

INTELLIGENT DESIGN

*Why the Fuss,
And What's it About?*



Dr. Carl Wieland
Darren Nelson

Intelligent Design: Why the Fuss and What's It About?

Dr. Carl Wieland and Darren Nelson

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Introduction

The important Ben Stein movie titled *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* (see *Further Resources* below) has really put “intelligent design” (ID) in the spotlight.

Taking advantage of this interest in ID, the organization I am with, *Creation Ministries International* (CMI), is carrying out several “design” tours in various countries. Dr. Jonathan Sarfati is the author of the best selling Creation book ever written.¹ His newest book, *By Design*, a comprehensive Creationist book on the subject of design, was written in 2008. CMI, which has for decades included items about design, has his book available on our [website](#).

So Why Does it Matter?

As *Expelled* shows, ID is really a subset of the broader “origins” controversy. It is limited to opposing the notion of an undesigned world, the evolutionary result of blind natural forces. Most Christians, though sadly often unconcerned about the how or when of Creation, see design vs. non-design as a “no-brainer.” It’s obvious this world didn’t make itself.

But there’s much more at stake in a discussion about origins. The reliability and accuracy of the Bible is crucial to the Christian faith, especially in regard to Genesis, wherein Scripture purports to give real history. Since Genesis history includes the origin of sin and death, it is crucially foundational to the logic of the gospel: a good world, ruined by sin, to be restored in the future.

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Why will things be restored? Because Jesus Christ, the obedient last Adam, shed His blood in death to ultimately overcome the Curse of death and bloodshed brought in by the disobedience of the first Adam. What will things be restored to? A sinless, deathless state, which is how it began. It all hangs together. The good news about Jesus Christ

¹ *Refuting Evolution*.

makes no sense without the bad news of why things became messed up in the first place.

All of that is undermined by belief in a long evolutionary history. If true, the long-age sequence of events, even if somehow “divinely guided,” would show that the history in Genesis is simply wrong. Death and suffering would have been around for millions of years

If the Bible is not accurate or reliable in its history, why should anyone trust it on matters of faith, salvation, and morality?

before Adam’s sin. This also destroys the logic of the gospel. If things rose from chaos via suffering, they did not fall from perfection. If there was no Fall into sin, then what is there to be saved from? If the Bible is not accurate or reliable in its history, why should

anyone trust it on matters of faith, salvation, and morality?

As the pressure in our Western culture mounts against the historical accuracy of the Bible, its authority in the moral sphere continually declines, and with it our society.

The Intelligent Design Movement

Many evangelicals have welcomed the ID movement (IDM) with its implied threat to the supremacy of Darwinism. The movement’s key claim is that certain biological lines of evidence (e.g., the “irreducible complexity” of features like the bacterial flagellum) are evidence for a designer (unidentified) and against blind, unguided processes. The IDM challenges the unthinking acceptance of the materialistic, godless philosophy that underpins Darwinian evolution and is in turn reinforced by it—naturalism. This is the belief that “nature is all there is—there is no supernatural.”

Anyone opposing naturalism could qualify as an ally, which would technically include any “theistic evolutionist” (TE). Surprisingly, many prominent TE’s oppose ID too—their version of theism permits “God” to operate only through strictly natural processes. This means that the world we see is in practice indistinguishable from one that has made itself.

Some Biblical Creationists² would even identify themselves as part of the IDM, sharing its goal of opposing naturalistic evolution. However, many in the IDM are not Biblical Creationists and are at pains to distance themselves from Genesis history.

One leading IDM figure is Roman Catholic biochemist, Dr. Michael Behe, author of the groundbreaking *Darwin's Black Box*.³ He opposes the idea that "nature made itself" but says he has no problem with the notion that one cell gave rise to all life forms, including people, over millions of years.⁴ This excludes any possibility of the Bible's historicity.

All this can add to a believer's confusion, of course. Should one avoid, or even oppose, a movement incorporating those who reject the Bible in various ways? Or should one wisely use and encourage whatever gains the IDM is able to make against naturalism's grip? Biblical and tactical arguments can be made for differing conclusions. The purpose here is simply to give some clarifying detail—and mention CMI's stance—in order to help individuals make their own assessments.

Not a New Argument

The argument of "intelligent design" has a long history, going back to the ancient Greeks and Romans.⁵ It was persuasively articulated by William Paley (1743–1805), who put forward the argument of an inferred divine Watchmaker in his book *Natural Theology* (1802). Biblical Creationists, who first became a substantial organized movement in the early sixties, have also used the design argument.⁶ More recent works, e.g. *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (by the agnostic Michael Denton, 1985) and *Darwin on Trial* (by Presbyterian Phillip Johnson, 1991), led to today's IDM.

² I prefer this term over "young-earth creationist" (YEC), which makes it sound as if the young earth is some sort of variant (or option) within Biblical Creation, rather than being an intrinsic part of Genesis history. See our ministry's popular booklet *15 Reasons to Take Genesis as History*.

³ Which our CMI ministry stocks for its usefulness in breaking down evolutionary strongholds.

⁴ See interview at www.CreationOnTheWeb.org/Behe.

⁵ Cicero, for example, used design in support of the Greek pantheon of gods.

⁶ A. E. Wilder-Smith, *The Creation of Life* (Wheaton: Harold Shaw, 1970); Robert Kofahl and Kelly Segraves, *The Creation Explanation* (Wheaton: Harold Shaw, 1975); and Henry Morris and Gary Parker, *What Is Creation Science?* (El Cajon: Master Books, 1982). Duane Gish, for many years before ID was heard of, was using similar arguments in his debates.

IDM Strengths

The IDM helpfully spotlights the fact that Darwinism is not religiously neutral but rather is based on the religion of naturalism.

Many Creationists reason that while the movement “doesn’t go as far as we like,” it seems a reasonable price to pay for a potentially effective strategy of “Let’s get the camel’s nose inside the tent, and then we can concentrate on these other issues. One battle at a time.” They feel the IDM can tap into the intellectual, academic, and political clout of a greater range of people than just Bible-believers. The presence of non-Christians in the movement makes it seem less parochial and “biased.”

Some of the arguments and materials produced by IDers, though not necessarily designed to help the battle for Biblical Creation, have been very useful, and we’ve promoted these.

ID controversies generate an increasing public awareness of “doubts about Darwin” that Christians (both ministries and private individuals) can make use of. They have also opened another flank of the battle, drawing some of the flak normally reserved for Creationists.

Some Weaknesses

The IDM’s “stick to science only; leave the Bible out of it” position displays a frustrating philosophical blind spot that cedes unnecessary territory and reinforces the anti-Creationist caricature of “science vs. religion.” There can be no “neutral” scientific arena within which to interpret the evidence related to the past. Facts don’t speak for themselves; they have to be interpreted, based on (unprovable, hence “religious/metaphysical/subjective”) axioms (presuppositions).

IDers all agree that naturalism is mistaken. But with no other coherent philosophical framework on which to base the axioms necessary to interpret evidence relevant to historical sciences (paleontology, historical geology, etc.), they can never offer a “story of the past.” This weakness is often presented by them as a strength, but it forces them to limit the debate to one of mechanism—and then only in broad, general terms (designed vs. undesigned).

To most evolutionists, this comes across as either absurd or disingenuously evasive; what is the origins debate about, if not a story of the past? It can reinforce the establishment's perception that they are really "Creationists being sneaky."⁷

Some may have felt that excluding the Bible from discussion would minimize anti-religious hostility. But the ferocity of the attacks on ID has shown the opposite to be true, if anything, as seen in *Expelled*.

The concern that ID thinking might just as easily lead to New Age or Hindu-like notions of Creation, as well as weird alien sci-fi notions, is understandable. Perhaps, though, it would be a risk worth taking. If ID were ever to dethrone naturalism as the dominant paradigm, it would seem harder to disguise these other anti-biblical philosophies as "science" and easier to argue for Genesis.

. . . we need to be extremely careful about the problems of trying to exclude the Bible.

On balance, I prefer to regard the IDM as natural allies overall—even though I cringe at the painful disparagements of six-day recent (Genesis) Creation by some IDers, and their obvious discomfort whenever linked with us (see Mark 8:38). But we need to be extremely careful about the problems of trying to exclude the Bible.

The Issue of "Bad Design"

Importantly, the self-imposed limitations of ID mean that it provides no real answer to its opponents' logically deduced charge that the Designer was monstrous and/or inept ("Look at all the horrible, cruel, even defective things in the living world"). Bringing up the Fall is deliberately, tactically excluded, and in any case, some IDers would not believe in an actual Fall resulting in a cursed world. However, the Fall was a major event in history that changed everything.

The world we are looking at now is a world that has been corrupted because of sin; it is not the original world that God designed. If one

⁷ When some (likely well-intentioned) IDers kept their involvement in Christian things and ID matters separate, it allowed the judge in the recent Dover ID case to describe them as "deceptive."

argues “design without Genesis” (thus sans the Fall) it lays the Designer open to ridicule and contempt in new ways.⁸

Romans 1:20 indicates that there is clear evidence of design in nature, making people “without excuse.”

“ . . . Since the entrance of sin into the world, man can gather true knowledge about God from His general revelation only if he studies it in the light of Scripture”

The chapter also shows that people willingly reject this clear evidence, which is enough to condemn, but not save, them. Science itself suffers without the proper axioms from which to work. The great theologian Louis Berkhof

wrote: “ . . . *Since the entrance of sin into the world, man can gather true knowledge about God from His*

general revelation only if he studies it in the light of Scripture”⁹

The Historical Background

Biblical Creationists have long pointed out that the “millions of years” concepts in fields such as astronomy/cosmology and historical geology were squarely based on, derived from, and fueled by, naturalism. They were not neutral deductions from the facts of nature but rather resulted from presuppositions based on the deliberate rejection of God’s Word and its authority regarding the world’s history.¹⁰ Such naturalism-underpinned conclusions of geology/astronomy were the seedbed for Darwinism. It is therefore ironic to see IDers, who often claim that traditional geology’s vast ages are “unimportant” or present no problem, identifying “naturalism” as the main issue in opposing Darwinism!

Starting with the powerful design arguments that the IDM has helped to reawaken (and has formalized in modern terms) can be a very

⁸ In fact, that is what the “design without the Bible” (natural theology) argument, tried by the deists of former centuries, led to historically. There is a good case for arguing that Darwin, who was heavily exposed to such “design arguments,” was therefore subliminally seeking to undermine such a “cruel God” as revealed by nature alone (i.e. without understanding the Fall and the awfulness of sin). Today’s naturalism is thus in some part an offspring of such attempts to leave the Bible out of understanding the world around us.

⁹ Louis Berkhof, L, *Introductory Volume to Systematic Theology*, Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1938, p. 60.

¹⁰ T. Mortenson, *The Great Turning Point*, Master Books, Green Forest, Arizona, 2004.

useful tool for “opening discussion,” especially in circles where mentioning the Bible would instantly plug the hearer’s ears. Many of us at CMI have been intermittently applying a “wedge” tactic for years prior to the Intelligent Design Movement, seeking a more ready hearing in some circles by initially focusing on less controversial aspects of Biblical Creation. However, unlike the IDM’s official stance, when given further opening or questioned, it’s important to unhesitatingly affirm our thinking as squarely based on the Bible’s real history.

Our main approach is to arm and equip believers (vide the c. 1,000 congregations we have addressed globally during the last twelve months) with information, which then diffuses into the culture via one-

Most people get the point when one shows them how evidence does not speak for itself but must be interpreted.

on-one contacts using the resources. This is almost always more effective than acting as if there is a neutral “science” arena for determining truth. Most people get the point when one shows them how evidence does not speak for itself but must be interpreted. Even

unbelievers are often willing to follow an argument when asked to temporarily alter their presuppositions (“put on a different pair of glasses”) to see how the evidence might fit a Biblical worldview.

In Conclusion

While occasionally it is sensible to focus solely on evidence, avoiding religious references, it is counterproductive to do so to an extent that reinforces the myth that it is less “scientific” to base one’s models on God’s revelation, the Bible. All efforts—not just those of overt Biblical Creation organizations like our own—to promote academic freedom and question evolution are immensely important and worthwhile. At the same time, careful thinking by all Christians in this battle about how to achieve the most good while giving due honor and glory to God is vital. In the end, the ultimate issue, which transcends and overrides all else in this debate, is the truth and authority of the Word of God, the Bible.

An Interview with Dr. Carl Wieland

Darren Nelson interviewed Dr. Wieland, who answers a few questions regarding Darwin and the release of *The Voyage That Shook the World*, a new film that could shake large numbers out of their evolution-based complacency to considering the God of the Bible.

The prospect of such a film airing on network television is incredibly significant. Especially in this “Year of Darwin,” the underlying evolutionary beliefs of much of the populace will rise to the surface and perhaps be more vulnerable to scrutiny. The timing of the release of the movie is excellent in hopes of achieving that goal.

Especially in this “Year of Darwin,” the underlying evolutionary beliefs of much of the populace will rise to the surface and perhaps be more vulnerable to scrutiny.

TOS: From what we gather, the approach of this movie is to use the voyage of the HMS *Beagle* itself as a backdrop for a critique of the theory of evolution. But what is unheard of in a film made for mainstream television is that Biblical history is offered as a real and better alternative for explaining the observational evidence Darwin encountered on his voyage. How do you intend to get this out to the worldwide audience? It seems like TV networks would want to stonewall such openly Christian material.

Dr. Wieland: That is really the point. We had to make it subtle yet powerful so that it would be seen as fair and not just a tub-thumping polemic. It is almost like a “neutral” narrator exploring the issue. Things like the Flood and our descent from Adam and Eve are mentioned because of the historical content (i.e. these were the sorts of things that were being opposed by Darwinism), but by showing the shortcomings of the evidence at crucial points, people are led to think about alternatives, like “Maybe the Bible was right all along?” It has to be a soft sell, yet without being “mealy-mouthed.” It would be misleading to say that it is “openly Christian.” If it were a pro-Christian plug, it would not get past first base. Simply by being open-minded, something is electrifying to a pro-Darwin-conditioned world. It’s hard to explain—you really have to see how it does it.

We have it in the hands of several broadcast buyers. We hope they will understand that the touch of controversy it explores will be a “plus.”

There will be immense pressure on them not to screen it, of course, which is why we want them to at least make their commercial decisions about broadcast before the word gets out as to who is behind it.

TOS: In making a film such as *The Voyage That Shook the World*, a great deal of care must be taken to represent the historical character, in this case, Charles Darwin, as he actually was, and not a caricature. A running debate has been as to whether (1) Darwin was an honest scientist sincerely seeking to understand truth, or (2) that he was anti-religiously motivated, intentionally and consciously trying to undermine belief in God. First of all, how significant do you think the answer to that question should be for people considering the claims of evolution? In other words, if we discovered, as the film contends, that Darwin had antireligious sentiments, should that fact cause us even greater pause in our judgment of the theory itself? Second, I'm curious to know how you would respond to the oft-asked question, "If Darwin knew then what we know now (regarding, say, the paucity of transitional form candidates or the complexity of biochemical systems), would he have scrapped his theory?"

Dr. Wieland: Ultimately, truth claims should be evaluated independent of the motives or character of the person who puts them forward. Copernicus put forward the heliocentric model of the solar system, it now appears, because of the very much pagan mystical Hermetical writings, which gave the sun a godlike status. But that

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doesn't change the fact that Copernicus seems to have been right. The great chemist Kekulé dreamed of snakes to come up with his ideas of the structure of the benzene ring—but he turns out to be right. Darwin was right about natural selection, but he was wrong about common descent.

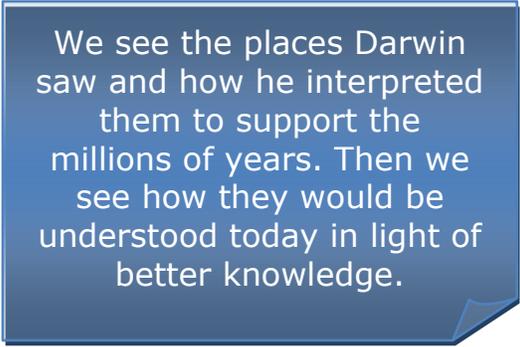
The film actually explores that [second] question. Of course, there is no way of knowing for certain. But the message is clear: since Darwin was a careful observer, and since the evidence that he saw with his eyes and interpreted through the "glasses" of Lyell's long-age geology theories is nowadays not believed to support things the way he believed, he may well have not put his theory forward. In fact, that presents a dilemma for today's Darwin-worshipper—we are putting forward, very subtly, the proposal that since the evidence is so clearly

different today in many areas from what he thought, then either (1) as a good scientist, he would change his views, or (2) if not, he cannot be said to be as good or objective a scientist as today's hymns of praise maintain.

TOS: Many people don't realize that the idea of an ancient earth *preceded* Darwin's theory of evolution. The old Earth view has long held substantially more credibility than the theory of evolution. Even today, many people who reject Darwinian evolution firmly believe that ancient universe cosmology is beyond doubt due to hard evidence in the fields of geology and especially astronomy. Do you find that CMI receives as many questions and criticisms regarding its stance on "deep time" as it does evolution? How much attention is given that issue, both in the film and in CMI literature?

Dr. Wieland: Time is obviously a crucial issue. Because if the millions of years are true, then not only is grand-scale evolution much easier to swallow (in fact, without deep time, there is no evolutionary theory), but also the notion of a good world that fell into sin after people were on the earth is clearly wrong, because if there were fossils millions of years ago showing evidence of death, disease, and suffering, they cannot be the consequence of the Fall. And the Gospel is all about the origin of sin and death. So the millions of years destroy the logic of the Gospel.

A great deal of attention in our literature and resources in general is devoted to this key question. The film spends a good deal of time on geological issues, in relation to deep time. We see the places Darwin saw and how he interpreted them to support the millions of years. Then we see how they would be understood today in light of better knowledge.



We see the places Darwin saw and how he interpreted them to support the millions of years. Then we see how they would be understood today in light of better knowledge.

TOS: A few years ago, a speaker boldly asserted the claim that in fifty years evolution would be looked back upon as the greatest hoax ever perpetrated upon mankind. While still firmly entrenched in the popular mindset, evolutionary theory is more and more revealing its soft underbelly. For the first time in living memory, a significant and growing number of *secular* scientists are seriously and openly challenging its plausibility. Strong creation ministries such as CMI, the

birth of the ID movement, and an increasing number of films such as *Voyage* reveal that the theory is in crisis. Is there a chance that we could, in our lifetimes, witness the debunking of the theory of evolution?

Dr. Wieland: I find that a dubious proposition. Romans 1 tells us that unregenerate people naturally reject God. The only way to be able to not want to retain God in one's knowledge and still be intellectually consistent is to have some way of escaping from the witness all around us of this incredible created world. So *some* form of evolution is a philosophical necessity for unbelief. Darwin's is just one mechanism of "how"—the belief itself has been around since the times of antiquity. The best book on this subject is going to come out in a few months at the latest: *Creation Without Compromise*, by Donald Crowe.

So even though I am not intrinsically a pessimist, realistically I do not envision this in my lifetime. Perhaps neo-Darwinism will give way to a neo-neo-Darwinism, but as far as being overthrown totally, it would require people to believe in the miracle-working creator God of the Bible. And I don't think it will happen unless and until a majority of people in the world become born-again believers. The two go hand in hand. Because if the Bible is right about creation in six days, then it's

But I am hopeful that in this ferment of questioning we are seeing at present, that there could well be millions of people liberated from materialism and led into the light of the glorious Gospel.

right about heaven and hell, the whole box and dice—and as Paul said, that carries with it all of the "offense of the Cross." But I am hopeful that in this ferment of questioning we are seeing at present, that there could well be millions of people liberated from materialism and led into the light of the glorious Gospel. Ultimately that's what it's all about. To see it

as purely related to the overthrow of a particular theory would be to sell the whole concept of creation ministry short.

Miracles happen, and the fact that we were able to raise over \$700,000 U.S. dollars globally made us aware of the providence of God more than ever in our history. To us, the idea that we would be involved in a million-dollar production was not believable a couple years ago. But God can do great things if believers get behind it.

Further Resources

- ✓ [Clash over Origins: Creation vs. Evolution DVD](#), Creation Ministries, Intl.
- ✓ [Days 1-7: Your Complete Children's Guide to Creation Week](#), by Russell Grigg
- ✓ [Evolution Impossible DVD](#), by Dr. Vij Soderer & Phillip Bell
- ✓ [Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed DVD](#), by Ben Stein
- ✓ [Codes and Creation DVD](#), Creation Ministries, Intl.
- ✓ [Putting the Pieces Together DVD set](#), Creation Ministries, Intl.
- ✓ [Refuting Evolution](#), by Jonathan Sarfati, PhD
- ✓ [Refuting Evolution 2](#), by Jonathan Sarfati, PhD
- ✓ [E-Book-The Human Body: God's Amazing Design Unit Study](#), by Kim Kargbo
- ✓ [Witnessing Pack](#), Creation Ministries, Intl.
- ✓ [Two-tone Twins Brochure](#), Creation Ministries, Intl.

About the Authors



Dr. Carl Wieland is the Managing Director of Creation Ministries International (CMI) in Brisbane, Australia. Originally a medical doctor, he has headed the Australian Creation ministry for more than twenty years. A well-known speaker and writer on Creation issues, he also served as a director of one of the largest Creation organizations in the USA while it was still a part of the same grouping. CMI currently consists of seven international affiliates, including an office in Atlanta. The *Creation* magazine he founded now reaches subscribers in more than 110 countries. See CMI's website, www.Creation.com.



Darren Nelson currently resides outside Knoxville, Tennessee. A high school mathematics teacher for many years, he has taken an indefinite sabbatical from the classroom to be the primary homeschool educator of his two children, Muriel and Noah.

Appendix

How to Begin Homeschooling

- 1. Discuss With Your Spouse:** Educating your child at home is a huge decision and should be one that is made with your spouse. Do not begin unless you are in agreement about this decision. You will need the support of your spouse not only at the beginning, but also throughout the year.
- 2. Research the Homeschool Laws Applicable in your Area:** Be fully aware of the legal requirements before you begin and especially before you take a child out of public school. For the U.S., each state's legal requirements can be found on the www.HomeschoolLegal.com website. Internationally, refer to www.HSLDA.org.
- 3. Research Styles of Home Education:** There is no single right way to educate your child at home; however, there are many differing philosophies you may want to consider.
 - **Charlotte Mason:** Based on a method introduced by nineteenth-century educator Charlotte Mason, this approach includes nature studies/journaling, narration, and living books.
 - **Classical:** Based on Dorothy Sayers' *The Lost Tools of Learning*, in which child development is broken up into three "stages" of learning commonly called "the Trivium."
 - **Delight Directed:** This puts the learning in the hands of the child, based on his or her interests. Parents help facilitate this type of learning with appropriate instructional materials.
 - **Eclectic:** A mix of philosophies and curricula to accommodate each child's abilities and interests. Parents choose from any method or style only those components that fit their specific needs.
 - **The Principle Approach:** An approach based on the principles of our Founding Fathers and an emphasis on God's Word as the basis for every subject.
 - **Traditional Textbook:** Normally uses a full-range, packaged, textbook-type curriculum that also may include a scope and sequence, testing, and recordkeeping.
 - **Unit Studies:** All or most core subjects are covered while studying any one topic or unit of study, using a variety of resources and supplemental activities.
 - **Unschooling:** A relaxed setting where learning is directed by the child. Parts of this philosophy are based on research by John Taylor Gatto and John Holt.

- 4. Find Support:** After finding your style of choice (or a mix of more than one choice), you may want to choose a support group that reflects that specific style or just a general homeschool support group in your area. Meeting with other home educators offers encouragement as well as knowledge and assistance with your homeschool questions. Often, organized classes or activities for your children are offered through support groups as well. For information about homeschool support groups in your area, check these listings:

U.S.:

www.TheHomeschoolMagazine.com/Homeschool_Nations/State_Listings.php
www.HomeschoolLegal.com

UK:

<http://www.home-service.org/>
<http://www.heas.org.uk/>

New Zealand:

<http://www.che.org.nz/>
<http://hef.org.nz/>
<http://www.ahe.org.nz/>
<http://www.homeschoolers.wellington.net.nz/>
<http://community.library.org.nz/cgi-bin/display.pl?id=296>

Guam:

www.HomeschoolBlogger.com/guam
<http://www.tumon.com/ghsa>

Australia:

<http://www.hea.asn.au/hea/>

Canada:

www.shbe.info
www.machs.mb.ca
www.aheaonline.com
<http://nshea.webcentre.ca/>
<http://www.eho.org/support/canada.asp>

- 5. Gather Resources:** Some families start with a complete curriculum package, while others start with a notebook and a library card. Choosing your resources depends on your style or method of education and your own interests. If you are financially burdened, there are free homeschooling resources on the web, as well as discounted, used books in abundance.

You Can Do This! Parents around the world are taking back their God-given responsibility to educate their children, and you can too. We have developed two downloads to help you get started:

- ✓ [Homeschool With Confidence](#)
- ✓ [Simple Recipes for Successful Homeschooling](#)

Disclaimer: The above information is not intended as legal advice and should not be construed as such. Please check the legal requirements in your area.

To a Homeschool Mom **By Amelia Harper**

He gave this gift with gentle hands,
A treasure rich and rare;
But sand and rock and rugged stone
Obscured the gem so fair.

“I give this gift to you,” He said,
“To polish and to prime;
The future lies within your hands,
So make use of the time.”

Some others placed their precious gifts
Within another’s care,
Because they knew the craft took time—
And time they could not spare.

But you were not content to trust
This task to other hands.
You sought to teach yourself the craft
That such a task demands.

For, you said, “No other hand
Can craft this gem so fair;
My loving eyes can better see
The treasure hidden there.”

So carefully you chipped away
Till brilliance sprang from stone.
You shaped each facet, smoothed each face,
Until the task was done.

Some days you feared that you would fail;
Some days, you saw success.
But still you labored on with love
And gentle tenderness.

Thus, soon the gem He gave to you
Reflected Light sublime;
And then you knew no other task
Was better worth your time.

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