

WASN'T IT SMART OF GOD TO...

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little drops instead
of one big one?



...give us a
receding instead of
advancing hairline?

...make
us sneeze
out and
not in?

STEVE CHAPMAN

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Fun Times

When our family of four was traveling together as itinerate musicians back in the late 1900s, we spent countless hours in vehicles covering the miles necessary to get to the next engagement. Those long rides were sometimes grueling and tough to endure, especially for our children. However, it was during one of those seemingly endless drives that the idea was conceived for the book you now hold in your hands.

It was around the summer of 1989. Our daughter, Heidi, was not far from becoming a “ten-ager” and our son, Nathan, was headed to his teens. We were on another long highway in a Midwestern plains state, and the car was quiet except for the constant sound of the rolling tires and air conditioning fan. Our two young “road warriors” were quietly staring out their windows with expressions that revealed the pain of boredom...again.

I looked at our kids through the rearview mirror and then nodded to Annie to take a look. She turned around for a glance, and when she turned back our eyes met. Without saying a word, we both knew we felt totally guilty that we were dragging them through the tediousness of so much traveling.

I turned my eyes back to the road and probably went on to think about the songs we’d be singing that night and my checklist of preconcert duties. My wife, Annie, however, did not put aside her motherly compassion. Embracing the emotions of the moment, she decided to attempt to lift our kids out of the highway doldrums. She broke the silence.

“Hey kids, let’s play a game!” Annie announced.

The kids looked with reserved interest at their mom.

Annie continued: “Let’s take turns finishing this sentence, ‘Wasn’t it smart of God to...’ and you can include your thoughts about how practical His creation is—whether it’s about our bodies, our nature, or whatever comes to your mind. I’ll go first.”

My ears perked up at that point, and I wondered what was in the mind of my brilliant wife. What I heard next was ingenious—so much so that it started our family down one of the most enjoyable conversation trails we can remember.

“Wasn’t it smart of God to...” Annie paused for effect before finishing, “to make our nose holes go down instead of up so when it rains we don’t drown.”

I looked at Annie and smiled as we heard the kids laugh. They immediately started audibly brainstorming additions to the list.

Heidi spoke up. “Wasn’t it smart of God to...make our hair not bleed when we cut it.”

We all smiled and agreed.

Nathan grinned as he added, “Wasn’t it smart of God to...give us lips so when we kiss our teeth don’t bang together.” (Leave it to a near-teenage boy to come up with that one!)

It was my turn. “Wasn’t it smart of God to...give us armpits *and* gravity to keep our arms down.”

We were quickly on a roll, and there was lots of applause offered for each contribution to the game. Needless to say, the rest of the miles on that trip remain some of our most memorable. Thankfully, Annie grabbed a pen and paper and logged the quips we came up with that day. She added to the list as, from time to time during the rest of our tour, we continued our musings on “Wasn’t it smart of God to...”

When we got home, that paper was filed away in our “favorite memory” file. It stayed there for more than twenty years—until I saw it again while going through some old boxes. I felt a rush of enjoyment as I perused the list and remembered the good time we’d had. I thought, *Perhaps it’s time to let the rest of the world enjoy the fun our family had during that weekend of traveling.*

So drawing from that list and adding more, along with additions from our now-grown children, their spouses, our extended family, and good friends, this little book was written to let you taste the sweet fruit of family fun. And just maybe these quirky and provocative thoughts will inspire you to start this tradition with your family and friends.

Whenever you read this book, whether solo on a beach, during a long highway journey, or with friends around a dinner table, my sincere hope is twofold. May it provide some interesting insight into the practicality of our marvelous Creator and may it spark your own creative endings for the truth, “Wasn’t it smart of God to...”

Steve Chapman

Wasn't it smart of God to...

- ... make our nose holes go down instead of up so when it rains we won't drown.
- ... put our feet as far as possible from our noses.
- ... make aging a slow process instead of a sudden change, like while at youth camp.
- ... make us sleep with our eyes closed so we won't see our spouses sleeping with their mouths open.
- ... give a new dad nine months to prepare for how much his life will drastically change.
- ... make us so that during our teen years we have lots of little pimples instead of one huge one.
- ... make our knees knobby so when we kneel to pray we will feel just enough discomfort to keep us alert and focused.
- ... give us hard knuckles so we can knock on doors.

- ... give us hormones so we'll want to mate...and have offspring who will want to mate...so we can have grandchildren.
- ... give us fevers so we'll know when we're sick or in love.
- ... give us lips so when we kiss we don't bang our teeth together.
- ... give us 32 teeth so if we lose a few we still have some to chew with.
- ... make a baby's voice high and shrill so the sound will wake dads from a deep sleep so they can wake up the moms.
- ... make our backsides padded so sitting will be more comfortable.
- ... design our legs to bend forward so when we kneel on the floor we don't mash our toes.
- ... pack all our vital organs into our torsos so if we lose an arm or leg we'll still be alive.
- ... let hearing loss generally happen in our later years so we don't have to listen to our aging friend complain about joint pain, bowel issues, memory loss, and...*I said, "Joint pain, bowel issues, memory loss..."*

- ... give us ears and noses to hold up our glasses.

- ... give labor in childbirth to clue in mothers about what the rest of their lives will be like.
- ... make the balding process slow instead of all of a sudden, like while on a date.
- ... make the diameter of the index finger slightly smaller than the diameter of nose holes.
- ... give us shoulders to hold up our shirts.
- ... make our heads not turn all the way around—probably because it would just be too creepy.
- ... make us so we sneeze out instead of in.
- ... give us two eyebrows instead of one—and tweezers to help keep them that way.
- ... not make the hair in our ears grow as long as the hair on our heads. (And give us friends who are kind enough to tell us if we're the exception.)

- ... give us a keen sense of hearing so we'll know when dinner is ready.
- ... give us sight so we can look back to see what we tripped over 'cause we weren't watching where we were going.
- ... give us the alphabet so we can quickly go through it when we can't remember someone's name at a reunion.
- ... give us old age to help us look forward to heaven.
- ... put our noses close to our mouths so smelling food before we eat it is more convenient.
- ... give us tongues so when we talk we don't "hown ike ikh."
- ... give us a sense of touch so we'll know the joy of feeling a baby's soft skin.
- ... make our lower jaws move when we talk instead of our upper jaws so when we talk our heads don't violently bounce up and down.
- ... make our arms not as long as our legs so they don't drag on the ground when we walk.

- ... make our ears protrude for catching sound waves.

- ... give us enough hair to fill the gap between the outer edges of our ears and our heads...or to cover our ears if we want to.

- ... make our noses flare when more air is needed during vigorous exercise or arguing.

- ... give us two eyes instead of just one so we can still see to drive with one while rubbing the other.

- ... make our feet long and flat on the bottom instead of pointy stubs so the poem "Footprints in the Sand" wouldn't be "Little Round Pointy Holes in the Sand."

- ... give us hips to hold up our pants.

- ... give us fingernails so that blackboards can have a dual purpose.

- ... make us so smiling takes more effort than frowning to remind us to work at being kind.

- ... give us armpits *and* gravity to keep our arms down.

- ... give us receding hairlines instead of advancing ones.

- ... make our eyes blink so we can moisten them as well as understand how quickly life goes by.
- ... make our fingernails grow four times faster than our toenails.
- ... make our arms foldable for staying warm and for showing coolness during a spat.
- ... give us ear wax instead of ear honey.
- ... make our stomachs with folds that expand as they fill up so we don't explode if we cave and eat that third piece of cake.
- ... give us nose hair to help filter the air we breathe to help keep our lungs clean.
- ... give us inquisitive minds so we can ask questions that He will answer so we'll know more about Him.
- ... cause women to forget the extent of pain during childbirth so we can know the joy of siblings.

- ... design humans to yawn so we'll know we're sleepy or that our dates are bored.

- ... give us two ears and one mouth so we'll remember to listen twice as much as we talk.

- ... make our hair not bleed when we cut it.

- ... give us free environmental cleanup crews consisting of buzzards and other carrion eaters so we don't have to deal with dead critters that are rotten and smelly.

- ... design us in such a way that the 50,000 cells that die in our bodies while we're reading this book won't rot and smell bad, thus eliminating the embarrassing buzzards-over-our-heads potential.

- ... make giraffes able to clean their own ears with their 21-inch tongues so we don't have to do it for them with our stubby ones.

- ... make our left lungs smaller than our right lungs to make room for our hearts.

- ... create the woodpecker with the amazing ability to peck 20 times per second and not get a headache.

- ... give us a sense of smell so we'll know when it's time for a bath—or a friend's bath.

- ... make our bodies using enough phosphorus to cover 2200 match heads but not ignite while we're filing our nails.

- ... make us able to wink so we can communicate important information without words.

- ... create the human body using enough carbon to make 900 pencils—yet not leave dark gray marks on our bedsheets.

- ... make the human body with enough fat to make seven bars of soap—yet not turn into mounds of suds when we're caught in the rain.

- ... design the adult human body able to hold enough water to fill a 10-gallon tank *and* give us bladders to hold any excess (at least temporarily).

- ... make ants so they don't sleep. (That's our only revenge!)

- ... lead us to discover the wheel. (Otherwise there would be a lot of cars on blocks.)

- ... give us fire to use for warmth, energy, manufacturing, and marshmallows.

- ... make rain fall in lots of little drops instead of one really big one.

- ... make babies so adorable that we don't really mind cleaning up the unbelievable messes they can make.

- ... make the healthiest foods the most colorful and delightful to our eyes.

- ... make human bone as strong as granite and able to support up to nine tons—a feature especially valuable after Thanksgiving dinner.

- ... make the human blood cell able to make a complete circuit of the body in about 60 seconds—guaranteeing that at least part of us is getting exercise.

- ... make the muscles of our eyes able to move approximately 100,000 times a day without breaking sweat.

- ... cover our entire body with skin that flakes and sheds at a rate of up to 105 pounds during 70 years of living—and thankfully not all at once.

- ... give us nails to bite when we're nervous that aren't made of metal and don't taste like Brussels sprouts.

- ... design us so our feet are so far from our teeth that we can't comfortably chew our toenails when we're grown-ups. (This restriction prevents joint injuries and salvages personal dignity.)

- ... give us 300,000 or so little blood vessels in our lungs that would stretch 1500 miles if laid end to end—but thankfully aren't.
- ... make our stomach digestive acids strong enough to dissolve zinc. (This feature is especially important if we happen to swallow a flashlight battery.)
- ... put our noses close to our mouths so we can discreetly and quickly check our breath before our dates open the door.
- ... not put eyes in the back of our heads. (I'm sure my third-grade teacher had them though.)
- ... say to the serpent that deceived Eve in the Garden of Eden, “Cursed are you...You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life,” so Satan wouldn't have a leg to stand on.
- ... enclose the sea so we don't have to swim all the time.

“Who shut up the sea behind doors...I fixed limits for it and set its doors and bars in place, when I said, ‘This far you may come and no farther; here is where your proud waves halt?’” (Job 38:8,10-11).

- ... design the sneeze to “share” up to 40,000 droplets of contaminated moisture in a spray that can exceed 200 miles per hour. (You've been warned!)

- ... give sneezers and unfortunate bystanders the gift of soft Kleenex.

- ... make us incapable of sneezing with our eyes open, sparing us from seeing the stranger next to us roll his eyes in disgust while wiping his face because we didn't grab a Kleenex in time.
- ... give some people curly hair and others straight hair so we would learn how to conquer our tendency to envy.
- ... put flowers deep in the forest, colorful fish in the depths of the oceans, and huge nebulas high in the heavens to give us something to discover.
- ... put iron, copper, and other ores in the ground and give us the ingenuity to dig them up, process them, and make tools.
- ... give us a sense of taste so chocolate isn't a wasted resource.
- ... make a single strand of DNA into an information storage unit that is a thousand times thinner than a strand of hair yet capable of holding enough information to fill a stack of books that would stretch from the earth to the moon 500 times.
- ... design us so that even if we are twins our fingerprints are different, assuring us that we are unique individuals.

- • • make us with two thumbs for gripping and to stick up to show double approval to our kids for jobs well done!

- • • make rainbows appear after it rains to remind us that He's keeping His promise to not send a global-wide flood.

- • • place our hearts behind a protective cage of hard ribs and the sternum. (This wonderful design is great when batters smoke line drives at the mound and we're pitching!)

- • • give us graphite that contains carbon—a key component of diamonds and lead. (Instead of buying an expensive diamond for his sweetheart, a fellow could just give her a pencil!)

- • • put 8000 taste buds on the human tongue's upper surface—a number that matches the choices of food at many church potlucks.

- • • make each taste bud cell renew every seven to ten days. (So go ahead, thaw those leftovers from last week!)

- • • make our digestive tract 29.5 feet in length, which means we really can have our cake...and our friend's cake...and eat it too.

- • • make our sex cells contain only half the genetic material required to make another human being—a fact that gives extra meaning to His comment, "And the two shall become one."

- • • make our tongues the strongest muscle in our bodies, proportionally speaking, so we can lift the spirits of our families and friends.

- • • give us many salivary glands in our mouths that can produce a quart of saliva each day. (Another reason to avoid the front pew—and a possible drenching—when the preacher delivers a rousing sermon!)

- • • include enough discomfort in the ninth month of pregnancy that women are more than willing to go through childbirth.

- • • make tooth enamel the hardest thing in our bodies. (Some of us have skulls that run a close second.)

- • • make sea urchins brainless but able to survive through simple nerve cords located in their mouth area. (That feature is also given to relatives of the sea urchin: sea cucumbers, starfish, and, oddly enough, some politicians.)

- • • make our sense of smell an important part of tasting food—but diminish that attribute when we have bad colds and have to take nasty-tasting medicine.

- • • give us a sense of smell 1000 times less effective than a beagle's. (Otherwise we'd probably spend most of our time chasing rabbits!)

- • • give us the ability to create nearly 10,000 facial expressions. (Unfortunately that number is

reduced by 9999 after a Botox injection.)

- ... provide millions of dust mites to live in our beds and gobble up skin flakes that fall off us. (Which makes some people wonder, *Why change the sheets?*)
- ... put assassins known as *lymphocytes* in each of us to identify, find, and kill disease-causing cells
- ... put gizzards in birds that have no teeth and give them a tolerance for swallowing grit of various sizes to grind up seeds so they don't starve.
- ... give owls extremely flexible necks that can rotate nearly 360 degrees to compensate for their tubular eyes that don't roll. (Knowing this fact may help squelch the heebie-jeebies the next time an owl turns its head all the way around to look at us!)
- ... create a magnetic field in the iron core of the earth strong enough to charge particles in space yet weak enough that metal things, such as nails, frying pans, and airplanes, don't stick to the ground
- ... create a black cow that eats green grass and makes white milk as part of producing yellow butter so we can shake our heads in udder amazement.
- ... make tigers able to see six times better in the dark than we can but run only four times faster than us. (Wait—that's not a comforting thought!)

- • • make some deer have white tails they can flash to help other deer follow them, to discourage predators, and to let hunters know they've been outsmarted again.

- • • make most male birds using brighter colors than their female counterparts to make courtship rituals interesting and patrolling territory more effective. (The equivalent of this colorful characteristic in human males can be seen in football stadiums where men paint themselves with bright colors and gather in territorial formations. Sadly, this may limit hopes for courtship.)

- • • make most female birds muted in color for better concealment on the nest. (Unfortunately there no human equivalent of this unique feature, so women in “nesting” settings often frighten men.)

- • • make the bottom of toddlers’ feet tough enough for walking barefoot yet sensitive enough for tickling fun.

- • • put our noses on our faces instead of under our arms—for odorously obvious reasons.

- • • place the nearest star close enough to the earth that we could vacation there if we only drove 100 mph for 29 million years. (Just imagine that family trip!)

- • • give some men the divine inspiration to write the most popular and life-changing book of all times—the Bible. (With more than 6 billion copies in print, hopefully thieves will walk off with this book and let it radically improve their existence now and forever.)

- • • make the “poison-arrow” frog’s defense potent enough to provide plenty of protection. (The

poison is strong enough to kill 2200 people—a fact that tells the 2199 people in line behind the first victim to run.)

- ... make baby robins capable of eating 14 feet of earthworms every day. (This brings to mind the obvious question: Do earthworms really have feet?)
- ... make gold so it never rusts—even if buried in the ground for a thousand years or worn on a finger for a lifetime.
- ... make the sun more than 300,000 times larger than the earth, design it to burn fiercely at 27 million degrees Fahrenheit, and put it 93,000 miles away from ice cream.
- ... make a flea able to jump 350 times its body length. (The human equivalent is 14 city blocks!)
- ... make some species of ribbon worms capable of eating themselves if they can't find food. (Be thankful God didn't design us that way or "finger foods" would have a totally new meaning.)
- ... design the female praying mantis to rip the head off of the male during or after mating so we will be thankful the Creator didn't include that characteristic in our makeup.
- ... design female worker honeybees so they die after stinging us. (It serves them right!)

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