

We are Wonderfully and Fearfully Made by God What the Bible Says

Question: "What does it mean that we are fearfully and wonderfully made?" (Psalm 139:14)

Answer: Psalm 139:14 declares, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well." The context of Psalm 139:14 is the incredible nature of our physical bodies. The human body is unique, the most complex organism in the world, and that complexity and uniqueness speak volumes about the mind of its Creator. Every aspect of the body, down to the tiniest microscopic cell, reveals that it is fearfully and wonderfully made.

Engineers understand how to design strong but lightweight beams by putting the strong material toward the outside edges of a cross section and filling the inside with lighter, weaker material. This is done because the greatest stress occurs on the surfaces of a structure when handling common bending or tensional stresses. A cross section of a human bone reveals that the strong material is on the outside, and the inside is used as a factory for blood cells of various kinds. When you examine a sophisticated SLR camera with its ability to let in more or less light as needed and its ability to focus automatically over a vast range of field, you find repeated imitations of the operation of one of our eyeballs. Yet, having two eyeballs, we also have depth perception, giving an athlete the ability to throw a football to a receiver with precision or for us to judge how far away a car is.

The human brain is also an amazing organ, fearfully and wonderfully made. It has the ability to learn, reason, and control so many automatic functions of the body such as heart rate, blood pressure, breathing, and to maintain balance to walk, run, stand, sit, all while concentrating on something else. Computers can outdo the human brain in raw calculating power, but are primitive when it comes to performing most reasoning tasks. The brain also has an amazing ability to adapt. When people put on glasses that make the world seem upside down, their brains quickly reinterpret the information they are being given to perceive the world as "right-side-up." Or when people are blindfolded for long periods of time, the "vision center" of the brain soon begins to be used for other functions. When people move to a house near a railroad, soon the sound of the trains is filtered out by their brains, and they lose conscious thought of them.

When it comes to miniaturization, the human body is also a marvel fearfully and wonderfully made. For instance, information needed for the replication of an entire human body, with every detail covered, is stored in the double-helix DNA strand found in the nucleus of each of the billions of cells in the human body. And a system of information and control is represented by our nervous system, so compact in comparison to man's clumsy inventions of wires and optical cables. Each cell, once called a "simple" cell, as small as it is, is a tiny factory that is not yet fully understood by man. As microscopes become more and more powerful, able to magnify smaller and smaller fields, the infinite vistas of the human cell begin to come into focus.

Consider the single fertilized cell of a newly conceived human life. From that one cell within the womb of his/her mother, develop all of the different kinds of tissues, organs, and systems, and they all work together at just the right time—amazing! An example is the hole in the septum between the two ventricles in the heart of the newborn infant that closes up at just the right time to allow for the oxygenation of the blood from the lungs (not used in the womb).

Further, the body's immune system is able to fight off so many enemies and restore itself, from the smallest repair (even down to repairing bad portions of DNA) to the largest repair (mending of bones and recovery from major accidents). Yes, there are diseases that will eventually overcome the body as we age because of man's fall into sin and the resulting curse, but we have no idea exactly how many times our immune system has saved us from death that would surely have occurred without it.

The functions of the human body are also incredible. The contrast of being able to handle large, heavy objects and yet to be able to carefully manipulate a delicate object without breaking it is also amazing. We can shoot a bow and arrow, repeatedly hitting a distant target, peck away quickly at a computer keyboard without thinking about the keys, crawl, walk, run, twirl around, climb, swim, do somersaults and flips, and perform "simple" tasks such as unscrewing a light bulb, brushing our teeth, and lacing up our shoes, again without thinking. Indeed, these are "simple" things, but man has yet to design and program a robot that is able to perform such a vast range of tasks and motions.

The function of the digestive tract, the liver and other major organs, the longevity of the heart, the formation and function of nerves and of blood vessels, the function of the lymphatic system, the cleansing of the blood through the kidneys, the ability of the reproductive system to create cells able to mate up with another cell from the opposite gender and produce a cell with twice as many chromosomes, the complexity of the inner and middle ear, the sense of taste and smell, and so many other things we barely understand—each one is a marvel and beyond man's ability to duplicate fully.

Truly, we are fearfully and wonderfully made. How grateful we are to know this God who made us through His Son, Jesus Christ, and to marvel not only at His knowledge but also at His love (Psalm 139:17-18, 23-24).

Recommended Resource: *Fearfully & Wonderfully Made* by Paul Brand and Philip Yancey.

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