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What Are Your Thoughts on Aliens?

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#STRask - Stand to Reason

Questions about whether the aliens people encounter are really evil spirits, whether the supposed biological pieces of crashed UFO pilots could be biological evidence of demons or angels, and what impact true evidence of aliens would have on the faith of Christians.

- * What are your thoughts on aliens? Are they really evil spirits of Satan?
- * Could the supposed biological pieces of crashed UFO pilots be biological evidence of demons or angels?
- * What impact would true evidence of the existence of aliens have on the faith of Christians?

Transcript

You're listening to the hashtag SDR-esque podcast with Greg Koukl and Amy Hall. Welcome. Hi, Amy.

We are in a little bit niggity mood because we've been talking about frivolous things and like Amy's water bottle, she's got, well, it's not a new water bottle, but I don't remember seeing it before. And so it looked like a new one, but it's not your only one. No, as I've told Kyle before.

I don't understand it. I can't explain it, but I think it's just a girl thing. We like to have various pretty water bottles.

I have three women in my household and we are overflowing with water bottles. It seems like every time we turn around, they got to get another one. Well, wait a minute.

It's a new month, right? It's like a new school year. Okay, but it's a new month. Why do we need another water bottle? I don't get that.

I can't explain it, Greg. It's a real thing. It's a real thing.

It's a real thing. They're like earrings and you got to match it to your dress or something. It's just a water bottle.

I mean, Kyle and I, we just, we need as a ditch. Right. Well, there's the water.

I get the same water bottles I've been carrying with my bags and my trips. Actually, it's not the same because I keep forgetting them on airplanes, but I got a bunch of extras. They all look the same.

Nothing fancy. Just a liter of water. I'm just, I don't know.

Well, my apologies. I have any decoration. No stickers on it or anything.

My apologies to the men out there. I honestly cannot explain it, but it is a real thing that its women are into water bottles and they have to have more than one. They make us happy, Greg.

I don't know why. Okay. I don't know why.

I'll probably get letters now. Somebody said, Hey, you're right. Maybe you can start a support group for the four men who have to deal with this.

Okay. Well, from the frivolous TV. Well, you can decide if this is also frivolous.

It's an unusual question. Well, last. I was going to say from the ridiculous to the sublime.

That's going to sublime to ridiculous. Okay, but it's not ridiculous. It's just.

Well, in the last episode, we were talking about some questions that are going around in the culture right now. So we're going to continue on that with this one. Okay.

This is a question that people are asking right now. Why do women always have so many water bottles? I can't answer that one. Okay.

All right. So this one comes from Allison. That's a great question.

I'm glad it was brought up because there is conversation about this now because apparently the government is acknowledging the reality of these things. Now, in a certain sense, there's always been UFOs that is, and UFOs exist. That is unidentified flying objects, you know, and the vast majority turn out to be identified as some naturalistic phenomena.

But there's this, there's this residual amount that have never been explained and they, they're odd. So there is a genuine phenomena going out there that is not explainable in the standards ways that UFOs as possible aliens have been dismissed. And now the, the government is acknowledging that that's the case.

Now, of course, this is creating a big stir so much so that a documentary is in the process of being made as in post production right now, but I was interviewed for it earlier this spring. And I couldn't imagine why they would interview me about UFOs because it's not my area of expertise. However, it turned out that many things that I had to share theologically and philosophically actually bore on the question and bore on the issue.

And so I was able to make a contribution that I think it's called God and UFOs or UFOs and God. That's their working title. And of course, we'll make some more, some will bring visibility to it once it's released.

And I talked to the producer of that just last week because of developments and so a couple of observations. And first is that the government is now acknowledging there is there are these things are real and unexplained as terrestrial phenomena of some sort. They don't call them UFOs now.

They call them UAP. I think unidentified aerial phenomena. Okay.

I always want to make it at F. But it's a P UAP unidentified. Now, why did they change the acronym? I don't know. But nevertheless, I'm sticking with UFOs because I can't remember the other one.

I have to think too hard about it. But but they've changed the the acronym partly to capture the idea that this is a little bit broader. It's not just flying objects.

It's phenomena. All right. So I'm going to talk about that that are unexplained.

So let me make a couple of observations about this. I know the question entailed or raised the the issue of of demons. All right.

Here here here's what I was able to contribute to the discussion. Physical objects have physical qualities. If an object doesn't have physical qualities, it's not physical.

Okay. That's that's philosophy, of course, but it's based on a simple reflection. So I'm having a thought right now about UFOs and this question.

Well, that thought does not extend in space. That thought is not beholden to the laws of physics and chemistry. That thought is not physical.

It's real. I'm having it. I'm aware of it, but it's not physical.

Okay. This is one way of distinguishing the reality of the material world from the immaterial world, the qualities it has. Okay.

And this is turns out to be a very powerful argument regarding the mind body problem. Is there are we just meet all the way down physical or is there an immaterial self called a soul that is part of the process. Now it turns out, as I just mentioned, thoughts are not

physical things because they don't have physical qualities.

Something has the thoughts and physical things don't have thoughts. So it must be a non physical self that possesses the thoughts. Okay.

I just use this as an analogy to show how an appropriate philosophical reflection on the nature of things helps us to divide things into two different categories, physical and non physical turns out UFOs in these sightings. They do not comport with physics. They do things that are inconsistent with physics, the laws of physics.

Okay. And therefore, if they are not comporting to the laws of physics, this would suggest that they're not physical. Now, a lot of people want to be dismissive of that.

They say, well, the laws of physics, as we know them, wait a minute, the laws of physics applied to the whole universe. Our whole understanding about the universe began is tied to the laws of physics. Okay.

They're universal. They govern matter. And if they don't govern matter, if the laws of physics that we know don't govern matter, then they're not laws of physics.

And then physics doesn't explain anything consistently. And so we are justified in not punting to the laws of physics we don't know about, but rather drawing on what we know to conclude that these objects that do not obey the laws of physics do not obey the laws of physics because they're not physical. All right.

So there's part of the conclusion. Secondly, there's a very strong, connection between the communication that people have in close encounters with these beings, which is called them aliens because that's pretty broad term. There are conversations that you would have and characteristically, two things we noticed characteristically of the content.

There's a lot of an occultic connection in these encounters. And secondly, there is a very consistent denial of the truth of Christianity, not the truths of other religions, but the truths of Christianity. Now, this is suspicious.

And one question that comes up and I this came up, I think in the conversation between Stephen Myer and Joe Rogan on the piece that they did a couple of months ago. And incidentally, if you haven't watched that, whoever's listening, this is, you know, this is three and a half hour discussion between Stephen Myer, the intelligent design guy and Joe Rogan. It's really magnificent.

Okay, just saying. Now, the, the, that issue, an issue came up in that discussion and now is coming up more and more. What if we make intelligent contact with aliens and they tell us Christianity is false and God doesn't exist? There you go.

Now what? And that's the, that's the big deal right now. What if we learn from these people that the religious views that we have are false? Okay. Now here's my response and I'm not sure if I got this.

I just want to give credit where credits do. If I got, I heard Dennis Prager say something about this years ago, but it stuck with me and the principle is really good. If really smart aliens say there is no God and Christianity's false.

So what? That's what I was going to say. Yeah. So what? There are absolutely brilliant people on this planet who say that.

And just because brilliant people say that doesn't mean that it's true. Okay. That's an inappropriate appeal to authority.

All right. We have very particular reasons for believing the existence of God and the, the truth of Christianity. All right.

So what a person would have to do, an intelligent person would have to do would be to appropriately disabuse us of those ideas in order for those ideas to be shown to be false. And, and what they would have to do is they would have to answer the particular challenges, I'm sorry, the particular evidences in favor of God and Christianity. No, Jesus didn't rise from the dead.

Oh, he's an alien. Oh, he was one of us. Really? Why should I believe you? He didn't, apparently he didn't think he was one of you.

And the disciples didn't think he was one of you. And nobody thought we have no evidence whatsoever in any of the records of Jesus that he was anything less than a Torah observant Jew who claimed to be the Messiah and the Son of God, which is a claim to divinity, unique divinity, by the way, not just a God, a Christ of sorts. And then worked miracles, substantiating the claim, including the miracle of the resurrection, which absolutely transformed his group of disciples from, from doubting losers.

Okay, Jesus did on Friday, Saturday is all over. And then Sunday, something happened that changed them and changed, changed James, the, the, the unbelieving step, half brother of Jesus. And the critic and the persecutive Christian Saul of Tarsus.

So, you know, what, what was that? Well, that was the resurrection. I mean, that's a very standard kind of argument for the legitimacy of the resurrection, which I cover in the story of reality in a chapter called four facts. So the point I'm making is just because some very smart authority says that Christianity is false.

There is no God, whether it's a really brilliant human being or some alien. It still comes down to the reasons. The reasons are what matter.

And, uh, and this is actually just an employment of a tactic in the tactics book called Rhodes Scholar. Just because a smart guy says something is so doesn't mean it's so. We have to know the rationale behind the conclusion they're offering to us so we can test the reasoning itself.

It is a little bit odd that they would assume that whatever they said would be true and goes, people do put some sort of weird spiritual, I don't know, they, they look up to the idea of aliens and if they came down, they would solve everything and they would know everything and all these sorts of things. I remember back, do you remember that movie contact? Many years ago, I talk about that in the, the new book. In fact, I use that as a rubric for making a play about the sign.

Well, one thing in there, Jodi Foster's character, when she finds, oh, I can't believe you remember that. Well, she, she, when she finds out there are aliens, then suddenly she's, all her, all her troubles are all her worries are solved. Like this, this changes everything.

Now we're not alone. And I'm thinking, you know, there are billions of people on the earth. You're not alone.

Why, why does it change anything to have an alien? Because people play some sort of weird, I don't know, value on them that is something beyond metaphysical significance. Yeah, I don't know how to explain that. But one thing, Greg, I am very skeptical that aliens have been here.

But let me push back. By the way, there's a lot of other reasons that we don't have time to go into, but, and I could at some time maybe, but of why, what we're seeing are not aliens. They're not visitors from other planets.

And that has to do with physics, you know, and a whole bunch of other difficulties. But go ahead. Well, let me ask, because I don't know how they're saying that they're messing with the laws of physics, but couldn't someone respond, if I were to jump off a cliff, the laws of physics would mean that I would fall to the ground.

Right. But if I had some sort of contraption that could enable me to fly, then the laws of physics would not have that effect on me, because I would be doing something with some sort of equipment that would enable me to do something the laws of physics would normally not let me do. Well, it's just employing the laws of physics in a machine that allows you to individually do something that would airplanes to, you know, you know, I can fly inside of a craft that is capable of using the laws of physics to get from one city to the other.

Okay. So that, and so the question that here's the issue, though, it is the laws of physics that allows airplanes to operate here, but it's the laws of physics that actually keep aliens from from flying. The great distances that are required to fly.

Okay. Because of a whole bunch of things, the time, the limitations of the speed of light, the radiation in the universe, fuel concerns. Okay.

There are all kinds of other things that have to be taken into consideration. All right. So this is what I mean, the laws of physics do the, um, in vain against the likelihood.

Another one is how are they going to find us? You know, it's a famous picture of the pale blue dot where we have a little, um, settle and satellite thing that's going out of our solar system. You know, this craft and as it's leaving our solar system, it looks backwards and takes a picture. And there's that pale blue dot, which is earth.

And that's within our solar system. It's really small. How does anyone find out that there is any kind of intelligent life on our little planet? And, um, because the closest place is light years away that could even in principle, in principle, have, um, intelligent life.

And so, so that's a question. Were isolated? Oh, well, we send out signals. Yeah.

Signals move at the speed of light. I mean, even radio signals, you know, the 1946 Olympics, that was the first TV signals that kind of might go out in the space. And that was actually featured in the movie contact, you know, and they bounced back and sent back to us in this message that was communicated.

So there were a host of difficulties of understanding whatever we're seeing as someone from another planet in a solar system or another galaxy. Okay. And that has to do with the distances involved and all the other things that are related to physics.

Okay. Um, now people will punt to, well, physics as we know it. And that's what Rogan did as I recall.

Well, that's what we know right now. Well, that's all we can go on is what, um, Stephen Meyer was saying this is all we can go on. Incidentally, there, um, there are no artifacts available.

There are physical, uh, impact. There are physical evidences. Like, for example, a satellite, people see, see this one of these things crash.

Then you go to the site, you see the soil all torn up, but there's no craft. There are no pieces of craft. There are no artifacts.

Well, this brings us. I have two more questions that we are going to do. I know this is going to be a long show, but I, we're not going to come around to aliens again for a long time.

So I want to get all three of these in. So this second one comes from Holly and it follows on what you're talking about right now. In a recent congressional hearing, it was brought up that the US government has recovered parts of crashed UFO crafts and biological

pieces of the pilots of the crafts.

How does this fit with the biblical narrative of the spiritual realm? Could we have biological evidence of demons or angels? Um, first of all, uh, this to me is still, uh, the court, the court is still out on that. The government says they found these things really. I think it was one whistleblower.

So I, I don't know what we know about that. Last week I talked to the producer of the film and I reaffirmed the fact with him that there are no artifacts. So that could be shown to be false.

Okay. Secondly, um, this doesn't mean these, the, even if there are artifacts, it doesn't mean that it can't be demonically in there. It can't be a demonic influence or involvement there.

All right. That's another feature. It doesn't disqualify that.

Let's just say there are real aliens. Let's just say that there are visitors from another. So they're just the real McCoy, you know, E. T. Phone home, you know.

So what? Again, I don't, I mean, it's like, wow, unbelievable, incredible science fiction become reality. Yes. But what, what follows from that? In terms of spiritual significance with regards to the claims of Christianity about the nature of the universe, the Bible never addresses whether or not there are creatures in other solar systems that are intelligent.

It doesn't ever speak to that. If it turns out that there are other creatures, it's certainly as possible. I don't see any difficulty with that.

Now, he Ross has said, if there are, they would have to be unfallen for one. Or if fallen, irredeemable because Jesus is the kinship redeemer, the second person of the Trinity, the word became flesh and dwelt among us. And so he will always be the God man.

All right, forever and ever. So there's no kinship redeemer for aliens, apparently. So this is a theological argument based on Christian theology that they would be unfallen or irredeemable.

So I don't, I don't know. They may. I mean, I think that's a fair observation.

But even if there are aliens, I don't see what threat that causes or brings to any piece of Christian theology. Unless people are just convinced that aliens know more than we do and all they have to do is say something's the case like Christianity's falls and therefore we should believe them. I'm not going to believe them, just like I'm not going to believe any other smart person who's who denies what I think is powerful evidence in favor of Christianity.

Well, you've already touched on the third question, which is from Ariel. What impact on faith will true evidence of alien existence have on Christians? Yeah. Well, what will it have on Christians is different from what it ought to have on Christians.

That's true. I think a lot of Christians are going to be shaken about this. And especially if these are aliens or the, however one characterizes where they came from and what the actual nature is, whether it's demonic or whether it's not.

I mean, that obviously the world is not going to admit that they're demonic. All right. It's just going to say they're real and they're from other things.

So we ought to pay attention to them, which I don't know why. Hey, when you think about, think about all the movies that have been made about aliens, none of them are friendly. They don't come with some.

They were for a while. You've got, you know, you've got E.T. E.T. was friendly. Oh, yeah.

That wasn't the earliest though. Oh, you're talking about the earliest. Well, well, even though he got in cycles.

Yeah. Okay. Well, E.T. was been, it wasn't been ever.

He was just benign. He didn't, he didn't hurt anything. You know, he just wanted to go home.

Okay, he's stuck. And, and he's, and but if the day the earth stood still, Michael Renney. Okay, look it up, man.

When I was a kid, I watched that. And here you got the, that was during the Cold War and the nuclear concerns and all that. And so the aliens come and says, we're going to control your whole planet unless you agree not to kill each other kind of deal.

And there was a, it was a critter with a guy with a death ray eyeball. You know, and if you didn't say the right thing in his language, man, you got fried. And that was a big thing during that time is that little, that line, whatever it was in this other language and all the kids knew what it was because they were trying to fry each other, you know, playing the, the, the, the critter guy and the robot like guy that came out of the thing.

So, but when you think about Independence Day, you think about almost all of the alien movies. They're all bad guys that are trying to take over and we're fighting back. Okay.

So I don't know why we would just assume that these aliens are going to be benevolent. I don't know why that would be the assumption. Why we could just, just accept it.

But I think a lot of people are going to act that way. I remember when I first became a Christian, there was, and it was probably mid 70s. There was a group that had a meeting

in Santa Monica.

And they, they, this was a, what would you call it? Like I said, not a question. A space cult or something. I don't know how you'd call it.

But what the guy was saying, I went to this meeting. I was at the late in Para house at the time. So it was up before 1976.

And I, I sat in the meeting, honest to goodness. This guy gave this talk about how the aliens have contacted them and we're going to take them away. Now, this is before the group in San Diego committed suicide.

Okay. That was a few years later. The Hale Bob cult.

Right. And he said, and we are going to take you to a brand new life to a new world. And we're looking for, are you with us? Will you come with us or not? And then he says this, we are not going to give you one shred of evidence that what we're saying is true.

You're in or you're out. And then he did an altar call and a whole bunch of people came forward. You've got to sell everything that you own.

You've got to cut all your ties with this earth. You're leaving this planet and a whole bunch of, I stood there. Well, I watch people come forward in that.

So notice how the, the, that public was so willing to make, to drop everything, those individuals to go with this group. I don't know whatever happened to this group, frankly. But I mean, I can't recall the details.

I can't even recall the name of the group, but that was, that was, that was mid 70s. So there is a tremendous appeal that the idea that some, some Savior will come from another world in rescue us. Oh, what's that called? That's called a false gospel because there is a Savior that came from another world that rescued us.

You know, what is the, the good invasion, I think, as C.S. Lewis calls it. And I trade on that notion in the story of reality a little bit. So it's, it's going to be interesting how this all develops, but just to lay a predicate for future discussions, keep in mind, if there is real aliens, it has, I don't see any spiritual significance.

The reality of aliens has on Christianity. And if aliens say that Christianity is false and the God of the Bible doesn't exist, that's so what? It all comes down to the reasons. Yeah, as long as we understand, you don't have to take everything they say as being true.

This weird idea we have in our culture, you still have to, they still have to refute the reasons for Christianity. I think, I think as long as Christians can remember that and remember that theologically, it's not going to cause any problems that I can think of. I mean, we'd have to think through some things, but it doesn't refute Christianity.

Their mere existence doesn't refute it. By the way, I'm thinking in more movies. Twilight Zone actually used this theme a number of times.

And one of them, Rod Serling, he was the author of that and I mean, whatever. And one was called the monsters are doing Maple Street. You can go online and watch that.

And how everybody went crazy because they thought aliens were coming and there's a twist at the end. I don't want to give you, but watch it. It's very interesting.

It shows the psychological impact. How mob, how mobs react to things and then start doubting their neighbors, etc. And then there's a Twilight Zone called to serve man.

Yes. Do you remember that? Okay. So the aliens land and they contact and they have a book that and they're trying to decipher the book and they're making friends and everything.

They're inviting people to come on the board and go with them. And that very last line, of course, this is like the Twilight Zone. It's the surprise ending.

So I'll tell you what it is. As the guy's going up the plant, the guys who were deciphering the books, said, no, don't go, don't go. It's a cookbook.

You know, that kind of thing. It's to serve man. Yes.

Yes. To serve man. So, yeah, there is this widespread, at least in Hollywood and with the science fiction writers, that these guys are doing it.

They're dangerous and they shouldn't be trusted. What's interesting, and I think we'd have to look at why this happened, but certainly at the beginning, like in the 50s, they were all bad. And then it kind of, into the 80s, then you started having good aliens like E.T. and Alf and close encounters.

And then it switched back again. And then we had bad aliens again. So I'm sure it has something to do with how we, what kind of fears are going on in our culture.

I just, I'm not sure. Wasn't the blob? I remember the blob, the late, late 50s are very early 60s. The blob.

Was that an alien? I think it might have been an alien too. And somebody like Steve McQueen was in that as a very, very young actor. Here's the main guy.

I wonder the first things. But then you had another one about wild trifids and these plants that come in from outer space. Why do these stick with me? I can't remember what I saw last week.

It certainly is an unusual topic and we will see what happens. I'll be interested to see

what happens if anything ever comes. Just don't get spaced out.

Oh, Greg. No worries. All right.

Well, thanks for sticking with us on this longer episode about aliens. And it probably will be a while before it comes up again. So hopefully you enjoyed it.

We'd love to hear from you. You can send us your question on Twitter or should I say the platform formerly known as Twitter? I'm not sure if we're supposed to call it X now. I don't know.

You can send it with the hashtag STRAsk or you can go through our website if you go to our hashtag STRAsk Podcast page. We look forward to hearing from you. This is Amy Hall and Greg Kolkle for Stand to Reason.