HAVING AN ANSWER AT THE READY

By Brett Tarbell

For us lay-apologists, scientific conversations can be intimidating—even disheartening—when we’re unable to answer someone’s sincere questions. Working at RTB, I’ve realized I don’t need a PhD to take part in these conversations. When I’m stumped, there’s usually an RTB resource to help me out. Of course, having a resource at the ready is even better! That’s where Conversation Cards: Origins of Life comes in handy.

The third offering in our series, this resource describes evidence showing that the appearance of complex life early in Earth’s history requires a Creator. The evolutionary paradigm offers no explanation for life’s origin. This resource equips nonscientists like me to have confident conversations with people who raise science-based objections to Christianity. It also reminds us that our faith doesn’t conflict with science—the two go hand in hand.

Longtime RTB follower David Edwards recently expressed how resources like this one have strengthened his faith and provided opportunities for sharing the gospel:

“It has been so wonderful to have peace and harmony with the record of nature and the Bible. From listening to all your messages since 2000 and reading a number of RTB books, you and everyone at RTB have truly been a wonderful source of my increased faith and trust in the Bible and Jesus.”

Our Monthly Partners and everyone who makes a gift (in any amount) to RTB this month will receive Conversation Cards: Origins of Life with our thanks. For your convenience, you may use the enclosed response form or visit shop.reasons.org/donate today.
Some of you reading this newsletter today have stood with Hugh and me since RTB launched 35 years ago. The farther back your memory goes, the more you realize what I mean when I refer to this milestone as a miracle, by any definition.

In terms of Hugh’s and my organizational leadership experience, “limited” would be an apt description. God in his wisdom brought friends alongside us to fill our gaps. He raised up volunteers, including a prayer team and an insightful board of directors, many of whom have served alongside us ever since.

You may recall that the Sierra Madre fire marshal told us we must vacate the little office at the back of our church—too many people and wires in too small a space! At the very last moment God provided a place, some rooms in a nearby strip mall. When God brought us scholars and support staff, enough to overflow that strip mall, he made a way, through you, to acquire a larger building!

When Hugh finished his first book, The Fingerprint of God, no Christian publisher wanted it. “Too controversial.” “Too technical.” “Author unknown.” But, God tapped the shoulders of a gracious husband-wife team who decided to risk publishing that manuscript. About 150,000 copies later, they retired, and well-known publishers began to approach us. Today we have our own publishing arm, RTB Press.

As Fingerprint gained readers, interview opportunities followed (thus, the need for a presentable suit for Hugh, provided by a kind friend). One interview on a popular Christian show led to a weekly series. This no-frills, talking-head program gradually gave rise to a substantial support base. This generous and faithful base has kept us going and growing to this very day—even through recessions and a 2020 pandemic. Now we can produce a weekly show as well as other media assets in our very own studio.

One volunteer who copied and distributed RTB content on cassette tapes laid the groundwork for college credit courses and, more recently, a degree program at a major Christian university. Another volunteer built reasons.org when we had only the vaguest idea of what a website was. It has now become our greatest platform for global impact.

Whether you were part of our original team or have joined us more recently, you’ve played a vital role in leading countless individuals—students, professors, homemakers, teachers, engineers, artists, and thinkers, including a Nobel laureate—to confident faith in Jesus Christ. You’ve also equipped pastors and lay leaders, “ministry multipliers,” around the world.

After 35 years, it feels to Hugh and me as if we’re just now hitting our stride. We can hardly wait to see how God will use RTB in the years ahead. Whatever may come, he will keep on advancing the unstoppable kingdom of our Lord Jesus.

MORE REASONS TO BELIEVE IN MIRACLES

By Kathy Ross
Questions surrounding spontaneous abortions and miscarriages are heartrending, indeed. My wife and I should know. Amy’s first pregnancy ended with a miscarriage. These questions also expose profound philosophical and theological problems for the Christian faith.

Many pro-choice advocates and skeptics of the Christian faith point out that the rate of spontaneous abortion (from fertilization to birth) may be as high as 90%. Yet, a careful reanalysis of the data surrounding embryo mortality indicates that the oft-cited spontaneous abortion rate is exaggerated, based on speculation and imprecise estimates. On top of that, there is no reliable data for embryo survival from fertilization to the time of implantation. We do know that once implantation commences (and the pregnancy is clinically detectable) about 70% of embryos make it to live birth.

Researchers have also learned that embryo mortality most often results from chromosomal abnormalities. The endometrium, the cell layer that lines the uterine wall, serves a “gatekeeping” function, rejecting embryos with chromosomal abnormalities and embracing developmentally viable embryos. This rejection happens early in the pregnancy (within the first week), before most women are even aware they are pregnant.

Although this scientific insight doesn’t answer all the difficult questions associated with spontaneous abortions, it helps explain why spontaneous abortions occur, and it can offer some comfort knowing that a rationale exists for pregnancy loss.

—Fazale Rana