



"When Sickness Comes ... and Goes"

Recently, the editor was sick with coughing, hoarseness, mild fever, and a tight chest. My physician, confirming my personal diagnosis of bronchitis, prescribed an antibiotic, cough syrup, a bronchodilator inhalant, and several days of bed rest with minimal vocalization. (In lay-person terms, quaff up, rest up, and shut up!) How does a busy biology professor with classes to teach, research students to mentor, and numerous other responsibilities take such a hiatus from work? So against the advice of my physician and my good wife, I persevered on attempting to sustain school, editorial, church, and family responsibilities. What was the outcome? I experienced a prolonged bronchitis, which persisted even after a second round of antibiotics.

Why do we experience sickness? Is sickness a normal cyclic event of nature? Is it the consequence of Adam's sin? Is it a dietary consequence from a lack of vitamins and health food supplements? Is there Divine plan and purpose in the illnesses that we experience? Reflecting over the past weeks, I recognize some truths: (1) I am not invincible; sickness can bring me down and make me sputter. (2) Aging is not a friend to the recovery process. (3) The Great Physician, who is within beckoning distance, cares when I ache. (4) Finally, the world keeps on functioning even if I drop out of circulation for a few days. I am not indispensable. What humbling thoughts!

Maybe the purpose of my bronchitis lies in the words of the Psalmist: "Be still and know that I am God." Busyness, overcrowded schedules, and multiple responsibilities militate against stillness and meditation. However, lying in bed for a couple of days gives lots of time to reflect on the goodness of God, the joys of life, family, friends, church, and home. Withdrawal times, even when forced by illness, help one bring order to priorities.

In my childhood mind's ear, I heard my mother's clear soprano voice singing the words of the Methodist hymn writer, William Hunter, written in 1859:

The great Physician now is near, the sympathizing Jesus;
He speaks the drooping heart to cheer, O hear the voice of Jesus.
Sweetest note in seraph son, sweetest name on mortal tongue,
Sweetest carol ever sung, Jesus, blessed Jesus.
And when to that bright world above we rise to see our Jesus;
We'll sing around the throne of love His name, the name of Jesus.

The great Christian hope is that one day we will experience the continuous living presence of the Great Physician, where there is no pain, no sorrow, and no sickness. ¶

A recovering patient,
Roman J. Miller, Editor

In This Issue

If this issue of *PSCF* seems larger than normal, your perception is correct. Due to the generosity of an anonymous donor, the remaining journal issues in 2005 will be expanded by two sets of eight pages. Consequently instead of a standard 72-page journal issue, we will be printing 88-page journal issues in an attempt to publish more quickly a cluster of accepted manuscripts that have been awaiting entrance into our journal pages.

Two papers on origins occupy the Articles section. Writing for a popular audience, Perry Phillips describes the origin of the universe as the "Big Bang," and includes some thoughtful theological implications. Biologist Michael Buratovich discusses serial endosymbiosis, a theory of cellular origins, and links it with Intelligent Design theory. The Communications section relates the contributions of two contemporary scientists. Kevin Seybold assesses the integration work of John Stapp, while Ben Carter analyzes the mindset of popular science writer Richard Dawkins.

The News & Views section provides two reflections on life through the eyes of John Woodburn and Wayne Frair. Arlan Blodgett reports on the responses of surveyed archeologists to the Noahic flood. Finally, Glenn Morton provides current information on the global oil supply. A cluster of book reviews and several letters from readers on prior published material conclude the pages of this issue.