

Cosmic Mischief

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INTRODUCTION TO COSMIC MISCHIEF

It is simply *inconceivable* that the universe was created via unintelligent or irrational design!

Meanwhile, who among us can comprehend much about it or fathom the reason for our existence, much less the absence of a billion siblings -- all those potential brothers and sisters our parents *might* have sired were it not for the intervention of fate, orchestrating our earthly appearance *willy-nilly*, as it were.

Truthfully speaking no one *knows* but everyone cares -- Christians, Jews, Buddhists and Muslims alike.

* * *

Chimpanzees are fully our equal in biological complexity. Their genetic makeup matches our's at the 98 percent level. And in intelligence they're not far behind -- especially to humans denied the benefits of an education or the technical fruits of modern civilization.

Meanwhile, both chimpanzees and humans come into existence by the unification of sperm (selected for whatever reason among 200 million candidates) and one (out of a million available) eggs. These two magically merge together to produce 46 DNA molecules -- each comprised of 3 billion uniquely arranged *atoms*.

That singular cosmic event, the Big Bang, eventually (after 13 billion years of gestation) produced *life* as proscribed by a very patient *Creator* from matter that was miraculously transformed into genetic material and (according to religion doctrine) endowed with an eternal soul -- quite possibly at the very nanosecond of fertilization. Still the promise of eternal life for "good behavior" does not apply to the unscrupulous chimpanzee who has no prospect of living forever but stands an excellent chance of being killed by those who do.

And now for something completely unexpected consider the muse that follows:

COSMIC MISCHIEF

After twenty billion years of waiting,
 For a split-second in infinity,
 Forty six chromosomes collided
 And exploded, for no apparent reason,
 Into 100 trillion cells and one eternal soul -
 Sending half a million siblings,
 (more molecules and atoms in the billions)
 On a longer journey than I required
 To find the gateway to existence.

So here I am - a conscious, thoughtful mote of matter,
 Made of 36 cosmic building blocks from a cache of 92 elements.
 Still, who am I to ask: Why 36 and not 37; why 92 and not 93?
 Like a chimp, I only have sight, my senses and a trace of free will.

Still, who can deny that making me
 Or *just* an ordinary chimpanzee,
 Was as complex an undertaking as the big bang required -
 Separated only by degree.
 Small bang, big bang; same incomprehensibility.

Meanwhile, let the big bang brew its galactic clusters;
 Embracing a billion Milky Ways and trillions of stars,
 Which only stellar debris with optic fibers see -
 Otherwise, complete darkness.

Sterile phenomena bereft of illumination , color, anticipation
 Of *events* wrought by random, yet lawful, interactions
 Between matter, energy and forces forever ignorant
 Of being ruled by algebra, geometry, calculus...

Still, can all this galactic machinery dwarf A molecule
 Capable of reproducing itself -
 With a little help from THE INVISIBLE HAND
 (fusion, fission, meiosis, mitosis)
 Then, bingo - *another stray molecule out of thin air!*

So now I ask :
 What kind of molecule are you: coming there, been there,
 Or having a pipe dream in between?

Cosmic Mischief - Defined

Picking up where we left off:

**Still, can all this galactic machinery dwarf A molecule
Capable of reproducing itself -
With a little help from THE INVISIBLE HAND
(fusion, fission, meiosis, mitosis)
Then, bingo - *another stray molecule out of thin air!***

Now, let's try to fill in a few of the gaps:

Insofar as intelligent design is concerned, what on earth has humanity got to do with it? All life forms, excluding man, are *just* as miraculous, *just* as complex and *just* as incomprehensible, in terms of their DNA, as any comparison to the mind-bending complexity of our own molecular coil might add to it. Beyond Darwin, the modern mystery of life is how a DNA molecule ever came about. And why does DNA function with so much greater efficiency than IBM's best computing machine; Von Braun's Saturn 5 hurtling into space with 160 million horsepower under its belt; or an astounding transplanted heart that manages to throb on for years *beyond the grave*.

Thus, quite unaware of its role as a life building engineer, each molecule of DNA moves around on a mechanical, but *brilliantly* programmed, mission. It could well be obedient to a clutch of mathematical laws -- like everything else that leaps out of the quantum domain composed of protons, electrons and quarks. Meanwhile, we're assured this is a region of the cosmos that is oblivious to cause and effect.

* * *

Our favorite of nature's inventions is still the chimpanzee (though almost any creature will do) evolving from one cell at conception into 100 trillion differentiated cells at maturity.

Life! What a concept! From two micro-specks of matter is conjured up a unique blueprint for designing a living organism -- with eyes to contemplate the stars and a brain silently conscious of itself and everything around it. And that microscopic mass of matter has been endowed with the singular skill of reproducing the phenomena (a look-alike of itself) many times over. But only here on dustspec earth?

Meanwhile, meiosis and mitosis aside, it does seem to us that the ultimate miracle is how a molecule of DNA can *split itself into two identical wholes*. This only requires 3 billion atoms of uniquely organized genetic matter to make an exact copy of itself so that after the split we find 6 billion atoms duplicated in a nanometer of space where only 3 billion existed before! And each such molecule is uniquely arranged within to conjure up the outward appearance of you -- and you alone amidst 6 billion others of your ilk.

* * *

Whoops! Here comes a 20 mile diameter asteroid (traveling at 37 miles per second!) to obliterate our planet and its *six billion-trillion tons* of cosmic debris including every living creature that earth contributes to the cosmic scheme of things. And what are we left with? As it turns out a few billion galaxies, not to mention trillions of stars with billions of orbiting planets, driven by the same mathematical laws (blind and oblivious); participating in the same random interaction of events that took place as earth was being formed 5 billion years ago. Finally, reduce everything in existence to all but a single atom of matter/energy and the mystery is still there --which is where the Big Bang (a miracle, if ever there were one) comes in.

Surely, that miracle demands faith in a higher, if not an obviously benovelent, power. Especially since we are/were separated by 87,985,440,000,000,000,000 miles (15 billion light years) from where it occurred--measured in *billionths* of a second we're told. Meanwhile, according to "clocks" for measuring that slippery entity called time (warped a bit, if traveling at great speed) the universe kept on expanding until *Lucy* appeared--choosing to walk upright for *her own reasons*, or, as fate may have ordained it, in strict obedience to still another mathematical law! STRANGE BREW--or so it seems to this overgrown, sentient, molecule.....

Now for a closer look at the two infinities we are sandwiched between please scroll down.

THE COSMIC HOURGLASS		
Selected Information not Found in The Bible or the Quran		
(The theory of evolution pales in complexity beside numbers like these)		
1 LIGHT YEAR	5,865,696,000,000	Miles or 244,404,000 Trips Around the World
8 LIGHT YEARS	46,925,568,000,000	Miles or Distance to the Nearest Star - 2 Billion Trips Around the World
100,000 LIGHT YEARS	586,569,600,000,000,000	Miles or Width of the Milky Way Galaxy
15,000,000,000 LIGHT YEARS	87,985,440,000,000,000,000,000	Miles or Maximum Visible Depth of the Universe
STARS IN THE MILKY WAY GALAXY	300,000,000,000	Some Galaxies Contain 1,000,000,000 Stars
GALAXIES IN THE (VISIBLE) UNIVERSE	100,000,000,000	The Solar System is to the Milky Way as 8 Inches is to 80 Miles
STARS IN ALL THE GALAXIES	30,000,000,000,000,000,000,000	Or grains of sand on all the world's beaches, etc.
Number That Could be Placed Inside a Golf Ball:		
SPERM	3,000,000,000	Each Unique in Important Respects
NUMBER OF ATOMS	?	30,000,000,000,000 iron atoms will fit on the head of a pin
NUMBER OF ELECTRONS	?	1 Electron = 6.3 / 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 grams
NUMBER OF QUARKS	?	Comparable to the number of stars in the universe
Time Elapsed Since the Creation / Invention of:		
	Years	
IBM FASTEST SUPER COMPUTER	1	Can do 478.2 Trillion Math Calculations per second.
SPACECRAFT	40	Can Move 2 Million Pounds at 5 Miles per Second
NUCLEAR BOMB	60	Can Reduce Any City on Earth to Dust in a Few Seconds
AIRPLANE	105	1 Lifetime
GASOLINE ENGINE	115	2 Lifetimes
ELECTRIC LIGHT	205	3 Lifetimes
TELESCOPE	390	6 Lifetimes
PRINTING PRESS	565	9 Lifetimes
END OF THE STONE AGE & START OF THE BRONZE	5,000	62 Lifetimes
HUMANS FIRST ON EARTH (Homo-Erectus)	1,500,000	25,000 Lifetimes
NUMBER OF LIFE FORMS ON EARTH	6,000,000	Many viruses, bacteria, beetles, birds, fish, dogs, primates, whales, etc.
THE UNIVERSE	15,000,000,000	Many Lifetimes

Immediately below is the link to a Cosmic video that is quite stunning. The video runs through magnifications using powers of ten. Thus it begins from far away in space traveling forward at 5.9 trillion miles per year for 10 million years until it terminates on the quarks within the nucleus of an atom inside the DNA of a tree. Bear in mind the illuminated structures would look identical if they pictured a DNA molecule (comprised of 3 billion uniquely arranged

atoms) replicated in each of the 100 trillion cells we are made of. (Scroll down a few inches when viewing to capture all of the text.) Here is the link. Please return to this spot when done.

<http://micro.magnet.fsu.edu/primer/java/scienceopticsu/powersof10/index.html>

ADDENDUM I

The Cosmic Hourglass and the above video provide a sense of proportion regarding the two infinities mankind is suspended smack in the middle of. Those infinities encompass both time and matter within an "expanding universe." Meanwhile, the earth itself is a mere dustspec in the cosmic system that circled the sun for a billion years before life arose to transform a tiny portion of it into something new and quite different.

Thus, life brought with it some very original attributes such as, consciousness, reproduction and sight! Nonetheless, it appears that all matter dedicated to life on earth (if not the cosmos) would cause barely a ripple if deposited in a basin the size of Lake Michigan.

As regards the relative size of things one can almost fathom a comparison of the solar system to the Milky Way as eight inches in relation to a distance of 80 miles. But it gets tricky when trying to compare the Milky Way to the contents of the universe, which are only partially known. Meanwhile, particle physics and the Quantum domain are of less concern to most of us because they are so intangible. We cannot see what they entail with the naked eye. Moreover, how can one be anything but confused by a domain in which the laws of cause and effect do not apply? And how does one relate to the quarks and neutrinos that lie at our very core? Or consider the notion of particles being accelerated faster and faster as their mass (for some arcane reason) increases dramatically only to collide with other particles creating new elements with "existences" measured in millionths of a second?

ADDENDUM II

Can Humanity Survive? Want to Bet on It?

John Tierney: The New York Times - January 30, 2007

Sixty ago years, a group of physicists concerned about nuclear weapons created the Doomsday Clock and set its hands at seven minutes to midnight. Now, the clock's keepers, alarmed by new dangers like climate change, have moved the hands up to 11:55 p.m.

My first reaction was a sigh of relief. After all, the 1947 doomsday prediction marked the start of a golden age. Never have so many humans lived so long — and maybe never so peacefully — as during the past 60 years. The per-capita rate of violence, particularly in the West, seems remarkably low by historical standards. If the clock's keepers are worried once again, their track record suggests we're in for even happier days....

Dr. Rees, a cosmologist at Cambridge and Britain's astronomer royal, doesn't just issue gloomy predictions. He doesn't just move the hands of an imaginary and inscrutable clock....No, Dr. Rees is braver. He gives odds on doomsday and offers to bet on disaster. In his 2003 book, "Our Final Hour," he gives civilization no more than a 50 percent chance of surviving until 2100.

Dr. Rees is not a knee-jerk technophobe — he expects great advances as researchers around the world link their knowledge — but he fears that progress will be undone by what he calls the new global village idiots. He's sure enough of himself to post an offer on Long Bets, a clever innovation on the Web that Stewart Brand helped start with money from Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon.com...

Five years ago, Dr. Rees posted this prediction: "By 2020, bioterror or bioerror will lead to one million casualties in a single event." He reasoned that "by 2020 there will be thousands — even millions — of people with the capability to cause a catastrophic biological disaster. My concern is not only organized terrorist groups, but individual weirdos with the mindset of the people who now design computer viruses."...

No matter how good their intentions, prophets face strong temptations to hype. In the current issue of The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Dr. Rees wryly describes what happened in 2003 when he turned in a manuscript titled, "Our Final Century?" "My British publisher removed the question mark from the book's title," he recalls, "and the U.S. publisher changed it to 'Our Final Hour.' ...Heralds of the bioterror apocalypse have actually worsened the problem of bioterror, as Milton Leitenberg points out in a 2005 report for the Strategic Studies Institute of the United States Army War College...

ADDENDUM III

How Do You Figure the Odds of an Asteroid Hitting the Earth?

Brendan I. Koerner: Slate - July 26, 2002

A newly discovered asteroid, dubbed 2002 NT7, has a 1-in-200,000 chance of striking the Earth on Feb. 1, 2019. How did scientists figure out those odds?

The hazards posed by Near-Earth Asteroids are assessed by Sentry, a computer system developed by the Near-Earth Objects Group at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif. The software factors together a cosmic rock's coordinates, distance, velocity, and gravitational influences to calculate its trajectory. 2002 NT7, for example, rounds the sun once every 837 days, and our fragile planet will almost certainly pass through its orbital path on Feb. 1, 2019. The big question is where the asteroid will be on that potentially fateful date—behind us, beyond us, or smack dab in the middle of Kansas...

For the moment, however, 2002 NT7 sits atop JPL's "Current Impact Risks" chart, which lists the 37 Near-Earth Asteroids most likely to dinosaur the human race. Along with 1997 XR2, it is one of only two asteroids to earn a "1" on the Torino scale, which ranks collision likelihood from

1 ("merits careful monitoring") to 10 (cash in your IRA now). If the 2-kilometer-wide 2002 NT7 were to strike, its impact would release 1 million megatons of energy, about the strength of 20,000 H-bombs exploding simultaneously.

ADDENDUM IV

The Rediscovery of Higher Meaning - Science Sees the Light

Gregg Esterbrook: The New Republic - October 12, 1998

Suppose you accept the Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe. Here's what you believe, roughly according to the model proposed by Alan Guth, a physicist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology: You believe that, once upon a time, all the potential of the cosmos -- all the potential for a firmament of 40 billion galaxies at last count -- was packed into a point smaller than a proton. You believe that within this plenum of the incipient cosmos was neither hypercompressed matter nor superdense energy nor any tangible substance. The genesis plenum was a "false vacuum" through which coursed a weightless, empty quantum-mechanical probability framework called a "scalar field." Probably you're not totally clear on what a "scalar field" is, but then neither are most Ph.D.s.

Next, you believe that, when the Big Bang sounded, the universe expanded from a pinpoint to cosmological size in far less than one second -- space itself hurtling outward in a torrent of pure physics, the bow wave of the new cosmos moving at trillions of times the speed of light. You believe that this process unleashed such powerful distortions that, for an instant, the hatching universe was curved to a surreal degree. Extreme curvature caused normally rare "virtual particles" to materialize from the quantum netherworld in cornucopian numbers, the stuff of existence being "created virtually out of nothing," as Scientific American once phrased it.

Further, you believe that, as subatomic particles began to unbuckle from the inexplicable proto-reality, both matter and antimatter formed. Immediately these commodities began to collide and annihilate themselves, vanishing as mysteriously as they came. The only reason our universe is here today is that the Bang was slightly asymmetrical, its yield favoring matter over anti-matter by about one part per 100 million. Owing to this, when the stupendous cosmic commencement day ended amid sundering energies beyond comprehension, a residue of standard matter survived, and from it the galaxies formed. That is to say: You believe that a microscopic, transparent, empty point in primordial space-time contained not just one universe but enough potential for 100 million universes.

It's wise to take the Big Bang hypothesis seriously, since considerable evidence weighs in its favor. The galaxies are expanding away from one another as if they had once been in the same place, then hurled outward; the interstellar void is slightly warmer than absolute zero, suggesting the universe was once superheated by something much stronger than the output of stars; the earliest nebulae appear to be composed of precisely the mix of elements that the Big Bang calculations suggest.

Yet, for sheer extravagant implausibility nothing in theology or metaphysics can hold a candle to the Bang. Surely, if this description of the cosmic genesis came from the Bible or the Koran rather than from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, it would be treated as a preposterous myth.

Just as surely, the sort of majestic events hypothesized by current thinking about the Big Bang seem hauntingly similar in character to other, more traditional arguments about splendid powers at the core of existence. Something extremely grand must have called forth our firmament, and whether that something was natural or supernatural may be mere semantics. Reflecting on this, Allan Sandage, one of the world's foremost astronomers, recently proposed that the Big Bang is best understood as "a miracle" triggered by some kind of transcendent power. The Nobel Prize-winning physicist Charles Townes, chief inventor of the laser, suggests that "to think that science already knows enough to be certain there are no mystical forces is illogical." Other prominent researchers are beginning to say much the same...

In part because it has been assumed that science would inexorably prove existence to be no more than a chance manifestation of pitiless mechanical forces, the main current of postmodern thought in philosophy, literature, art, and their mass-cult equivalents has been silted with gray. But as bleak worldviews deconstruct themselves to the point of depletion--if nothing really matters, why even bother to say that?-- such thinking is starting to change.

New findings in science point toward a buoyant view of our being: one in which life is favored, not improbable, and the universe a welcoming place, not an indurate domain. As science finds more to existence than previously understood, other intellectual disciplines may be inveigled toward a more hopeful view of the human prospect. Western thought may experience a revival of meaning.....



ADDENDUM V

CROP FAILURES, FOOD SHORTAGES, WATER SHORTAGES

From the Internet – Source Unknown

CROP FAILURE / FOOD SHORTAGES - 8/31/07

[LOOMING FOOD CRISIS](#) - the surge in demand for agro-fuels such as ethanol is hitting the poor and the environment. A "perfect storm" of ecological and social factors appears to be gathering force, threatening vast numbers of people with food shortages and price rises. The era of cheap food is over. World commodity prices of sugar, milk and cocoa have all surged, prompting the **BIGGEST INCREASE IN RETAIL FOOD PRICES IN THREE DECADES** in some countries

"Meat, too, will cost more because chicken and pigs are fed largely on grain." The world price [of maize] has doubled. 850m people around the world are already undernourished. There will soon be more because the price of food aid has increased 20% in just a year. In the US, where nearly 40 million people are below the official poverty line, the Department of Agriculture recently predicted a 10% rise in the price of chicken. The prices of bread, beef, eggs and milk rose 7.5 % in July, the **HIGHEST MONTHLY RISE IN 25 YEARS**. Reports suggest that one-third of ocean fisheries are in collapse, two-thirds will be in collapse by 2025, and all major ocean fisheries may be virtually gone by 2048. 15% of the world's present food supplies, on which 160 million people depend, are being grown with water drawn from rapidly depleting underground sources or from rivers that are drying up. In large areas of China and India, the water table has fallen catastrophically.

In Britain, the recent floods will result in a shortage of vegetables such as potatoes and peas, and cereals such as wheat. This comes on top of a 4.9% rise in food prices in the year to May and a 9.6% hike in vegetable prices. Rain-dependent agriculture could be cut in half by 2020 as a result of climate change. "Anything even close to a 50% reduction in yields would obviously pose huge problems." "The competition for grain between the world's 800 million motorists, who want to maintain their mobility, and its two billion poorest people, who are simply trying to survive, is emerging as an epic issue." It is not going to get any better.

The UN's World Food Organisation predicts that demand for biofuels will grow by 170% in the next three years. A separate report from the OECD, the club of the world's 30 richest countries, suggested food-price rises of between 20% and 50% over the next decade. This time last year, there were fewer than 100 ethanol plants in the whole United States, with a combined production capacity of 5bn gallons. There are now at least 50 more new plants being built and over 300 more are planned. If even half of them are finished, they will help to rewrite the politics of global food.

[With the world population growth outpacing food supply](#)

The United Nations expects the world's population to pass the 9 billion mark by 2050. But can world food production keep pace? Plant physiologists have estimated that "we must reach an average yield of 4 tons per hectare to support a population of 8 billion." Yields now are

just 3 tons per hectare, and a world of 8 billion people may be less than 20 years away. Meanwhile, forces are conspiring to put a ceiling on food production. Global warming and the resulting climate change may well be increasing the incidence of extreme weather events, as well as inflicting permanent damage on some farming regions.

At the same time, our effort to slow global warming by switching from fossil fuels to biofuels is taking large tracts of land out of food production. World per capita cereal production has already passed its peak - in the mid-1980s - not least because of collapsing production in the former Soviet Union and sub-Saharan Africa. Meanwhile, rising incomes in Asia are causing a worldwide surge in food demand. The International Monetary Fund recorded a 23% rise in world food prices during the last 18 months. Of course, we're not supposed to notice that prices are going up. In the U.S., the monetary authorities insist that we should focus on the "core" consumer price index, which excludes the cost of food and fuel, and has the annual U.S. inflation rate at just 2.2%. But food inflation is roughly double that.

WATER SHORTAGES

[TURKEY](#) - Ankara, Turkey's capital and home to more than 4.5 million people, has been in the grips of a serious water shortage for the last three weeks. On August 1, the director general of the State Hydraulic Works announced that Ankara had enough water for just 78 days and that the water level in the city's reservoirs had fallen to 5.5 percent of capacity, down from last year's 23 percent. At the time of writing, the level in the reservoirs is a meagre 3.5 percent of capacity, which corresponds to a water supply of fewer than two months. "Temperatures all across Turkey will be two to four degrees higher than average in the period between August and October." This means that evaporation of existing water stocks will continue unabated. Although not as acute as Ankara's, Istanbul has also a water shortage problem. In general, Turkey has been experiencing a dramatic decline in the level of its fresh-water supply. The newspapers are full of pictures of arid, cracked soil, accompanied by gloomy reports of the drying up of a river, lake or reservoir. Water shortages have already taken their toll on agricultural production across the country.

[EGYPT](#) - Egyptians have begun mass demonstrations, demanding that the Cairo government intervene to end their critical drinking water shortage. In some areas in Cairo drinking water has been cut off for over a week and even over a month in one particular vicinity. The shortage threatens to ruin over 404 hectares (1,000 acres) of farmland.

[GREECE](#) - Water shortages have hit much of Greece, particularly the Aegean islands, at the height of the summer tourist season.

[BULGARIA](#) - There is a water shortage in about 600 small towns and villages in Bulgaria. If the dry weather continues, incidents of water shortage may reach 800.

[PHILIPPINES](#) - Extracting water from the atmosphere won't produce substantial supply to address the water shortage in Metro Cebu. Harvesting water from the atmosphere is already being practiced by other tropical countries, but the technique has not produced enough water supply.

Kissing the Earth Goodbye By D. Overbye - the New York Times - March 11, 2008

In the end, there won't even be fragments.

If nature is left to its own devices, about 7.6 billion years from now Earth will be dragged from its orbit by an engorged red Sun and spiral to a rapid vaporous death. That is the forecast according to new calculations by a pair of astronomers, Klaus-Peter Schroeder of the University of Guanajuato in Mexico and Robert Cannon Smith of the University of Sussex in England....

Earth's basic problem is that the Sun will gradually get larger and more luminous as it goes through life, according to widely held theories of stellar evolution. In its first 4.5 billion years, according to the models, the Sun has already grown about 40 percent brighter.

Over the coming eons, life on Earth will become muggier and more uncomfortable and finally impossible.

"Even if the Earth were to marginally escape being engulfed," said Mario Livio, an astronomer at the Space Telescope Science Institute, "it would still be scorched, and life on Earth would be destroyed."

About a billion years from now, the Sun will be 10 percent brighter. Oceans on Earth will boil away.

The reason is that in the course of ballooning outward, the Sun will blow off a substantial share of its mass. Thus, the Sun's gravitational grip on its planets will be weakened, and they will retreat to more distant orbits. The Earth will wind up about where Mars is now, "on the border line between being engulfed or escaping engulfment," as Dr. Livio put it.....the red giant version of the Sun — at its maximum — will be 256 times as big across as the star is today and 2,730 times as luminous.

After a period of burning helium and shrinking and expanding and then finally shrinking again, the Sun will wind up as tiny cinder known as a white dwarf, fading away for the rest of time.

Is there any way out of this fiery end for the robots or cockroaches or whoever will be running the Earth in a billion years?

One option is to leave for another planet or another star system.

Five million plus accidental deaths a year worldwide due to the unwinding of natural law -- e.g., car, train and plane wrecks, falling off of trees or ladders, choking to death, etc. Meanwhile why wouldn't a Higher Power just as willingly let mankind destroy itself (as has been the case in all past wars) now that 1/3 of the world's population possesses nuclear weapons and proliferation is moving apace?