



**WORLDVIEW MADE PRACTICAL**  
**Volume 17 Number 10**  
**March 9, 2022**

**Will the James Webb Space Telescope Disprove God?**

By Tal Davis

On Christmas Day, December 25th, 2021, NASA, in cooperation with the European Space Agency, the French National Centre for Space Studies, and the Canadian Space Agency, launched the new James Webb Space Telescope from the French owned Guiana Space Centre in South America. The infra-red telescope will orbit the sun about one million miles from Earth. It arrived at its permanent orbit on January 24th, 2022. It is expected to send back pictures that will far exceed in distance and clarity than even those of the Hubble Space Telescope. Astronomers and physicists are hopeful the telescope will be able to see virtually to the edge of the universe and, therefore, back in time to near the beginning of time itself. Yes, that is possible given that, because the speed of light is constant at 186,000 miles per second, it takes light from the edge of the universe billions of years to reach Earth. So when astronomers look at the farthest visible bodies in space they are actually peering billions of years in the past.

This raises an important question that should concern us all. Many secular scientists believe that research into the limits of the universe will provide needed evidence that will finally bury the need to believe in God. They maintain that science will, in time, uncover all the secrets of how the universe began, how it exists today, and what will ultimately happen to it in the future. Some think that the James Webb Telescope will discover such evidence without a need to involve belief in a Creator.

But, we ask, is that really the case? Do new discoveries in science, in this case astronomy, actually lessen the evidence for a Creator God? In 2017 I

wrote an article in which I made five bold predictions for the next century (read it here: <http://www.marketfaith.org/2017/12/we-know-who-holds-the-future-but-what-does-the-future-hold-five-predictions-for-the-next-century>) Let us review briefly those five prophetic utterances (no, I don't claim any divine ability to see the future). It is, of course way too soon to know if my predictions pan out. Anyway, here they are:

- Prediction #1: No life will be discovered anywhere else in the solar-system or galaxy except on Earth.
- Prediction #2: No interstellar travel outside of our solar system will ever be possible.
- Prediction #3 Darwinian evolution will be discredited.
- Prediction #4: Atheism will become an untenable philosophy.
- Prediction #5: Christianity will continue to decline in Europe and North America. However, Evangelicalism will grow vastly in South America and the Far East.

Actually it is only the first and fourth of these predictions that I want to reconsider in this article.

First, let revisit prediction #1:

***No life will be discovered anywhere else in the solar-system or galaxy except on Earth.***

In my earlier piece I discussed the fact that no shred of evidence has ever been found to indicate that any sort of life now exists, or ever did exist, anywhere in the universe except on Earth. I stated that even with all the extensive exploration of other planets in our solar system, exoplanets (planets orbiting stars outside of our solar system), stars, and galaxies, the investigations have yielded absolutely nothing to indicate that life, especially advanced life, does or even could exist anywhere else. Dr. Hugh Ross is a Chris-

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tian astronomer and director of Reasons to Believe ministries. He asserts on his website that only on Earth do all the 322 fine-tuning factors (as known in 2004 when Ross wrote – many more are known now) necessary coalesce to make life possible. The odds of them all occurring by chance is 10388 (that is a decimal point [.] followed by 388 zeroes ending in the number 1 [.0...01]). That is an infinitesimally tiny number.

Thus, I predict they will find no evidence of life supporting worlds anywhere but here. Also, astronomer Ross wrote about the odds of life occurring anywhere by chance (including Earth):

"Thus, less than 1 chance in 10282 (million trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion) exists that even one such life-support body would occur anywhere in the universe without invoking divine miracles." (10282 equals 1 followed by 282 zeroes.) (see Ross' 2004 article here:

<https://reasons.org/explore/publication/s/articles/probability-for-life-on-earth>)

As I wrote in 2017, this has enormous implications for origin of life theories and gauging the veracity of conflicting worldviews: "The truth is, however, that the odds of life appearing on any world by chance alone is beyond the scope of realistic expectations. Biological science still cannot explain or reproduce the origin of even the simplest forms of life found here on Earth. A growing number of scientists are taking the position that life could not have originated on Earth at all. Those with a Naturalistic worldview cannot abide the possibility that life was created by a supernatural force or entity. So some are saying it must have come here from outer-space –

either by asteroids or by intelligent alien beings who seeded it."

You might wonder what this has to do with the James Webb Space Telescope. Just that the data that it will provide about the origin of the universe and the stars and galaxies beyond our own will either confirm or call into question the assumptions astronomers have made about life existing beyond Earth. It is my sincere belief that it will further demonstrate that the universe had a beginning from nothing (as the Bible teaches), and that life-sustaining planets and stars are extremely rare with Earth perhaps being unique in all the universe. In any case, we will never know given the immensity of the universe, the distances between stars, and the laws of physics. That is one reason I do not believe UFOs are extra-terrestrial spacecraft piloted by beings from other planets. Perhaps in heaven, God will allow us to know more of the secrets of His creation not available to us in this life.

This brings us to the fourth of my earlier predictions - Prediction #4:

***Atheism will become an untenable philosophy.***

As I wrote in 2017, "The 20th and early 21st centuries have seen amazing discoveries. Scientists have learned much about information coding in biological systems. They have proven that the universe had a beginning and is finite. They have demonstrated the incredible fine-tuning of the Earth's environment and place in the cosmos necessary to accommodate intelligent life. All of these, and recent discoveries in physics, are slowly turning the tide from Naturalism to a renewed appreciation for Theism. Even some formerly staunch atheists have had to admit that it all seems to point to a designing mind. We would call that Mind God. It is my prediction that in the next hundred years, Atheism, as a reasonable philosophical position, will become virtually extinct. The naturalistic explanations for the laws and acts of

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nature will be shown to demonstrate an even greater degree of purpose and planning than ever imagined. For Christians, this will provide an opportunity for opening new frontiers in evangelism and apologetics. The question is, however, will the next generation of believers take advantage of it?"

So, will the James Webb Space Telescope disprove God? On the contrary, the new super eye in the sky will further enhance the argument for intelligent design and belief in a Creator God. This design inference will be increasingly demonstrated as being indispensable in the creation of the cosmos and for creation and development of life here on Earth. It will provide greater evidence that a Designer, who created the universe from nothing and set up the laws of physics to allow for intelligent life, does indeed exist. As I wrote five years ago, I predict that over the next century, despite the stubborn obstinacy of many of those committed to that worldview, Naturalism will increasingly be seen as intellectually and scientifically indefensible as it continues to fail to explain where things came from and how they work. Science will discover new orders of fine-tuning from the tiniest sub-atomic particles to the immensity of the cosmos. It will become ever more evident, even to those whose hearts are closed, that an Infinite Mind and Omnipotent Power was behind it all, and only a miracle explains it. We believers in Christ, of course, call that Mind God!

Isaiah quoted the Lord Himself this way: *"It is I who made the earth, and created mankind upon it. I stretched out the heavens with My hands, And I ordained all their lights."* (Isaiah 45:12 NASB)

And Jeremiah proclaimed:

*It is He who made the earth by His power, Who established the world by His wisdom; And by His understanding He has stretched out the heavens.* (Jeremiah 10:12 NASB)

Likewise, Paul's words to the Romans will have even more relevance in the future:

*"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, that is, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, being understood by what has been made, so that they are without excuse."* (Romans 1:20 NASB)

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