

# Is This How God Works?

By Roger L Simon

Some who have been reading my newsletter know that lately I have taken to spelling the supreme being as G-d with a hyphen as part of my (very) fledgling spiritual journey. Many of the more devout Jews do that out of respect for what in the Christian tradition St. Anselm described as “that which nothing greater can be conceived.” The name of the creator of the universe is too holy for humans to write out.



But I am reverting to type today, calling God God, in order not to distract from a story my wife showed me from the June 26 [Jerusalem Post](#). This story is the best argument I have seen for intelligent design, a concept I dismissed for decades basically in the manner of Wikipedia, which calls it “pseudoscience.” They are in disagreement with Seattle’s Discovery Institute, which describes ID this way: “Certain features of the universe and of living things are best explained by an intelligent cause, not an undirected process such as natural selection.”

Meanwhile, at Israel's Tel Aviv University—where conditions, as we know, are not exactly normal—researchers “have successfully manufactured a new type of glass that while maintaining its transparency, can come together instantly with the touch of water at room temperature. ...

“Led by PhD student Gal Finkelstein-Zuta and Prof. Ehud Gazit from the Shmunis School of Biomedicine and Cancer Research at the Faculty of Life Sciences and the Department of Materials Science and Engineering at the Faculty of Engineering at TAU, could dramatically change the sustainability and cost of tools in a variety of industries. Most notably, the discovery could revolutionize optics and electro-optics, satellite communication, remote sensing, and biomedicine.”

A new form of glass? What does this mean exactly? And how does it happen? Ms. Finkelstien-Zuta called it just like making Kool-Aid.

“The commercial glass we all know is created by the rapid cooling of molten materials, a process called vitrification. The amorphous liquid-like organization should be fixed before it arranges in a more energy-efficient way as in crystals, and for that energy is required—it should be heated to high temperatures and cooled down immediately. On the other hand, the glass we discovered, which is made of biological building blocks, forms spontaneously at room temperature, without the need for energy such as high heat or pressure. Just dissolve a powder in water—just like making kool-aid [sic], and the glass will form. For example, we made lenses from our new glass. Instead of undergoing a lengthy process of grinding and polishing, we simply dripped a drop onto a surface, where we control its curvature—and hence its focus—by adjusting the solution volume alone.”

Wow. What's going on here? Are we back to the Middle Ages? This sounds like alchemy. David Copperfield should add it to his Vegas act.

But it's not magic. It's real ... I think. It has been published in the peer-reviewed journal Nature.

So where does this leave us regarding intelligent design? (I should note that I never regarded my skepticism of ID as proof that God *did not* exist.)

Yes, this discovery could be looked at as just another, but rather extraordinary, advance in science. Still, there are other factors, not just, as I alluded to above, that it took place in the Holy Land while under fire, but also the very complexity and invisibility of this discovery. In a way it relates to the world of quarks and other constituents of matter from small particle physics that we are now told have a random quality to them.

Who puts all this together?

Both for my own edification and as research for the novel I am writing, I have been reading parts of the many-volumed “Tanya” by Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad Hasidism. “Tanya,” which translates as “it has been taught,” was first published in 1796 and has been called the “[one size fits all](#)” life manual.

Much of it that I have been reading contains similarities to ideas you might find in Christianity and Buddhism, but with its own—you could almost say vibrantly optimistic—point of view as well. Leafing through an abbreviated version this morning, I found the following quote that seemed apposite to the discoveries of the Tel Aviv researchers.

“To attain true joy  
contemplate God  
permeating all things  
realize that this world  
is nothing but divine glory.”

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