

In the beginning, when God finished creating everything, “God looked at everything he had made, and it was very good.” (Genesis 1: 31). God’s creation was affected by their disobedience, and ever since then people have continued to disobey God — so the world is still messed up. We can choose either to make things worse by going our own way, or turning back to God and doing all we can to make the world better.

Many Christian charities, like Tearfund, Samaritan’s Purse and Christian Aid, are sharing God’s love by helping people who are suffering. We can play our part in making the world a better place by giving money to help their work.

Only TWO of these owls are exactly alike. Which are they?

(Answers on the next page)

People who believe in evolution tell us that suffering, pain and death have been going on for millions of years. The Bible tells a very different story. In the beginning there was no sadness, suffering or pain.

There was also no death, since God intended people to live for ever in friendship with Himself. These bad things entered the world because of sin. God has promised to make a new creation where all these bad things will have vanished.