

# Clifton News

290 October - December 2020

Published since 1948







# News

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” (Isaiah 26.3)

We hope our readers are keeping well as we endure this worldwide pandemic. We are sure that the peace the believer enjoys in the midst of all circumstances will be a testimony to those who are without God and without hope in this world. We would like to wish our readers the Lord's blessing for the coming Christmas season.

Last month we bid farewell to Vincent and Shara with their children Mahima and Ashish who moved to Rugby. We wish them the Lord's blessing for the future and their fellowship with the saints at Church Street Gospel Hall in Coventry. We are truly grateful for the help they have been to the assembly here over the past two years they rented the annex. The assembly had a farewell a picnic for them at Beddington Park and it was a very nice time of fellowship with pleasant weather.

In their place, we welcome Vipul and Olga Patel who along with their little daughter Sarah have moved from Harrow into the annex and are now in fellowship with us. Vipul works in construction and Olga is a nurse.

We continue to meet at the hall for our Sunday meetings and on most Mondays. Our Saturday winter ministry series, Sunday Family Service and Monday Bible teaching is broadcast on Zoom from the hall so if you would like to listen to God's Word, please enter the following on the Zoom website to join Clifton Hall.

Meeting ID: 756 5533 4423  
Passcode: 186868

## Carol Service

Sunday 20th December at 6:30 pm (followed by tea and mince pies)

## Watchnight Gospel Meeting

31st December at 11.00 pm

Editor: Nitish Patel.

Clifton Hall, 45 Whitehorse Lane, South Norwood, London SE25 6RD.

Website: [www.cliftongospelhall.com](http://www.cliftongospelhall.com). Email: [cliftongospelhall@googlemail.com](mailto:cliftongospelhall@googlemail.com)

# Meetings

## Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread 11.00 am  
(During outreach at local community events it is at 10 am)

Young people's Bible class 12.00 pm  
Family Service 4.00 pm

## Monday

Prayer and Bible Teaching 7.45 pm

## Wednesday

Seekers 6.30 pm  
(Term time only for under 10s)

Temporarily  
closed due to  
covid-19

## Friday

Friday Club 7.30 pm  
(Term time only for those over 10)

Temporarily  
closed due to  
covid-19

## SUNDAY AFTERNOON FAMILY SERVICE

### October

4 Richard Catchpole  
11 Nitish Patel  
18 John Aston  
25 Ferranti Wong

### November

1 Jonathan Docksey  
8 Nitish Patel  
15 Richard Catchpole  
22 Alastair Rodger  
29 Alastair Rodger

## **December**

- 6 Richard Catchpole
- 13 Alastair Rodger
- 20 Carol Service (this is at 6.30 pm)
- 27 Nitish Patel

## **MONDAY PRAYER AND BIBLE TEACHING**

## **October**

- 5 Robert Bennett
- 12 Robert Bennett
- 19 Nitish Patel
- 26 John Aston

## **November**

- 2 David Willis
- 9 Paul Miller
- 16 Paul Miller
- 23 Paul Miller
- 30 Timothy Miller

## **December**

- 7 Timothy Miller
- 14 Richard Catchpole
- 21 Richard Catchpole
- 28 Nitish Patel

## **SATURDAY MINISTRY MEETINGS**

(at 7.30 pm)

- |                 |                                   |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 3 October       | John Lee (Bognor Regis)           |
| 7 November      | Justin Ramsey (Helions Bumpstead) |
| 6 February 2021 | Kevin Oh (Uxbridge)               |

# Question Box

Are there contradictions in the Bible?

By contradictions, we can say that they are only apparent contradictions. We believe that the Bible is God's Word and like its author cannot have any error and is perfect in its original autographs.

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." (Psalm 12.6-7)

Many critics of the Bible point out so called errors of the Bible but upon closer examination it can be seen that there is no error or mistake at all. They have not read the passage properly in its context or understood its meaning or they have mixed up two different events. In many cases they have never even read the Bible and simply repeat what others say!

But how are we to explain some passages especially in the Kings and Chronicles or in the four gospels that appear to contradict? Sometimes there are different names, places or numbers spoken of regarding the same event.

B. A. Ramsbottom in his book "Bible doctrines simply explained" gives a good illustration of how people can misunderstand the Bible and think there is a contradiction when there is none.

"In the early years of my pastorate two teenage girls from chapel both sent me a postcard. They were on holiday together, staying in the same place. The postcards were written the same day, posted the same day, and arrived together. One said, "It is a most beautiful day. The sun is shining." The other said, "It is raining." They were both honest girls. Why did they write different things, and yet both told the truth? No doubt you can think of lots of answers. So it is with God's Word."

All who live in the UK know that it can be sunshine and rain in the same day and even snow too ! Each girl obviously wrote her card at a different time on the same day. A person who has only lived in the east where it is sunshine all year long and rain only during the monsoons might think there is a contradiction. Often so called Bible

contradictions are nothing more than a misunderstanding of the geography, language, history and customs of the people who lived in Bible times.

For example in Mark 15:25 it says that Jesus was crucified the third hour but John 19:14-15 says that Jesus trial by Pilate was at the sixth hour. It may appear to be a contradiction but both are correct. Mark used the Jewish time system but John used the Roman time system.

The Jews started their new day at 6 pm with night counted from 6 pm to 6 am and the day counted from 6 am to 6 pm. Therefore Jesus was crucified at our 9 am, the third hour after 6 am. The Romans started their new day at midnight like we do today therefore their sixth hour would be our 6 am when Jesus was brought before Pilate and crucified three hours later at their ninth hour.

In Mark 5.2 and Luke 8.27, Jesus cast out the demons from the man named Legion but in Matthew 8.28, it states there were two men. In the healing of blind Bartimaeus, Matthew 20.30 says that there were two blind men but Mark 10.46 and Luke 18.35 speak of only one. It is not a contradiction for there were two men in both stories but Mark and Luke focus on just one of them. Matthew mentions two donkeys, the mother and its colt that Jesus rode upon into Jerusalem but Mark and Luke only mention one, the baby colt. Taking all the gospels together we get the complete picture and not a contradiction. Both animals the mother and her colt rode into Jerusalem with Jesus seated on the colt which had never been ridden upon before.

Another example is when Jesus cleansed the Temple. Matthew 21.12, Mark 11.15 & Luke 19.45 indicate that it took place at end of His ministry whereas John 2.15 says it took place at the beginning. The answer again is simple. Jesus cleansed the Temple twice at the beginning and at the end of His ministry just before His crucifixion.

These are just a few of many examples of how most apparent contradictions can be resolved and those that cannot is because we were not there to see all the details of the events as in the earlier illustration of the two girls on holiday. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3.16)

# Bible Teaching

## JOHN 9

(Part 2)

*From Bible notes by the late Tom Ledger*



**4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.**

Acts 2.22, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know."

### **I must work the works of him**

The unravelling of the beauty of God in Christ. Setting at liberty from bondage, corruption, from death, blindness! The demonstration of the love of God. The coming into the world of the Son of God. His work, His cross.

## THE DAY

The time of opportunity: Period of possibility. Time that is available. It is limited. Oh, is it possible for us to loose the time of God's opportunity? Can we be insensitive to the times in which we live?



## THE NIGHT

Opportunity rejected. His rejection of Israel. His death.

Romans 11.25 "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

John 12.35-36 "Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them ..."

## GENTILES

1 John 2:8 "Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." (i.e. in all that believe)

FOR ISRAEL IT IS NIGHT. FOR THE GENTILE WORLD, LIGHT!

The Light has come dispelling the darkness.  
But now after 2000 years, the darkness is descending again.  
The darkness always starts with those who profess to have the light.  
Oh, Antichrist and the Man of Sin are coming. Oh, what darkness then night.

### **5. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.**

The world has no real light, knowledge, insight, wisdom part from Him.  
Oh, they may have knowledge about mechanical things, scientific, biological things but as to the being and nature of God, the true being and nature of man, his existence, life and death, soul and eternity, truth and error, ALL IS DARKNESS!

## THE OBJECT LESSON (vv. 6-7)

A sermon in action. The Lord's action, not medical but giving instruction. We are meant to think about it, seek to understand it.

**6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay**

Compare Isaiah 50.6, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting."

"Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands." (Matthew 26:67)

"And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him." (Mark 15:19)

"Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house." (Deuteronomy 25:9)

Spitting speaks of humiliation, contempt, rejection and despising.

"Clay" compare Job 4.18-19,

Eliphaz ...

"Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly: How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth?"

Job ...

"Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?" (Job 10:9)

Elihu ...

"Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay." (Job 33:6)

Man's frail humanity, utterly dependent, the body in its weakness.

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." (Philippians 2:7)

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." (Acts 10:38)

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know." (Acts 2:22)

SIGNIFIES, EXPRESSES THE LORD HAVING BECOME MAN

He is coming among them in lowliness, humility, grace. If He had come in the glory of deity it would have been death to them.

Yet His deeds and words should have made them realise who He was!

"Anointed the eyes of the blind man with clay"

That would make his condition worse than ever! If there had been a glimmer of light before there would be none now!

The Lord Jesus was the greatest, clearest, the brightest manifestation of God there has ever been. God in grace, mercy, love etc ...

Here in wonderful power too ! But as Man.

To reject Him is to descend into the deepest darkness!

To be continued ....

# Good News



## NATIVITY ROLES AFFECTED FUTURE LIVES

Last year, the Daily Mail newspaper published a strange survey of 2000 British adults done by Virgin Media. The survey claimed to have found that those who had taken part in their school Christmas nativity plays when young had a direct effect on their adulthood traits. The study also claimed that the role played also determined the path they took in life and what kind of work each one ended up doing.

Examples given were, most children who had played the part of the ox mainly ended up in working in advertising earning an average of £43,000 per year, which is more than twice the salary of those who played a lamb or sheep.

Those who landed the plum role of Mary were most likely to be extroverts and have the biggest social media following and mainly

work in retail.

Those most content with their life were those who played Joseph or the donkey. Those who played Joseph were more likely found to be working in finance.

Children who played angels ended up in healthcare where as inn keepers ended up as manual labourers. Those who played the angel Gabriel were said to be more likely to work in marketing and communications!

Those who were shepherds were found more in the IT sector and one of three kings more likely to work in construction, repair and maintenance.

There were other traits found but whatever you think of this strange survey, one thing is clear, your future is affected not by what role you played in a nativity play but by what you do with Jesus the central and most important person in the nativity play and of the whole Christmas story. The Bible tells us that ... "He is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." (John 4.42).

Your life and destiny for heaven or hell depends on what you do with Him. He is the only Saviour for He was the only one who was God and Man, born sinless by means of the virgin birth. He alone could die the death we all deserve as sinners on the cross and rise again the third day. He alone can save us from our sins. We pray you will call upon Him for salvation now!

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1.21)





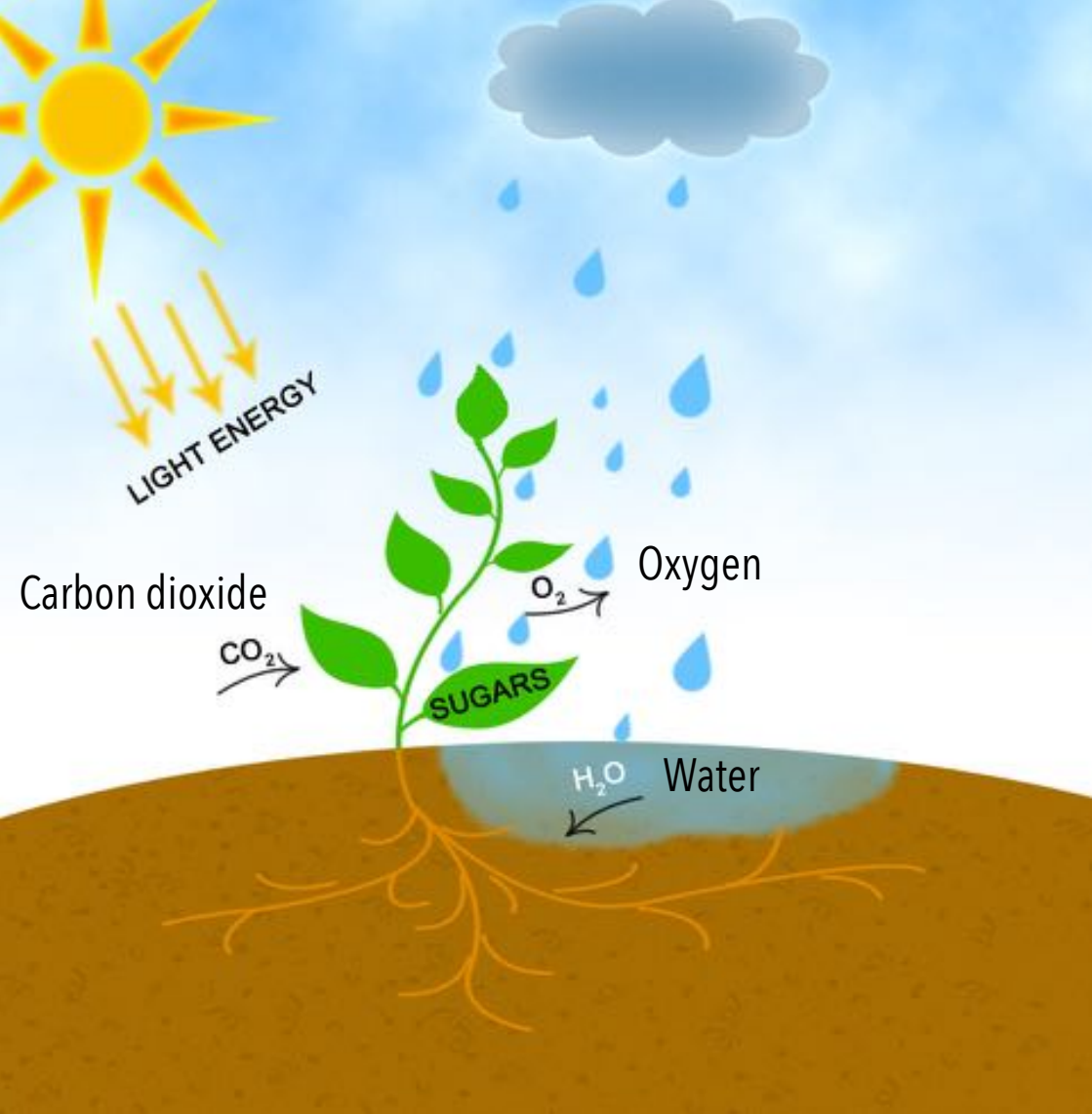
# *Design in Creation*

## PHOTOSYNTHESIS

Geoffrey R. Guile, BSc, MSc, PhD.  
Coltishall, Norfolk.

### WHAT IS PHOTOSYNTHESIS?

Without photosynthesis life could not exist on the earth, for plants are at the start of the “food chain” that provides food for both humans and animals. They also maintain the atmosphere we breathe: every day plants release about 50 million tons of oxygen into the atmosphere, as well as removing about 60 million tons of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Photosynthesis is the process that plants use to do this. It captures the energy in sunlight and plants use this energy to make carbohydrates (sugars) and other chemical substances that they need.



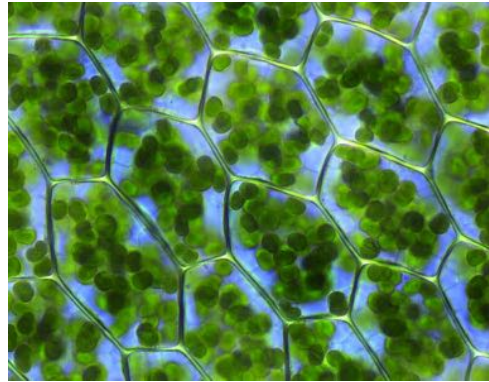
$\text{CO}_2$  is produced naturally by living creatures respiring, as well as from the burning of oil and coal. These  $\text{CO}_2$  producing processes use up atmospheric oxygen. Photosynthesis is the recycling process that maintains the levels of oxygen and  $\text{CO}_2$  in the atmosphere.

The mechanism of photosynthesis is very complex and is still not fully understood. It involves two distinct but connected processes. The first process captures the energy in sunlight and this provides the energy that the plant needs in order to grow. As part of this process water is split into oxygen and hydrogen, and the oxygen is released into the atmosphere. The second process, which is called carbon fixation,

takes CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere and by means of a very complex series of chemical reactions combines it with hydrogen to produce sugars. (N.B. this is a very simplified description of what happens.)

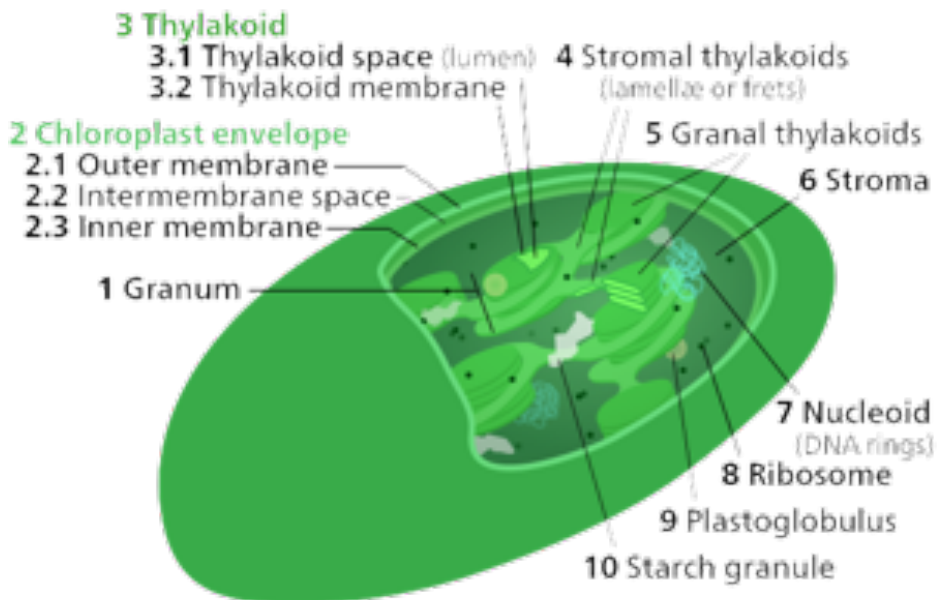
## CHLOROPLASTS

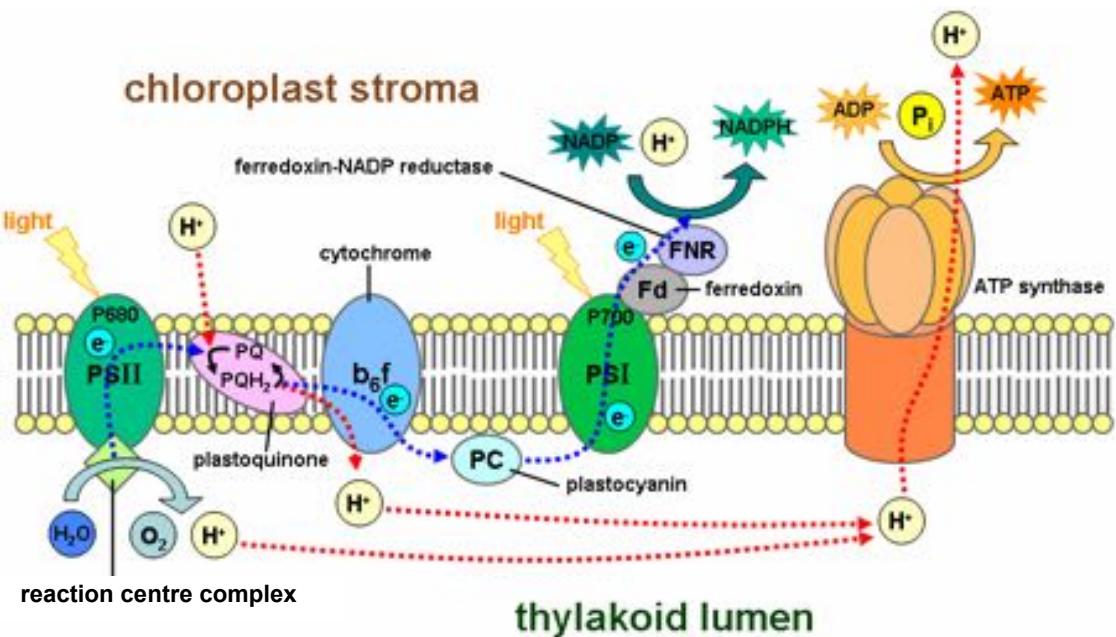
In land plants and green algae photosynthesis takes place inside tiny disc shaped structures called chloroplasts. A typical plant leaf contains about 70 million cells, and each cell between 20 and 200 chloroplasts which are about 0.005mm in diameter. The interior of the chloroplast consists of a liquid called the stroma within which are folded stacked membranes called thylakoids. Carbon fixation takes place in the stroma, and absorption of light energy and production of oxygen in the thylakoids.



Chloroplasts visible in plant cells (moss)

Embedded in the thylakoid membrane are large numbers of a special structure called the light harvesting complex. Among other





**“The mechanism of photosynthesis is very complex and is still not fully understood.”**

components this contains molecules of chlorophyll, (a green-coloured chemical which gives plants their green colour,) and a protein called the reaction centre protein that contains four manganese atoms in a precise structure, which is where the water splitting occurs.

Sunlight is absorbed by the chlorophyll molecules and its energy is passed to the manganese atoms in the reaction centre protein. When the manganese atoms are raised to a high energy state, this causes the splitting of the water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen. The oxygen is released into the atmosphere and the plant uses the hydrogen in the CO<sub>2</sub> fixation process as well as for driving the ATP synthase enzyme which makes ATP. ATP is the “molecular fuel” that provides the energy that powers chemical reactions in the plant cells. [To learn more about molecular machines, see our article in Clifton News No 274 July - September 2016].

## EVOLUTION OR COMPLEX DESIGN?

Photosynthesis shows a complex, intelligent, design in a number of ways. We will discuss one example, chlorophyll, which is made by the plant by a step-by-step process involving 17 different enzymes.



(Enzymes are proteins that catalyse chemical reactions in cells. They have very complicated and precise structures.) The chlorophyll cannot be produced unless all the enzymes are present and working. Furthermore, the molecules produced at some of the intermediate steps of this process are highly toxic and must be processed further as soon as they are produced, or the plant is poisoned.

The process for making chlorophyll is therefore described as *irreducibly complex* because all the enzymes have to be present and working correctly *at the same time*. It would be impossible for a multistep process like this to have evolved over a long period.

## COMPLEX DESIGN NEEDS A DESIGNER

The design of living things, with so many examples of irreducible complexity, is proof of the existence of an almighty Creator; they simply could not have arisen through random chance in an evolutionary process. In Psalm 139 the psalmist could say to God “I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made... How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!” as he thought the complexity of his own body; but the wonder of creation extends to all living things, even plants. We read in Genesis that God even planted the garden of Eden where he placed Adam in a perfect paradise.

Things are now very different; creation while still showing undeniable evidence of amazing design has been marred by sin, for the first man Adam disobeyed God and “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.”

Death and ultimately eternal separation from God in the lake of fire is now the common lot of the human race, because we all sin and God must judge sin. But the Creator became the Saviour and at Calvary a work far greater than that of creation took place when “Christ died for the ungodly.” (Rom 5.12.) People today often ask, where is the proof of the love of God? We see it in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, “God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom 5.8.) We each need to recognise this and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour.





Bethlehem

