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THE NEW DEFENDERS OF MOLINISM: RECONCILING GOD’S FOREKNOWLEDGE AND OUR FREE WILL

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God has both complete foreknowledge concerning how… creatures will act and great control over their actions,

JW, AN IMMEDIATE CONTRADICTION. WHY AM I NOT SURPRISED?

IF GOD HAS COMPLETE FOREKNOWLEDGE ... HOW CAN HE ONLY HAVE "GREAT" CONTROL OVER THEIR ACTIONS? IF GOD HAS *COMPLETE* FOREKNOWLEDGE, HE WOULD HAVE *TOTAL* CONTROL OVER THEIR ACTIONS. YOU TRIED TO SNEAK "GREAT" IN THERE SO YOU COULD HAVE SOME WRIGGLE ROOM FOR YOUR CLAIM OF FREE WILL.

IT MUST BE QUITE A BURDEN TO HAVE TO GO TO SUCH GREAT LENGTHS TO DECEIVE OTHERS WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY DECEIVING YOURSELF INTO BELIEVING YOU ARE AN HONEST PERSON.

in the sense that any act they perform is either intended or permitted by him. Yet because the knowledge which generates this foresight and sovereignty is not itself a product of free divine activity, our actions remain genuinely free, not the robotic effects of divine causal determinism.

JW, HOW DO YOU FIGURE YOUR BELIEF IN THE DIVINITY IN JESUS IS GENUINELY FREE? IF GOD THREATENS YOU WITH ETERNAL TORTURE FOR REJECTING THAT BELIEF, THEN THAT BELIEF IS COERCED, NOT FREE.

IF I HOLD A GUN TO YOUR HEAD, COCK THE TRIGGER AND SAY "GIVE ME YOUR MONEY," YOU ARE BEING COERCED - YOU ARE CERTAINLY NOT GIVING YOUR MONEY FREELY.

YOU HAVE AN AWFULLY STRANGE IDEA OF WHAT THE WORD "FREE" MEANS.

Middle Knowledge–God’s knowledge of counterfactuals–is under attack from all sides.

JW, THAT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE RATIONAL PEOPLE REALIZE THEY DON'T EXIST. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE AND COUNTERFACTUALS ARE YOUR ONLY HOPE FOR PROVING HE DOES.

On one side, theological determinists argue that God’s foreknowledge necessitates all states of affairs. On the other side, open theists and process theists argue that foreknowledge limits the free will of creatures.

JW, IF FREE WILL EXISTS THEN YOUR GOD IS NOT ALL-POWERFUL. FREE WILL ENTAILS THAT WE CAN MAKE CHOICES OVER WHICH GOD HAS NO CONTROL. FREE WILL COULD EXPLAIN WHY AFTER 2,000 YEARS OF WARS, CRUSADES, INQUISITIONS, AND MISSIONARY PROGRAMS, THERE ARE STILL ABOUT 4 AND A HALF BILLION NON-CHRISTIANS ON EARTH. BUT JW, AS LONG AS YOU REFUSE TO GIVE UP THE CLAIM OF GOD'S OMNISCIENCE ... YOU CAN'T HAVE FREE WILL.

That said, there are some extremely powerful philosophical defenses–and defenders–of the doctrine of middle knowledge.

JW, THAT'S EQUIVALENT TO SAYING THERE ARE SOME EXTREMELY POWERFUL DEFENDERS OF CINDERELLA. IS THIS REALLY HOW YOU'VE CHOSEN TO SPEND YOUR LIFE?

WELL, I GUESS THIS ESSAY ANSWERS THAT QUESTION.

Logical Priority and Creaturely Freedom

Essential to a correct understanding of molinism is an investigation of creation. Here, however, the discussion is not over the temporal nature of creation or the steps God took in creating. Rather, the focus is upon the logical priority within God’s creative act.

OKAY JW, LET'S LOOK AT THE LOGICAL PRIORITY OF CREATION. GOD CREATED LIGHT ON DAY 1 BUT DIDN'T CREATE THE SUN UNTIL DAY 4. GOD CREATED PLANTS ON DAY 3 - A FULL DAY BEFORE HE CREATED THE SUN. AND LOGICALLY JW, HOW DO YOU COMPUTE DAYS WITHOUT A SUN?

By drawing out the logical priority involved, molinism solves the objections of both determinism and open theism.

JW, LOGIC IS THE SECOND-WORST ENEMY OF THEISM. WHAT IS THE WORST?

REALITY.

THAT IS WHY YOU GUYS HAVE TO RESORT TO ALL THIS BIZARRE NONSENSE AND SOPHISTRY IN AN ATTEMPT TO HIDE THE FACT THAT AFTER 2,000 YEARS, YOU'VE GOT ABSOLUTELY ... NOTHIN'.

The logical order of events is different from the chronological order in which they occur. Determinists focus only upon the chronological order:

1) Future contingents are true or false, God knows those which are true.

2) The events which are true occur.

From this, determinists (and open theists who deny God’s foreknowledge in order to preserve freedom of the will for this reason) conclude that everything is determined. The problem is they have ignored the contribution middle knowledge can make to reconciling free will and foreknowledge.

JW, MAYBE THEY IGNORED IT BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT DISHONEST ENOUGH TO RESORT TO DESPERATE CONVOLUTIONS IN ORDER TO PRESERVE A VIOLENT, IRON-AGE RELIGION THAT CONTINUES TO RAVAGE HUMANITY.

The logical priority of events occurring is quite different from its chronological order:

1) Events occur;

2) Statements about the events are true or false;

3) God knows the true statements.

By drawing out the logical priority of events’ occurring, one can then apply this to creation. William Lane Craig points out “The Three Logical Moments of God’s Knowledge”:

1) Natural Knowledge- God’s necessary knowledge of all possible worlds;

HEY JW, BY ANY CHANCE IS THERE ONE POSSIBLE WORLD OUT THERE WITHOUT YOUR GOD OR ANY GHOST WORSHIPPERS? BECAUSE IF THERE IS, YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE WHAT I WOULD BE WILLING TO DO TO GET THERE.

2) Middle Knowledge- God’s knowledge of creaturely counterfactuals.

JW, DID YOU EVER STOP TO CONSIDER THE FACT THAT GOD *IS* A COUNTERFACTUAL?

GOD IS CONTRARY TO FACT.

Here is the pivotal point:

JW, TRANSLATION: "HERE IS WHERE WE CON YOU - BUY THIS PART AND WE'RE IN."

the third “logical moment” (again, note the distinction between chronological priority and logical priority) occurs only subsequent to God’s decision to create a world. God uses His natural knowledge to peruse the possible worlds,

JW, WHY WOULD GOD NEED TO PERUSE THE POSSIBLE WORLDS IF HE IS ALREADY ALL-KNOWING? WOULDN'T THAT BE LIKE WATCHING RERUNS?

and His middle knowledge to determine how to best bring about His divine plans.

JW, SO YOU'RE SAYING THAT THE WORLD WE LIVE IN, RIGHT NOW, HERE, WAS THE "BEST" PLAN HE CAME UP WITH? JESUS H. CHRIST, IF THIS IS THE BEST ONE, I WOULD SURE HATE TO SEE THE ONES HE DISCARDED.

Then, He chooses which possible world to create,

JW, NOW YOU'RE JUST MAKING STUFF UP. THAT ISN'T IN THE BIBLE. THIS IS SIMPLY SPECULATION.

and this brings about the third “moment” of God’s knowledge:

3) Free Knowledge–God’s contingent knowledge of the actual world.

Note that God’s free knowledge is contingent–it is based upon actualizing a world from the set of possible worlds. Combining this with the facts of logical versus chronological priority, the resolution of the alleged difficulties from both determinists and open theists is revealed. Determinists ignored the fact that God, upon creating, is selecting from the set of possible worlds–included in each possible world is the set of free creaturely choices which will occur.

JW, WHAT PROOF DO YOU OFFER THAT GOD CREATED OUR WORLD, OR THAT HE SELECTED IT FROM THE SET OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS, OR THAT A SET OF FREE CREATURELY CHOICES WILL OCCUR? SINCE THE ANSWER TO ALL THREE QUESTIONS IS "NONE," IT NOW SHOULD BE A LITTLE CLEARER, EVEN TO YOU, WHY DETERMINISTS IGNORED WHAT YOU *CLAIMED* WERE FACTS.

God, therefore, does not determine which events will occur, but selects a world full of free choices.

JW, MISS THAT CONTRADICTION DIDJA? BY SELECTING A WORLD OF FREE CHOICES ... HE *IS* DETERMINING WHICH EVENTS WILL OCCUR: IT WILL THE EVENTS THAT OCCUR IN THE WORLD HE SELECTS. SINCE HE KNOWS WHAT CHOICES WILL BE "FREELY MADE," AND HE HAD THE OPTION TO CHOOSE OTHERWISE, THERE IS NO WAY TO ESCAPE THE FACT THAT HE DID DETERMINE WHICH EVENTS WILL OCCUR.

Open theists, on the other hand fail to recognize that the choices are free.

JW, ACTUALLY YOU ARE THE ONE WHO FAILED TO RECOGNIZE THAT CHOICES MADE BY BEINGS CREATED BY AN OMNISCIENT GOD CANNOT BE FREE. ANY FEELINGS OF FREEDOM THEY MAY HAVE ARE ONLY AN ILLUSION.

The point must be emphasized: the choices themselves are logically prior to God’s knowledge of them.

JW, HOW CAN ANYTHING BE PRIOR TO GOD'S KNOWLEDGE IF HE HAS EXISTED ETERNALLY? ARE YOU NOW CLAIMING THAT HIS OMNISCIENCE BEGAN AT SOME POINT IN TIME? THAT MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL ... WHICH IS WHY IT MAKES PERFECT SENSE TO YOU.

In other words, there is a set of possible worlds, each of which features various states of affairs.

JW, IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS THAT CRAIG AND YOU GUYS HAVE BORROWED THE "MANY WORLDS MODEL" FROM QUANTUM PHYSICS, AND DRESSED IT UP IN CHRISTIANITY.

I THINK THIS IS A PERFECT TIME TO REMIND THE AUDIENCE OF THE DEFINITION OF THE WORD "SOPHISTRY" AS TAKEN FROM WICTIONARY:

"An argument that seems plausible, but is fallacious or misleading, especially one devised deliberately to be so."

JW, I THINK THE OPERATIVE WORDS HERE ARE "DEVISED DELIBERATELY."

Middle knowledge reveals the free choices made by the individuals which can populate the possible worlds.

JW, WHAT DO YOU THINK JESUS' APOSTLES WOULD HAVE DONE IF YOU HAD TOLD THEM THIS CRAP? MY GUESS IS, THEY WOULD HAVE PUT A CROWN ON YOUR HEAD MADE FROM THE BRAIDED TAIL OF A DONKEY, AND THEN CRUCIFIED *YOUR* ASS ON A CROSS.

God’s knowledge does not determine the choices

JW, BUT HIS SELECTION OF THE BEST WORLD ... DID.

–God simply chooses to actualize one of the worlds full of free choices.

AND JW, THAT IS WHAT KILLS YOUR ARGUMENT. THE MOMENT GOD CHOOSES THE WINNER, HE *HAS* CHOSEN WHICH OF ALL POSSIBLE CHOICES WILL ACTUALLY OCCUR.

It is only the “free knowledge” of God which is determined by God.

JW, THAT CONTRADICTS YOUR PREVIOUS STATEMENT THAT GOD IS THE ONE WHO DETERMINES *WHICH* WORLD WILL BE SELECTED.

The Theological Superiority of Molinism

Reconciling God’s foreknowledge and creaturely free will is not the only reason to accept molinism. The doctrine has a number of theological advantages over both open theism and theological determinism.

JW, THAT'S LIKE CHOOSING DIPHTHERIA OVER TYPHOID OR SMALLPOX. THEY'RE ALL DISEASES. ANY WAY YOU GO YOU'RE SCREWED.

First, the doctrine undermines the extremely untoward idea within theological determinism that God causes evil.

JW, TSK TSK. HOW QUICKLY YOU CHRISTIANS FORGET YOUR BIBLE:

FROM ISAIAH 45:7

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things."

JW, I'LL AGREE THAT GOD CREATING EVIL IS AN EXTREMELY UNTOWARD IDEA, BUT JW, THEY GOT THAT IDEA FROM GOD HIMSELF. PERHAPS YOU COULD SUPPLY A BETTER SOURCE?

John Frame, for example, says quite simply “…[I]t is important to see that God does in fact bring about the sinful behavior of human beings, whatever problems that may create in our understanding”.

SEE JW, THERE IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST ADVANTAGES OF ATHEISM, RIGHT THERE. THE HORRIBLE MONSTER WHOM YOU BELIEVE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR EVIL AND SIN IS NOT SO BAD AFTER ALL WHEN YOU REALIZE HE IS JUST A FIGMENT OF YOUR IMAGINATION. ATHEISM GETS GOD OFF THE HOOK FOR ALL THOSE TERRIBLE THINGS THOSE ANCIENT GOAT HERDERS WROTE ABOUT HIM.

Molinists, on the other hand, acknowledge that God accounts for evil within His plan

JW, "ACCOUNTS FOR EVIL?" YOU NEED TO SPEND SOME QUIET BIBLE STUDY TIME IN ISAIAH AND REFRESH YOUR *SCRIPTURE 101* BASICS. BY HIS OWN ADMISSION, GOD DID A LOT MORE THAN JUST "ACCOUNT FOR EVIL."

but they can rightly argue that evil is due to the free acts of creatures.

JW, NOT ACCORDING TO YOUR BIBLE. THAT VERSE IN ISAIAH WAS UNUSUALLY CLEAR, AND IT CONTRADICTS YOUR STATEMENT.

Molinism also provides a grounds for Biblical Inerrancy.

JW, EVEN IF ONE HAD NEVER HEARD OF MOLINA, THAT RIGHT THERE WOULD BE REASON ENOUGH NOT TO WASTE ANOTHER SECOND ON THAT NUT. BIBLICAL INERRANCY IS THE LITMUS TEST FOR DETERMINING IF SOMEONE IS A TOTAL FREAK.

Open theists have great difficulties providing any grounds for this doctrine (and often end up abandoning it).

JW, I SEE THAT AS A POINT IN THEIR FAVOR.

The reason for this is because open theists don’t believe God knows what free creatures will do.

JW, IF THEY WERE TRULY FREE, THEN GOD COULDN'T KNOW.

Thus, free creatures–the authors of the Bible–could be fallible.

JW, JUDGING BY HOW ACCURATE THEIR SCIENCE AND THEIR PREDICTIONS WERE, I WOULD SAY THEY WERE A LOT MORE THAN JUST "FALLIBLE."

Middle knoweldge, on the other hand, shows that God knows what the creatures will do in whatever circumstances they are placed in.

JW, THAT'S WHY IN YOUR WORLD, FREE WILL COULD ONLY BE AN ILLUSION. THE CREATURES WOULD THINK THEY WERE FREE TO CHOOSE, BUT SINCE GOD HAS ALREADY CHOSEN WHICH WORLD, FROM AMONG MANY, TO CREATE, THE CHOICES HAVE ALREADY BEEN SEEN AND SELECTED FOR ... BY GOD.

THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU MAKE CRAP UP JW: IT'S BOUND TO BITE YOU IN THE ASS.

Thus, God would have known who, what, where, when, why, and how to bring about His infallible Word.

JW, REFUSING TO ADMIT THAT "HIS WORD" HAS MORE "FALLIBLES" THAN IT HAS VERSES ONLY PROVES THAT YOU ARE A DELUSIONAL TWIT WHO THINKS THAT BY DENYING REALITY YOU CAN CONVINCE OTHERS TO SUPPORT YOUR QUICKLY FADING ANCIENT DEATH CULT. REALITY SEEMS TO BE PROVING OTHERWISE.

Most notably, prophecy perhaps only makes sense on a molinist account.

JW, THAT'S NOT GOOD NEWS FOR YOUR SIDE SINCE NO BIBLICAL PROPHECY HAS EVER COME TRUE.

While determinism allows for the truth of prophecy, it undermines the creature-creator relationship inherent in prophecy (and found in accounts like that of Jonah). God simply foreordains that His prophets come forward and prophecy, then He unilaterally brings about the truth of their prophetic utterances.

Open theism, on the other hand, must force prophecy either into God’s luck or argue that it is one of the “unilateral” actions of God (which undermines the core of open theism–human freedom). Molinism, however, allows for human freedom and the truth of prophecy.

JW, SINCE HUMAN FREEDOM AND PROPHECY ARE MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE BY DEFINITION, YOU HAVE JUST EXECUTED MOLINISM. NICE WORK JW.

Thomas Flint points out that prophecy on a molinist account could be brought about in two ways–either through God acting to bring about the truth of the prophetic utterance,

JW, WHY WOULD GOD HAVE TO ACT TO MAKE HIS PROPHECY HAPPEN IF HE HAS ALREADY CHOSEN THE ONE WORLD, OUT OF MANY, IN WHICH THAT PROPHECY HAS ALREADY BEEN SELECTED TO HAPPEN?

or through God’s foreknowledge of the free actions of creatures.

THAT'S A CONTRADICTION JW. IF THEIR ACTIONS ARE TRULY FREE THEN GOD COULD NOT HAVE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THOSE ACTIONS. FOR ONCE HE DOES, THE DECISION HAS BEEN MADE, AND THE CREATURE IS ONLY UNDER THE ILLUSION THAT IT IS ACTING FREELY. THAT IS BECAUSE IT DOES NOT POSSESS THE FOREKNOWLEDGE TO ALREADY KNOW, AS GOD DOES, WHAT ACTION HAS BEEN PRESELECTED.

YOU SAID YOURSELF, GOD SELECTED THE ONE WORLD OUT OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS WHERE ALL ACTIONS WILL OCCUR AS HE CHOOSES. GOD PICKED ONLY THIS WORLD, AND HE KNOWS EVERY ACTION YOU WILL MAKE BECAUSE HE DISCARDED ALL THE POSSIBLE WORLDS WHERE YOU ACTED DIFFERENTLY.

Again, prayers and their answers may only make sense upon a molinist account.

JW, WHAT ANSWERS? YOU'RE HEARING THE VOICES AGAIN, AREN'T YOU JW?

Determinists, in particular, have difficulty with prayer. God seems quite narcissistic–He foreordains that His creations worship Him, and then chooses to bring about their requests.

JW, PERHAPS YOU COULD PROVIDE AN EXAMPLE OF A REQUEST HE BROUGHT ABOUT? I MEAN ONE ... WITH EVIDENCE.

Open theists, on the other hand, have left God hog-tied. I may pray for a friend to come to the faith, and God can only hope with me that that friend might change his/her mind. God doesn’t know what will happen, on open theism, so He, like me, can just try His best.

JW, IF YOU WANT FREE WILL WITH YOUR RELIGION, THEN GO WITH THE OPEN THEISTS. IF YOU THINK YOUR POSITION PROVIDES IT, THEN YOU'RE JUST JACKING YOURSELF OFF, WHICH, IS PRETTY MUCH WHAT THIS ENTIRE ESSAY WAS - ONE GIANT MENTAL JACK OFF.

Conversely, molinism allows for creaturely freedom to choose to pray, while also allowing God to bring about the states of affairs prayed for.

Conclusion

Molinism provides a wealth of theological insight.

ACTUALLY JW, MOLINISM ONLY PROVIDES A LOGICALLY FLAWED ARGUMENT THAT ALLOWS APOLOGISTS TO DELUDE THEMSELVES INTO BELIEVING THAT THEY CAN MAINTAIN TWO CONTRADICTORY POSITIONS AT THE SAME TIME: FREE WILL AND OMNISCIENCE.

Not only that, but it also reconciles God’s foreknowledge with our free will.

JW, ONLY IN THE MINDS OF THOSE DESPERATE ENOUGH TO ACCEPT AN ARGUMENT THAT RIVALS PASCAL'S WAGER FOR STUPIDITY.

Molinism avoids the difficulties of both open theism and determinism, while making sense of theological and philosophical truths.

JW, WHAT THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS? NAME ONE. ANY WORD BEGINNING WITH "THEO" SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AN ANTONYM FOR ANY WORD CONTAINING "TRUTH."

The defenders of molinism have won their case.

JW, YOUR CONSTANT DECLARATIONS OF VICTORY (LIKE IN THE HARRIS V. CRAIG DEBATE) REMIND ME OF A FOOTBALL FAN WHOSE TEAM LOSES 99-2 ... BUT CLAIMS VICTORY BECAUSE HIS TEAM SCORED MORE SAFETIES.

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

NEW DRUG MAY PREVENT PROGRESSION OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

WHEN GIVEN TO MICE WITH ALZHEIMER'S, THE DRUG, KNOWN AS J147, IMPROVED MEMORY AND PREVENTED BRAIN DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE DISEASE. THE NEW COMPOUND COULD BE TESTED FOR TREATMENT OF THE DISEASE IN HUMANS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. J147 ENHANCES MEMORY IN BOTH NORMAL AND ALZHEIMER'S MICE AND ALSO PROTECTS THE BRAIN FROM THE LOSS OF SYNAPTIC CONNECTIONS. NO DRUGS ON THE MARKET FOR ALZHEIMER'S HAVE BOTH OF THESE PROPERTIES.

AS MANY AS 5.4 MILLION AMERICANS SUFFER FROM ALZHEIMER'S. MORE THAN 16 MILLION WILL HAVE THE DISEASE BY 2050, RESULTING IN MEDICAL COSTS OF OVER $1 TRILLION PER YEAR. THE DISEASE CAUSES A STEADY, IRREVERSIBLE DECLINE IN BRAIN FUNCTION, ERASING A PERSON'S MEMORY AND ABILITY TO THINK CLEARLY UNTIL THEY ARE UNABLE TO PERFORM SIMPLE TASKS SUCH AS EATING AND TALKING, AND IT IS ULTIMATELY FATAL. ALZHEIMER'S IS LINKED TO AGING AND TYPICALLY APPEARS AFTER AGE 60, ALTHOUGH A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES CARRY A GENETIC RISK FOR EARLIER ONSET.

AMONG THE TOP TEN CAUSES OF DEATH, ALZHEIMER'S IS THE ONLY ONE WITHOUT A WAY TO PREVENT, CURE OR SLOW DOWN DISEASE PROGRESSION. SCIENTISTS ARE UNCLEAR WHAT CAUSES ALZHEIMER'S, WHICH APPEARS TO EMERGE FROM A COMPLEX MIX OF GENETICS, ENVIRONMENT AND LIFESTYLE FACTORS. SO FAR, THE DRUGS DEVELOPED TO TREAT THE DISEASE, SUCH AS ARICEPT, RAZADYNE AND EXELON, ONLY PRODUCE FLEETING MEMORY IMPROVEMENTS AND DO NOTHING TO SLOW THE OVERALL COURSE OF THE DISEASE.

TO FIND A NEW TYPE OF DRUG, SCIENTISTS BUCKED THE TREND WITHIN THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY OF FOCUSING EXCLUSIVELY ON THE BIOLOGICAL PATHWAYS INVOLVED IN THE FORMATION OF AMYLOID PLAQUES, THE DENSE DEPOSITS OF PROTEIN THAT CHARACTERIZE THE DISEASE. TO DATE, ALL AMYLOID-BASED DRUGS HAVE FAILED IN CLINICAL TRIALS.

INSTEAD, THE SCIENTISTS DEVELOPED METHODS FOR USING LIVING NEURONS GROWN IN LABORATORY DISHES TO TEST WHETHER OR NOT NEW SYNTHETIC COMPOUNDS WERE EFFECTIVE AT PROTECTING THE BRAIN CELLS AGAINST SEVERAL PATHOLOGIES ASSOCIATED WITH BRAIN AGING. BASED ON THE TEST RESULTS FROM EACH CHEMICAL ITERATION OF THE LEAD COMPOUND, WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY DEVELOPED FOR TREATMENT OF STROKE AND TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY, THEY WERE ABLE TO ALTER ITS CHEMICAL STRUCTURE TO MAKE A MUCH MORE POTENT ALZHEIMER'S DRUG.

ALZHEIMER'S IS A COMPLEX DISEASE, BUT MOST DRUG DEVELOPMENT IN THE PHARMACEUTICAL WORLD HAS FOCUSED ON A SINGLE ASPECT OF THE DISEASE--THE AMYLOID PATHWAY. IN CONTRAST, BY TESTING THESE COMPOUNDS IN LIVING CELL CULTURES, RESEARCHERS CAN DETERMINE WHAT THEY DO AGAINST A RANGE OF AGE-RELATED PROBLEMS AND SELECT THE BEST CANDIDATE THAT ADDRESSES MULTIPLE ASPECTS OF THE DISEASE, NOT JUST ONE.

WITH A PROMISING COMPOUND IN HAND, THE RESEARCHERS SHIFTED TO TESTING J147 AS AN ORAL MEDICATION IN MICE. THEY CONDUCTED A RANGE OF BEHAVIORAL TESTS THAT SHOWED THAT THE DRUG IMPROVED MEMORY IN NORMAL RODENTS.

THE RESEARCHERS WENT ON TO SHOW THAT IT PREVENTED COGNITIVE DECLINE IN ANIMALS WITH ALZHEIMER'S AND THAT MICE AND RATS TREATED WITH THE DRUG PRODUCED MORE OF A PROTEIN CALLED BRAIN-DERIVED NEUROTROPHIC FACTOR, A MOLECULE THAT PROTECTS NEURONS FROM TOXIC INSULTS, HELPS NEW NEURONS GROW AND CONNECT WITH OTHER BRAIN CELLS, AND IS INVOLVED IN MEMORY FORMATION.

BECAUSE OF THE BROAD ABILITY OF J147 TO PROTECT NERVE CELLS, THE RESEARCHERS BELIEVE THAT IT MAY ALSO BE EFFECTIVE FOR TREATING OTHER NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS, SUCH AS PARKINSON'S DISEASE, HUNTINGTON'S DISEASE AND AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS, AS WELL AS STROKE.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

EMILY DICKINSON (1830 –1886) 55 YEARS.

SHE WAS AN AMERICAN POET. SHE LIVED A MOSTLY INTROVERTED AND RECLUSIVE LIFE. AFTER SHE STUDIED AT THE AMHERST ACADEMY FOR SEVEN YEARS IN HER YOUTH, SHE SPENT A SHORT TIME AT MOUNT HOLYOKE FEMALE SEMINARY BEFORE RETURNING TO HER FAMILY'S HOUSE.

ALTHOUGH DICKINSON WAS A PROLIFIC PRIVATE POET, FEWER THAN A DOZEN OF HER NEARLY EIGHTEEN HUNDRED POEMS WERE PUBLISHED DURING HER LIFETIME. IT WAS NOT UNTIL AFTER HER DEATH IN 1886—WHEN EMILY'S YOUNGER SISTER DISCOVERED HER CACHE OF POEMS. A COMPLETE AND MOSTLY UNALTERED COLLECTION OF HER POETRY BECAME AVAILABLE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 1955 WHEN THE POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON WAS PUBLISHED. CRITICS NOW CONSIDER DICKINSON TO BE A MAJOR AMERICAN POET.

MANY OF HER POEMS DEAL WITH THEMES OF DEATH AND IMMORTALITY, TWO RECURRING TOPICS IN LETTERS TO HER FRIENDS.

"THAT IT WILL NEVER COME AGAIN IS WHAT MAKES LIFE SO SWEET."