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GREATEST VALENTINE'S DAY STORY EVER

EGYPT'S MUSLIMS TURNED UP IN DROVES FOR THE COPTIC CHRISTMAS MASS, OFFERING THEIR BODIES, AND LIVES, AS “SHIELDS” TO EGYPT’S THREATENED CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

EGYPT’S MAJORITY MUSLIM POPULATION STUCK TO ITS WORD. WHAT HAD BEEN A PROMISE OF SOLIDARITY TO THE WEARY COPTIC COMMUNITY, WAS HONORED WHEN THOUSANDS OF MUSLIMS SHOWED UP AT COPTIC CHRISTMAS EVE MASS SERVICES IN CHURCHES AROUND THE COUNTRY AND AT CANDLE LIGHT VIGILS HELD OUTSIDE.

FROM THE WELL-KNOWN TO THE UNKNOWN, MUSLIMS HAD OFFERED THEIR BODIES AS “HUMAN SHIELDS” FOR LAST NIGHT’S MASS, MAKING A PLEDGE TO COLLECTIVELY FIGHT THE THREAT OF ISLAMIC MILITANTS AND TOWARDS AN EGYPT FREE FROM SECTARIAN STRIFE.

(MY COMMENT: IT DOESN'T GET ANY BETTER THAN THAT. THIS IS THE ANSWER TO THE WORLDWIDE RELIGIOUS WARFARE THAT HAS BEEN RIPPING HUMANITY APART FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS.

EGYPTIAN MUSLIMS ARE PROVIDING THE MODEL THAT ALL COUNTRIES NEED TO IMPLEMENT. CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS NEED TO WORK TOGETHER TO ERADICATE THE HATEFUL FUNDAMENTALIST ELEMENTS FROM WITHIN THEIR RANKS IN ORDER TO ADVANCE INTO A NEW FUTURE OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE).

“WE EITHER LIVE TOGETHER, OR WE DIE TOGETHER,” WAS THE SLOGANEERING GENIUS OF MOHAMED EL-SAWY, A MUSLIM ARTS TYCOON WHOSE CULTURAL CENTRE DISTRIBUTED FLYERS AT CHURCHES IN CAIRO THURSDAY NIGHT, AND WHO HAS BEEN CREDITED WITH FIRST FLOATING THE “HUMAN SHIELD” IDEA.

(MY COMMENT: WOULD IT BE HYPERBOLE TO SAY THAT I THINK EL-SAWY IS ONE OF THE GREATEST HUMANS WHO HAS EVER LIVED?).

AMONG THOSE SHIELDS WERE MOVIE STARS ADEL IMAM AND YOUSRA, POPULAR MUSLIM TELEVANGELIST AND PREACHER AMIR KHALED, THE TWO SONS OF PRESIDENT HOSNI MUBARAK, AND THOUSANDS OF CITIZENS WHO HAVE SAID THEY CONSIDER THE ATTACK, ONE ON EGYPT AS A WHOLE.

(MY COMMENT: THIS IS WHAT PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE BEEN DOING ALL ALONG.

AT LAST, THERE MAY BE A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL. NOW, IF ONLY WE CAN ESCAPE THE TUNNEL BEFORE THE TRAIN ARRIVES).

DALIA MUSTAFA, A STUDENT WHO ATTENDED MASS AT VIRGIN MARY CHURCH, SAID, “THIS IS NOT ABOUT US AND THEM. WE ARE ONE. THIS WAS AN ATTACK ON EGYPT AS A WHOLE, AND I AM STANDING WITH THE COPTS BECAUSE THE ONLY WAY THINGS WILL CHANGE IN THIS COUNTRY IS IF WE COME TOGETHER.”

(MY COMMENT: JOAN OF ARC WOULD HAVE BEEN PROUD OF DALIA MUSTAFA).

IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING THE BRUTAL ATTACK ON SAINTS CHURCH IN ALEXANDRIA, WHICH LEFT 21 DEAD ON NEW YEAR’ EVE, SOLIDARITY BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND COPTS HAS SEEN AN UNPRECEDENTED PEAK. MILLIONS OF EGYPTIANS CHANGED THEIR FACEBOOK PROFILE PICTURES TO THE IMAGE OF A CROSS WITHIN A CRESCENT – THE SYMBOL OF AN “EGYPT FOR ALL”. AROUND THE CITY, BANNERS WENT UP CALLING FOR UNITY, AND DEPICTING MOSQUES AND CHURCHES, CROSSES AND CRESCENTS, TOGETHER AS ONE.

(MY COMMENT: THIS IS THE FUTURE OF RELIGION:

INSTEAD OF DIVIDING HUMANS INTO WARRING TRIBES - UNITING ALL INTO ONE.

INSTEAD OF WORSHIPPING BLOOD AND DEATH - CELEBRATING LIFE AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.

ATHEISTS DO NOT DESIRE A WORLD FULL OF NONBELIEVERS. THAT IS A LIE SPREAD BY RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISTS. ATHEISTS DESIRE A WORLD WHERE EVERYONE'S BELIEFS ARE TOLERATED. THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO RESPECT BELIEFS WITH WHICH YOU DISAGREE, BUT IT DOES MEAN YOU HAVE TO TOLERATE THEM. YOU MAY DISRESPECT THE BELIEF, BUT YOU SHOULD RESPECT THE PERSON. NO PERSON SHOULD BE DISRESPECTED FOR WHAT THEY BELIEVE, BUT ONLY FOR WHAT THEY DO).

THE ATTACK HAS ROCKED A NATION THAT IS NO STRANGER TO ACTS OF TERROR, AGAINST ALL MUSLIMS, COPTS AND JEWS. IN JANUARY OF LAST YEAR, ON THE EVE OF COPTIC CHRISTMAS, A DRIVE-BY SHOOTING IN THE SOUTHERN TOWN OF NAG HAMMADI KILLED EIGHT COPTICS AS THEY WERE LEAVING CHURCH FOLLOWING MASS. IN 2004 AND 2005, BOMBINGS IN THE RED SEA RESORTS OF TABA AND SHARM EL-SHEIKH CLAIMED OVER 100 LIVES, AND IN THE LATE 90’S, ISLAMIC MILITANTS EXECUTED A SERIES OF BOMBINGS AND MASSACRES THAT LEFT DOZENS DEAD.

THIS ATTACK THOUGH COMES AFTER A SERIES OF MORE RECENT INCIDENTS THAT HAVE LEFT EGYPTIANS FEELING LEFT OUT IN THE COLD BY A GOVERNMENT MEANT TO PROTECT THEM.

LAST SUMMER, 28-YEAR-OLD BUSINESSMAN KHALED SAID WAS BEATEN TO DEATH BY POLICE, ALSO IN ALEXANDRIA, CAUSING A LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL UPROAR. AROUND HIS DEATH, THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS OTHER REPORTS OF POLICE BRUTALITY, RANDOM ARRESTS AND TORTURE.

LAST YEAR WAS ALSO WITNESS TO A RUTHLESS PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION PROCESS IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT’S SECURITY APPARATUS AND THUGS SEEMED TO SPIRAL OUT OF CONTROL. THE RESULT, ASIDE FROM INJURIES AND DEATHS, WAS A SWEEPING WIN BY THE RULING PARTY THANKS TO ITS OWN CAREFULLY-ORCHESTRATED CAMPAIGN THAT INCLUDED VOTE-RIGGING, CORRUPTION AND WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE. THE OPPOSITION WAS ESSENTIALLY ANNIHILATED. AND JUST DAYS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS, COPTICS - WHO MAKE UP 10 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION - WERE ONCE AGAIN THE SUBJECT OF PERSECUTION, WHEN A GOVERNMENT MORATORIUM ON CONSTRUCTION OF A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CENTRE RESULTED IN CLASHES BETWEEN POLICE AND PROTESTORS. TWO PEOPLE WERE LEFT DEAD AND OVER 100 WERE DETAINED, FACING SENTENCES OF UP TO LIFE IN PRISON.

THE ECONOMIC WOES OF A COUNTRY THAT FAVORS THE RICH HAVE ONLY EXACERBATED THE FRUSTRATION OF A POPULATION OF 80 MILLION WHOSE MAJORITY STRUGGLE EACH DAY TO SURVIVE. ACCOUNTS OF THEFTS, DRUGS, AND VIOLENCE HAVE SURGED IN RECENT YEARS, AND THE CHORUS OF VOICES OF DISCONTENT HAS CONTINUED TO GROW.

THE TERROR ATTACK THAT STRUCK THE COUNTRY ON NEW YEAR’S EVE IS IN MANY WAYS A FINAL STRAW – A BREAKING POINT, NOT JUST FOR THE COPTIC COMMUNITY, BUT FOR MUSLIMS AS WELL. THEY TOO FEEL MARGINALIZED, OPPRESSED, AND OVERLOOKED BY A GOVERNMENT THAT FAILS TO ADDRESS THEIR NEEDS. ON THIS COPTIC CHRISTMAS EVE, THE SOLIDARITY WAS NOT JUST ONE OF RELIGION, BUT OF A DESPERATE AND COLLECTIVE PLEA FOR A BETTER LIFE AND A GOVERNMENT WITH ACCOUNTABILITY.

(MY FINAL COMMENT: IT IS SAD THAT EGYPT'S LONG ILLUSTRIOUS HISTORY SHOULD RESULT IN A COUNTRY AS CORRUPT AND VIOLENT AS THE ONE IT HAS BECOME. BUT AS THIS ARTICLE SHOWS, HEROES ARE EMERGING; PEOPLE WILLING TO DIE FOR THEIR BELIEFS. THEY HAVE A LONG DIFFICULT ROAD AHEAD, BUT IF THEY SUCCEED, THEY WILL BE A MODEL FOR THE WORLD.

WHY HAS THE MAINSTREAM AMERICAN MEDIA BURIED THIS STORY? THIS STORY SHOWS MUSLIMS AT THEIR BEST. HELL, IT SHOWS HUMANITY AT ITS VERY BEST.

WHY WASN'T THE MEDIA INTERESTED?).

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

LONGSTANDING MYSTERY OF SUN'S HOT OUTER ATMOSPHERE SOLVED

ONE OF THE MOST ENDURING MYSTERIES IN SOLAR PHYSICS IS WHY THE SUN'S OUTER ATMOSPHERE, OR CORONA, IS MILLIONS OF DEGREES HOTTER THAN ITS SURFACE.

THE FINDING ADDRESSES A FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION IN ASTROPHYSICS: HOW ENERGY IS MOVED FROM THE SUN'S INTERIOR TO CREATE ITS HOT OUTER ATMOSPHERE.

BY IDENTIFYING THAT THESE JETS INSERT HEATED PLASMA INTO THE SUN'S OUTER ATMOSPHERE, WE CAN GAIN A MUCH GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF THAT REGION AND POSSIBLY IMPROVE OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUN'S SUBTLE INFLUENCE ON THE EARTH'S UPPER ATMOSPHERE.

THE OBSERVATIONS PROVIDE NEW INSIGHT ABOUT THE ENERGY OUTPUT OF THE SUN AND OTHER STARS. THE RESULTS ARE ALSO A GREAT EXAMPLE OF THE POWER OF COLLABORATION AMONG UNIVERSITY, PRIVATE INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT SCIENTISTS AND ORGANIZATIONS.

THE RESEARCH TEAM FOCUSED ON JETS OF PLASMA KNOWN AS SPICULES, WHICH ARE FOUNTAINS OF PLASMA PROPELLED UPWARD FROM NEAR THE SURFACE OF THE SUN INTO THE OUTER ATMOSPHERE.

FOR DECADES SCIENTISTS BELIEVED SPICULES COULD SEND HEAT INTO THE CORONA. HOWEVER, FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONAL RESEARCH IN THE 1980S, IT WAS FOUND THAT SPICULE PLASMA DID NOT REACH CORONAL TEMPERATURES, AND SO THE THEORY LARGELY FELL OUT OF VOGUE.

HEATING OF SPICULES TO MILLIONS OF DEGREES HAS NEVER BEEN DIRECTLY OBSERVED, SO THEIR ROLE IN CORONAL HEATING HAD BEEN DISMISSED AS UNLIKELY.

IN 2007, SCIENTISTS IDENTIFIED A NEW CLASS OF SPICULE THAT MOVED MUCH FASTER AND WERE SHORTER-LIVED THAN THE TRADITIONAL SPICULES.

THESE "TYPE II" SPICULES SHOOT UPWARD AT HIGH SPEEDS, OFTEN IN EXCESS OF 100 KILOMETERS PER SECOND, BEFORE DISAPPEARING.

THE RAPID DISAPPEARANCE OF THESE JETS SUGGESTED THAT THE PLASMA THEY CARRIED MIGHT GET VERY HOT, BUT DIRECT OBSERVATIONAL EVIDENCE OF THIS PROCESS WAS MISSING.

THE RESEARCHERS USED NEW OBSERVATIONS FROM THE ATMOSPHERIC IMAGING ASSEMBLY ON NASA'S RECENTLY LAUNCHED SOLAR DYNAMICS OBSERVATORY AND NASA'S FOCAL PLANE PACKAGE FOR THE SOLAR OPTICAL TELESCOPE ON THE JAPANESE HINODE SATELLITE TO TEST THEIR HYPOTHESIS.

THE HIGH SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL RESOLUTION OF THE NEWER INSTRUMENTS WAS CRUCIAL IN REVEALING THIS PREVIOUSLY HIDDEN CORONAL MASS SUPPLY.

OBSERVATIONS REVEAL, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE ONE-TO-ONE CONNECTION BETWEEN PLASMA THAT IS HEATED TO MILLIONS OF DEGREES AND THE SPICULES THAT INSERT THIS PLASMA INTO THE CORONA.

THE FINDINGS PROVIDE AN OBSERVATIONAL CHALLENGE TO THE EXISTING THEORIES OF CORONAL HEATING.

DURING THE PAST FEW DECADES, SCIENTISTS PROPOSED A WIDE VARIETY OF THEORETICAL MODELS, BUT THE LACK OF DETAILED OBSERVATION SIGNIFICANTLY HAMPERED PROGRESS.

ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES IS TO UNDERSTAND WHAT DRIVES AND HEATS THE MATERIAL IN THE SPICULES.

A KEY STEP WILL BE TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE INTERFACE REGION BETWEEN THE SUN'S VISIBLE SURFACE, OR PHOTOSPHERE, AND ITS CORONA.

ANOTHER NASA MISSION, THE INTERFACE REGION IMAGING SPECTROGRAPH, IS SCHEDULED FOR LAUNCH IN 2012 TO PROVIDE HIGH-FIDELITY DATA ON THE COMPLEX PROCESSES AND ENORMOUS CONTRASTS OF DENSITY, TEMPERATURE AND MAGNETIC FIELD BETWEEN THE PHOTOSPHERE AND CORONA. RESEARCHERS HOPE THIS WILL REVEAL MORE ABOUT THE SPICULE HEATING AND LAUNCH MECHANISM.

BONUS SCIENCE STORY:

SCIENTISTS CONSTRUCT SYNTHETIC PROTEINS THAT SUSTAIN LIFE

IN A GROUNDBREAKING ACHIEVEMENT THAT COULD HELP SCIENTISTS "BUILD" NEW BIOLOGICAL SYSTEMS, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY SCIENTISTS HAVE CONSTRUCTED FOR THE FIRST TIME ARTIFICIAL PROTEINS THAT ENABLE THE GROWTH OF LIVING CELLS.

THE TEAM OF RESEARCHERS CREATED GENETIC SEQUENCES NEVER BEFORE SEEN IN NATURE, AND THE SCIENTISTS SHOWED THAT THEY CAN PRODUCE SUBSTANCES THAT SUSTAIN LIFE IN CELLS ALMOST AS READILY AS PROTEINS PRODUCED BY NATURE'S OWN TOOLKIT.

THESE MOLECULAR MACHINES FUNCTION QUITE WELL WITHIN A LIVING ORGANISM EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE DESIGNED FROM SCRATCH AND EXPRESSED FROM ARTIFICIAL GENES. THE MOLECULAR PARTS KIT FOR LIFE NEED NOT BE LIMITED TO PARTS -- GENES AND PROTEINS -- THAT ALREADY EXIST IN NATURE.

THE WORK REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT ADVANCE IN SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY, AN EMERGING AREA OF RESEARCH IN WHICH SCIENTISTS WORK TO DESIGN AND FABRICATE BIOLOGICAL COMPONENTS AND SYSTEMS THAT DO NOT ALREADY EXIST IN THE NATURAL WORLD. ONE OF THE FIELD'S GOALS IS TO DEVELOP AN ENTIRELY ARTIFICIAL GENOME COMPOSED OF UNIQUE PATTERNS OF CHEMICALS.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF ARTIFICIAL GENOMES CAPABLE OF SUSTAINING CELL LIFE MAY BE WITHIN REACH.

NEARLY ALL PREVIOUS WORK IN SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY HAS FOCUSED ON REORGANIZING PARTS DRAWN FROM NATURAL ORGANISMS. IN CONTRAST THE RESULTS DESCRIBED BY THE TEAM SHOW THAT BIOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS CAN BE PROVIDED BY MACROMOLECULES THAT WERE NOT BORROWED FROM NATURE, BUT DESIGNED IN THE LABORATORY.

ALTHOUGH SCIENTISTS HAVE SHOWN PREVIOUSLY THAT PROTEINS CAN BE DESIGNED TO FOLD AND, IN SOME CASES, CATALYZE REACTIONS, THIS WORK REPRESENTS A NEW FRONTIER IN CREATING THESE SYNTHETIC PROTEINS.

THE RESEARCH IS DESCRIBED IN THE ONLINE JOURNAL PLOS ONE, PUBLISHED BY THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF SCIENCE.

RESEARCHERS STUDY THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BIOLOGICAL PROCESSES ON THE MOLECULAR SCALE AND PROCESSES AT WORK ON A LARGER MAGNITUDE. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY ARE STUDYING HOW THE ERRANT FOLDING OF PROTEINS IN THE BRAIN CAN LEAD TO ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE, AND ARE INVOLVED IN A SEARCH FOR COMPOUNDS TO THWART THAT PROCESS. IN WORK THAT RELATES TO THE NEW PAPER, THEY ARE ALSO INTERESTED IN LEARNING WHAT PROCESSES DRIVE THE ROUTINE FOLDING OF PROTEINS ON A BASIC LEVEL -- AS PROTEINS NEED TO FOLD IN ORDER TO FUNCTION -- AND WHY CERTAIN KEY SEQUENCES HAVE EVOLVED TO BE CENTRAL TO EXISTENCE.

PROTEINS ARE THE WORKHORSES OF ORGANISMS, PRODUCED FROM INSTRUCTIONS ENCODED INTO CELLULAR DNA. THE IDENTITY OF ANY GIVEN PROTEIN IS DICTATED BY A UNIQUE SEQUENCE OF 20 CHEMICALS KNOWN AS AMINO ACIDS. IF THE DIFFERENT AMINO ACIDS CAN BE VIEWED AS LETTERS OF AN ALPHABET, EACH PROTEIN SEQUENCE CONSTITUTES ITS OWN UNIQUE "SENTENCE."

AND, IF A PROTEIN IS 100 AMINO ACIDS LONG (MOST PROTEINS ARE EVEN LONGER), THERE ARE AN ASTRONOMICALLY LARGE NUMBER OF POSSIBILITIES OF DIFFERENT PROTEIN SEQUENCES. THE RESEARCH QUESTIONED WHY THERE ARE ONLY ABOUT 100,000 DIFFERENT PROTEINS PRODUCED IN THE HUMAN BODY, WHEN THERE IS A POTENTIAL FOR SO MANY MORE. THEY WONDERED, ARE THESE PARTICULAR PROTEINS SOMEHOW SPECIAL? OR MIGHT OTHERS WORK EQUALLY WELL, EVEN THOUGH EVOLUTION HAS NOT YET HAD A CHANCE TO SAMPLE THEM?

RESEARCHERS SET ABOUT TO CREATE ARTIFICIAL PROTEINS ENCODED BY GENETIC SEQUENCES NOT SEEN IN NATURE. THEY PRODUCED ABOUT 1 MILLION AMINO ACID SEQUENCES THAT WERE DESIGNED TO FOLD INTO STABLE THREE-DIMENSIONAL STRUCTURES.

MICHAEL FISHER, A CO-AUTHOR OF THE PAPER SAID, "WHAT I BELIEVE IS MOST INTRIGUING ABOUT OUR WORK IS THAT THE INFORMATION ENCODED IN THESE ARTIFICIAL GENES IS COMPLETELY NOVEL -- IT DOES NOT COME FROM, NOR IS IT SIGNIFICANTLY RELATED TO, INFORMATION ENCODED BY NATURAL GENES, AND YET THE END RESULT IS A LIVING, FUNCTIONAL MICROBE. IT IS PERHAPS ANALOGOUS TO TAKING A SENTENCE, COMING UP WITH BRAND NEW WORDS, TESTING IF ANY OF OUR NEW WORDS CAN TAKE THE PLACE OF ANY OF THE ORIGINAL WORDS IN THE SENTENCE, AND FINDING THAT IN SOME CASES, THE SENTENCE RETAINS VIRTUALLY THE SAME MEANING WHILE INCORPORATING BRAND NEW WORDS."

ONCE THE TEAM HAD CREATED THIS NEW LIBRARY OF ARTIFICIAL PROTEINS, THEY INSERTED THOSE PROTEINS INTO VARIOUS MUTANT STRAINS OF BACTERIA IN WHICH CERTAIN NATURAL GENES PREVIOUSLY HAD BEEN DELETED. THE DELETED NATURAL GENES ARE REQUIRED FOR SURVIVAL UNDER A GIVEN SET OF CONDITIONS, INCLUDING A LIMITED FOOD SUPPLY. UNDER THESE HARSH CONDITIONS, THE MUTANT STRAINS OF BACTERIA DIED -- UNLESS THEY ACQUIRED A LIFE-SUSTAINING NOVEL PROTEIN. THIS WAS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE FORMATION OF A BACTERIAL COLONY UNDER THESE SELECTIVE CONDITIONS COULD OCCUR ONLY IF A PROTEIN HAD THE CAPACITY TO SUSTAIN THE GROWTH OF LIVING CELLS.

IN A SERIES OF EXPERIMENTS EXPLORING THE ROLE OF DIFFERING PROTEINS, THE SCIENTISTS SHOWED THAT SEVERAL DIFFERENT STRAINS OF BACTERIA THAT SHOULD HAVE DIED WERE RESCUED BY NOVEL PROTEINS DESIGNED IN THE LABORATORY.

THIS IS AN EXCITING RESULT, BECAUSE IT SHOWS THAT UNNATURAL PROTEINS CAN SUSTAIN A NATURAL SYSTEM, AND THAT SUCH PROTEINS CAN BE FOUND AT RELATIVELY HIGH FREQUENCY IN A LIBRARY DESIGNED ONLY FOR STRUCTURE.

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NEWS IN SCIENCE & POLITICS

2010 TIES 2005 AS THE WARMEST YEAR IN RECENT HISTORY

ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL CLIMATIC DATA CENTER WHICH HAS RECORDS DATING BACK TO 1880, LAST YEAR WAS A HOT AND WET AFFAIR, TYING 2005 FOR THE WARMEST YEAR ON RECORD AND STANDING ALONE AS THE YEAR WITH THE MOST PRECIPITATION. THE EARTH’S AVERAGE TEMPERATURE ROSE TO 58 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT, OR 1 DEGREE ABOVE THE 20TH-CENTURY AVERAGE. IT WAS THE 34TH STRAIGHT YEAR THAT TEMPERATURES HAVE BEEN ABOVE AVERAGE.

THIS WARMTH REINFORCES THE NOTION THAT WE’RE SEEING CLIMATE CHANGE. THE YEAR SAW A NUMBER OF BRUTAL HEAT WAVES—MOST NOTABLY RUSSIA’S—AND THE PROBABILITY OF THESE EVENTS DOES INCREASE AS THE CLIMATE WARMS. BUT ANOTHER CLIMATOLOGIST NOTES THAT THE TEMPERATURE TREND IS PRETTY FLAT FROM THE 1990S. WE DON’T SEE MUCH OF A WARMING TREND OVER THE PAST 12 YEARS.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

STEVEN WEINBERG AGE 77

NOBEL LAUREATE IN PHYSICS FOR HIS WORK IN UNIFYING THE ELECTROMAGNETIC AND WEAK NUCLEAR FORCES.

"SCIENCE DOES NOT MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE IN GOD.

IT JUST MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO NOT BELIEVE IN GOD."