

Your Letters

Science mysteries

I would like to make a few comments on Brother David Burges' interesting article, "[Science mysteries](#)" (Oct. 2005, p. 401).

Firstly, Stephen Hawking is no longer hopeful that a unified theory of everything will, or can, be found. Recently, in an interview with the editors of the American science journal *Discover*, he admitted that there are so many mysteries and fundamental contradictions in the universe that resolving them is unlikely to be possible, and even if they could be explained they will be beyond human comprehension.

Secondly, it is not surprising at all that *New Scientist* should recognise our intellectual fallibility. As a frequent contributor to scientific journals over the past forty years, I can say that most of them, and the science they publish, have changed greatly during that time. Now, hundreds of fascinating research papers and books are being published on teleology (evidence of design), which was a taboo subject when I was a young scientist.

Thirdly, I would suggest a slight change, but an important one, in the first paragraph of the article, the prefatory one. I can speak for many of my colleagues when I say that very rarely do we as scientists "give the impression that science can explain everything". The unfortunate reality is that it is the media—print, radio and especially television—that always give the impression that scientists can explain everything. It is quite infuriating! Media personalities invariably choose the more confident, or shall we say arrogant, scientists for interview, not the best.

Of course, as Bible believers we can be equally (or more) arrogant, assuming often that *we* can explain everything. We cannot. Agur admitted that there were "three things that are too amazing for me, four that I do not understand" (Prov. 30:18).^{*} David confessed, "I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me" (Ps. 131:1). And in Psalm 8 he had to admit that there was no intellectual way he could resolve the fundamental mystery of how the Creator of an incomprehensibly vast cosmos could feel love and compassion towards a minute, mortal speck

of briefly animated dust: "what is man that You are mindful of him . . . ?" (v. 4).

A final comment. Brother Mark Vincent's "P.S." in the same issue (p. 407) is superb, right on the mark! Online gaming has not just conquered Korea and Britain. In the Caribbean, where most people are poor, it is now a wild craze that has become to many young people more important than anything else in their lives, even their meals and their sleep.

Alan Eyre
Jamaica

* Quotations from the NIV.

Caleb the son of Jephunneh

May I make a few observations on the article "Kenezites and Kenites" (Sept. 2005, p. 348), particularly the idea that Caleb married a Kenite, one of Jethro's daughters?

Firstly, regarding the people who went into Egypt, it would not have been possible for all those named in Genesis 46 to have literally gone down into Egypt. The sons of Pharez the son of Judah are mentioned in verse 12, but it would not be possible for them to have been born before Jacob and his family went into Egypt, as Pharez and his brother would have been infants themselves then. (Judah's two sons who had died are also included in the list.) It would seem from Genesis 38:1 that Judah took his Canaanite wife as soon as Joseph was taken as a slave into Egypt. It was a generation later that he had the twins, Pharez and Hezron, by his daughter-in-law Tamar. If this was, say, twenty years later, this would have been shortly before the time when the family came into Egypt. This can be worked out from the fact that Joseph was seventeen when he went with the Midianites, thirty when he appeared before Pharaoh and around forty when his family came down to Egypt after seven years of plenty and two years of famine (37:2; 41:46; 45:6).

It can also be shown that not all Benjamin's children would have been born when Jacob and his family came into Egypt, although ten are mentioned in 46:21. We are told that as soon as