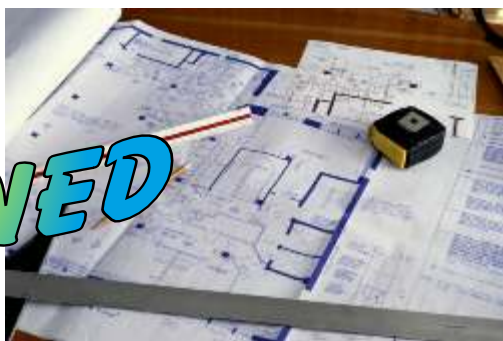


WELL DESIGNED



Owls

OWLS are majestic birds, with large eyes and almost silent flight. Like other birds of prey, they have *binocular vision*. Their eyes are held in place by bony structures, which means they can't roll their eyes. However, owls have a unique way of increasing their field of vision — they can rotate their head 270 degrees either way!

This is because they have several special design features. They have 14 neck vertebrae — twice the number humans have. But how do owls rotate their head so far without damaging the arteries in their neck? If humans tried this it would cause serious injuries, even severing the arteries leading to the brain, which could lead to strokes. So why don't we find thousands of dead owls lying on the forest floor?

Scientists have discovered that the holes in the owls' neck vertebrae are 10 times larger than the arteries that pass through them. This prevents them from being damaged when the head is twisted. Also, the blood vessels are larger where they enter the head, so that their brains aren't starved of oxygen when they twist their necks.



An owl in flight



The ability of owls to fly silently is due to special comb-like structures on the primary feathers of the leading edge of the owl's wing, which breaks up air turbulence - a design aircraft designers have copied.

Owls are certainly well designed for their way of life. The oldest fossil owl — claimed to be '61.7 to 56.8 million years old' — looks just like a normal owl. This suggests that owls are the result of creation, not evolution.

THE POWER OF WORDS

Words are used every day for conversation and communication. Words are powerful and can be used to help or to hurt, to encourage or discourage. Some famous speeches have gone down in history, such as Winston Churchill's 1940 speech, which included the words: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender." US civil rights leader Dr Martin Luther King's famous 1963 "I have a dream" speech also had a great and far-reaching impact.



The majority of people believe in some kind of God or Creator; there are few genuine atheists. However, is it possible for us to speak to God — and does He speak to us? We believe that the answer to both these questions is a resounding "yes." We can talk to God in prayer, and millions of people do. But God our Creator hasn't been silent or left us in the dark about Himself. He has spoken to us in a number of ways. First of all in creation: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth." (*The Bible, Psalm 19: 1-4*). God has also spoken to us through the



Bible, words that are authentic and accurate, and should be heeded (*see page two*). Finally, and supremely, God revealed Himself by becoming one of us. "God has spoken to us by His Son." (*Hebrews 1: 2*). In the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God revealed His holiness and His love. Our sins have separated us from God, but Jesus's death on the cross provides us with the means of forgiveness and reconciliation. In Jesus, God has sent us an unmistakable message: "I love you. Come to me and you will find forgiveness, hope and eternal life." Will you hear that message, and respond?

TIME TO SMILE

Why was the man fired from the calendar factory?
Because he took a day off.

Elderly teacher: "If I say, 'I am beautiful,' which tense is that?"

The student replied, "It's obviously past tense."

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The REAL SCIENCE paper!



No. 93

THE WONDER OF WORDS

We use lots of them every day. Words! How many we use depends on where we are, and whether we are alone or with others, but the average number of words a person speaks in a day is said to be 7,000-10,000. When we use words, how often do we pause to consider what a wonderful thing language is? Can you imagine life without it? No letters, texts, emails or telephone chats? No books or newspapers? No radio or television?

Language is one of many things which sets humans apart from animals. Of course, animals have their own unique ways of communicating, but no animals use real speech to communicate with each other.



THERE ARE NO "PRIMITIVE" LANGUAGES!

Most evolutionists believe that human language evolved from animal noises, or the primitive grunts of 'ape-men'. If so, then the oldest languages should be simpler than modern ones, but the opposite is true! There is no such thing as a 'primitive' language. The most ancient languages for which we have written texts, such as Sumerian and Sanskrit, often have far more intricate and grammatical forms than many modern languages. In Sanskrit (right) — still spoken in parts of India — each verb has about 500 parts (most English verbs have only 5 parts, e.g. do, does, did, done, doing). Languages actually degenerate over time.



Sumerian cuneiform 2400 BC



Ms. Sarah Welch CC BY-SA 4.0

"An enormous gap..."

Professor Stuart Burgess writes: "Humans have an amazing ability to learn and recall words. In contrast to humans, apes and monkeys have virtually no vocabulary whatsoever. They may have one type of grunt that acts as a warning



signal and another type of grunt that indicates the presence of food... Many experiments have been carried out to try to teach chimpanzees to talk. However, these have only confirmed that chimpanzees were not designed to speak... The truth is that there is an enormous gap between humans and apes".*

**The Origin of Man*, Day One Publications, 2004, page 69.



Parrots talk, and there is evidence that African Grey Parrots actually understand the meaning of their words. Apes come nowhere near this, yet no-one believes that humans are closely related to parrots!

DARWIN'S BIG MISTAKE ABOUT "PRIMITIVE" TRIBES

WHEN Charles Darwin met some of the native Yahgan people of the island of Tierra del Fuego off the southern tip of South America, he described them as savages and "primitive beasts," whose language had a mere 100 or so words and sounded like animal grunts and clicks. In his 1871 book *The Descent of Man*, Darwin wrote that "we are descended from barbarians", and that human language had evolved by selecting the best "grunTERS" from a crowd of ape-like ancestors. He believed the Fuegians were examples of this.

However, Darwin was totally wrong. When 19th-century missionary Thomas Bridges took the Christian gospel to the Fuegians, he recorded over 32,000 words and inflections in his Yahgan-English dictionary. So Darwin was wrong about the Fuegians. This means that he was also mistaken in his theory of the evolution of human language. There are numerous examples of so-called "primitive" people groups whose languages are much more complex than European languages. These include Australian Aboriginal, Papuan, Amazonian, sub-Saharan African, and Siberian languages.



A group of Yaghans from Tierra del Fuego

ANOTHER VIEW

The origin of languages remains a mystery to secular scientists. Although there are a number of language *groups* which can be traced to a common origin, there is no evidence that these groups themselves are related.

Since there is no *natural* explanation for the origin of languages, why not consider the *supernatural* explanation recorded in the Bible? Genesis chapter 11: 1-9 describes how God confused the languages so that people would spread throughout the earth and populate it, rather than congregating in one place and becoming too powerful.

WHAT WE NEED FOR LANGUAGE



Our ability to speak involves a number of processes and parts of our anatomy. The speech centres in our brain send signals to muscles in our throat, larynx, tongue and lips to enable us to form words, and also to our chest to control breathing. Apes don't have brain areas dedicated to processing and producing speech. Neither do they have the deep throat, or fine control of their lips and tongue, which are essential to the formation of words. Humans are unique in all of this.

The Bible - still the world's best-selling book!

Recent figures released by the United Bible Societies (UBS) reveal that 2019 was a record-breaking year in terms of Bible provision. In the past five years alone, UBS has completed first translations of the full Bible in 50 languages. As of August 2020 just over 5.7 billion people around the world – around 80% of the world's population – now have access to a full Bible in their own language. In addition, the New Testament has been translated into a further 1,549 languages, reaching another 801 million people. However, of the 7,359 known languages in the world, 3,948 still have no part of the Bible. Many of these languages are spoken by very small groups of people, but the Bible Societies are still working to provide them with Bibles, too.



Fragment of John's Gospel from 150 AD (John Rylands Library, Manchester)

Why is the Bible so important?

Many people dismiss the Bible as just a collection of ancient writings. But people who say such things haven't done their homework. The Bible was way ahead of its time with some scientific concepts, and both archaeology and fulfilled prophecy support the Bible's claim to be inspired by God.

The literary evidence for the Bible's trustworthiness is also impressive. There are 5,686 Greek manuscripts of parts of the Bible in existence today – some very ancient. There is more reason to reject historical accounts of Plato, Aristotle, Homer and Caesar, since the written evidence is tiny in comparison.

The Bible claims to be a message to us from the Creator of the universe. If that is true, it's the most important book in the world, and we ignore its message at our peril!

Read the Bible in many versions free at www.biblegateway.com

The first 2 verses of the Bible (Genesis 1: 1-2) in 4 languages

RUSSIAN:

1 В начале сотворил Бог небо и землю[a]. 2 Земля была безлика и пуста, тьма была над бездной, и Дух Божий парил над водами

VIETNAMESE:

1 Ban đầu, Đức Chúa Trời sáng tạo trời đất. 2 Lúc ấy, đất không có hình thể và còn trống không. Bóng tối, bao trùm vực thẳm và Thần Linh của Đức Chúa Trời vận hành trên mặt nước.

ARABIC:

ضررالاول تاومسلا دلا قلخ عديبال يف رمدغل هجو يلعو ذيلاخو قيرخ ضررال تنالكو دايمل هجو يلعو فري دلا حورو قملظ

MAORI:

He mea hanga na te atua i te timatanga te rangi me te whenua. A kahore he ahua o te whenua, i takoto kau; he pouri ano a runga i te mata o te hohonu. Na ka whakapaho te Wairua o te Atua i runga i te kare o nga wai.

BIBLE-BELIEVING SCIENTISTS

Dr Peter Vajda, Geophysicist



MANY people claim that no true scientist can believe in God or the Bible, especially one who specialises in the earth sciences. Hungarian geophysicist Dr Peter Vajda is one of many who refute that notion. He is a research scientist with the Division of Geophysics at the Earth Science Institute, at the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava, Slovakia, where he is head of the Department of Gravimetry and Geodynamics.



His research focuses on observing and interpreting the earth's gravitational field. This includes studying the magma deep inside volcanoes by carefully measuring the strength of the gravity in the surrounding area. This helps scientists to understand how dormant volcanoes re-awaken, which can help keep people safe from future eruptions. Dr Vajda has spoken at conferences all over the world, and has published more than 60 scientific papers.

Dr Vajda was once what he described as a "satisfied atheist." He says, "I firmly believed that the world and life came into existence through evolution, although I knew nothing about it." While he was in Canada studying for his doctorate at the University of New Brunswick, a friend introduced him to the Bible. He later came to faith in Jesus Christ. He recalls, "I discovered that God is alive and personal." Eventually he came to accept the Biblical account of creation. He realised that it is impossible to discover the origin and history of the earth using "science." Dr Vajda says, "Observations can only be made in the present. The rest is reconstruction, in which *beliefs* play a pivotal role." He refers to a verse from the Bible where God asked: "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand." (*Job 38: 4*).

Dr Vajda also came to realise that there are many problems with radio-active dating, which many people believe proves that the earth is many millions of years old. He says the dates quoted are "based on untestable assumptions." This former atheist now confidently says: "I am convinced that the Bible reveals the true history of the universe, and can be depended upon absolutely."

Acknowledgements to www.creation.com for information in this article. See creation.com/peter-vajda-interview

Only humans communicate in writing

We can't be absolutely sure when humans began to use written symbols to communicate and record information. The earliest examples are *pictographs*, which later developed into letters and the first alphabets. Written languages vary widely, and learning some of them can be challenging. e.g. Chinese, which has about 40,000 different characters.

Without written records we would be totally ignorant about human history, and knowledge could only be passed on by word of mouth. Humans are unique in their ability to write.

Professor Stuart Burgess writes: "Like speech, writing is a wonderful skill that involves many parts of the body working together. Writing requires the coordinated action of the hands, the eyes, the nervous system and different parts of the brain, including the motor cortex for the hands and the speech-processing areas... The ability to speak and write shows that humans are spiritual beings, who are designed to communicate thoughts and emotions."¹

Most people don't write as often as they used to. However, it would be sad to give up the art of writing. There's no substitute for a hand-written card or letter!

1. *The Origin of Man* 2004, pp. 70-71.

The Kish Tablet



This limestone tablet, with pictographs, from around 3,500 BC is possibly the oldest writing ever discovered. Pictographs later developed into letters and the first alphabets. Such discoveries refute the notion that Moses couldn't have written the first five books of the Bible because writing 'had not been invented.'

Jose-Manuel Benito: Wikipedia

"Human language is unique"

Agnostic Noam Chomsky (below) has been described as "the father of modern linguistics" and is regarded as an expert on languages. After much research, he commented, "Human language appears to be a unique phenomenon, without significant analogue [similarity] in the animal world."¹ A 2014 report concluded that "our brains are hardwired for language."²

1. *Language and Mind* (1972), p. 67.
2. *Science Daily*, 17th April 2013.

