**Uniqueness**

**No one like you has been before you**

**and no one like you shall arise after you.**

***(1 Kings 3:12)***

There is one glory of the sun  
and another glory of the moon  
and another glory of the stars;  
for one star differs from another star in glory.

***(1 Corinthians 15:41))***

**Apples do not reproduce true from seeds. Each apple has about ten seeds, and each of them will grow into a different kind. Thus, apples from seeds that were planted by American settlers grew in spectacular varieties, said to number over 3000. *(Jack Denton Scott, in Reader’s Digest)***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**Given away by your bacteria: The skin on your hands harbors a teeming “tropical rain forest” of bacteria – about 150 different species mixed in proportions that are unique to you, says the Los Angeles Times. So when you touch something, you leave behind a microbial trace – one sufficiently distinctive, a new study indicates, to identify you as reliably as a fingerprint would. University of Colorado researchers gave computer mice to three people to use and afterward sampled the bacterial colonies left behind on the devices; they then compared what they found with a database of colonies collected from 270 other people. In every case, the mix of bacteria on the mouse closely matched that on the owner’s palm but not anyone else’s. “It suggests a new approach to forensics,” says Martin Blaser, a forensics expert at New York University who was not involved in the study. The researchers acknowledge that the technique isn’t ready for prime time; they don’t yet know how many times something must be touched to provide an identifiable trace, or how to sort out a signature if two people have touched the same surface. Still, a microbial trace can’t be simply wiped away, like a physical fingerprint, and lasts for weeks. It can also be found on surfaces, such as fabrics, on which fingerprints don’t show up. (The Week magazine, April 2, 2010)**

**Our bodies, our microbes: Our bodies contain 10 times more bacteria than human cells, and those resident microbes may rule our mental and physical health. That’s the conclusion of researchers who for the first time have mapped up to 99 percent of the microbes that live, more helpfully than harmfully, in the human body. Using DNA sequencing on samples gathered from 242 healthy volunteers, they discovered that we each host 100 trillion bacteria of 10,000 types. As much as six pounds of our body weight is bacteria. Each person has a unique microbiome, or balance of different types of microbes. “These microbes are part of our evolution,” New York University microbiologist Martin Blaser tells NPR.org. “They are very important in human health and probably human disease as well.” Helpful bacteria assist in the digestion of food, train the immune system, and aid in keeping harmful bacteria from taking root. Researchers hope that maps of healthy microbiomes will allow doctors to identify bacterial imbalances that can cause infections, mood disorders, obesity, and other medical problems – and offer clues on how tweaking a patient’s microbial makeup could address them. The next challenge, Washington University biologist George Weinstock says, is to figure out how microbes “talk to our human cells” and how “human cells talk back to them.” That conversation, he says, “makes us who we are.” (The Week magazine, July 6-13, 2012)**

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*Scales on the feet of birds give them “fingerprints” as unique as those of people. (Boyd's Curiosity Shop, p. 20)**

**“They say certain unusual persons are ‘marching to the beat of a different drum.’ Brutus Thornapple must have a whole brass band leading him off on a tangent!” (Art & Chip Sansom, in The Born Loser comic strip)**

**In order to be irreplaceable, one must always be different. (Coco Chanel, French clothes designer)**

**Every clown is unique. Their faces have to be painted on an eggshell to be registered. When the clown dies, his egg is buried with him, no doubt sunny-side up. *(Russ Edwards & Jack Kreismer, in The Bathroom Trivia Digest, p. 102)***

**It is possible to make a positive identification of a cow by taking a “fingerprint” of its nose. *(Paul Stirling Hagerman, in It’s a Weird World, p. 72)***

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**If formed under laboratory conditions, all diamonds would be octahedrons, perfectly transparent. But because of the presence of other chemical elements in the kimberlite pipes, and the stresses of their rough journey through the earth, diamonds emerge with varying degrees of clarity, in many shapes and practically all the colors of the spectrum. *(Ronald Schiller, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Israel, world's largest exporter of cut diamonds, has developed a method of “fingerprinting” diamonds. They use a laser beam. Every diamond throws a distinctive, personal pattern of light. (Bernie Smith, in The Joy of Trivia , p. 321)**

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**It is also true that every snowflake, blade of grass, and grain of sand is different. They may all look alike but they are not! On the microscopic level, there is practically an infinite number of ways to arrange atoms. Even a single snowflake, for example, has about 10 (to the 20th power) atoms arranged within itself. (Donald B. DeYoung)**

**Waiter: “Here are your sodas!” Drabble: “Thank you, my good woman! You know, Wendy, I like to think that I am classy, sophisticated and socially gracious, different from most other men my age!” Wendy: “You're different, all right!” (Kevin Fagan, in Drabble comic strip)**

**The history books are full of stories of gifted persons whose talents were overlooked by a procession of people until someone believed in them. Albert Einstein was four years old before he could speak and seven before he could read. Isaac Newton did poorly in grade school. A newspaper editor fired Walt Disney because he had “no good ideas.” Werner von Braun failed ninth-grade algebra. Haydn gave up on making a musician of Beethoven, who seemed a slow and plodding man with no apparent talent. There is a lesson in such stories: Different people develop at different rates, and the best motivators are always on the lookout for hidden capacities. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*Consider human DNA. Most scientists agree that humans share about 98.5 percent of our genetic code with chimpanzees. However, it would be very misleading to say that humans are therefore 98.5 percent chimp. We also share 50 percent of our DNA with bananas, but that doesn’t make us half plantain. What makes each kind of biological organism unique is determined by their small genetic differences, not their numerically greater similarities. (Julian Baggini, in The Week magazine)**

**The Giant Coral Reef That Shouldn't Exist: Most of the world's reefs are confined to crystal clear, tropical waters, where corals that rely on photosynthetic algae are drenched in sunlight. But scientists have discovered a startling exception to this rule: a 600-mile-long, undetected coral reef in the dark, muddy waters of Brazil's northern coast where the sediment-rich Amazon River flows into the Atlantic Ocean. "We found a reef where the textbooks said there shouldn't be one," the study's co-author, Fabiano Thompson, tells National Geographic. The mouth of the Amazon, which is deprived of light and oxygen and is dark brown with silt, was the last place scientists expected to find a vibrant reef system. Chasing scattered reports hinting at the reef's existence, however, researchers in Brazil dredged small areas of the seafloor and found 61 species of sponge (including one weighing hundreds of pounds), 73 types of fish, 35 species of algae, 26 soft corals, and 12 stony corals. "We brought up the most amazing animals I've ever seen on an expedition like this," says University of Georgia researcher Patricia Yager. The reef -- which spans 3,700 square miles along South America's continental shelf -- also is home to unique microbes that apparently base their metabolism on minerals and chemicals like ammonia and nitrogen -- not sunlight. Exploration of the Brazilian reef has only just begun, but scientists say it would appear to be a unique ecosystem. (The Week magazine, May 13, 2016)**

**We are each of us an endangered species. When we die, our species disappears with us. Nobody like us will ever exist again. (Janet Malcolm, journalist)**

**No two sets of fingerprints are alike; even identical twins have different fingerprints. *(Barbara Seuling, in You Can’t Sneeze with Your Eyes Open, p. 19)***

**Just as each type of bird has its own particular song, each kind of firefly has its own special pattern of lighting. The lights also vary in the time interval between flashes. (Francine Jacobs, in Nature's Light, p. 20)**

**A new biological test promises to change radically the way criminologists track down murderers, rapists and muggers. It would make possible the virtually foolproof identification of any person by detecting genetic “fingerprints” in tiny samples of blood, semen and hair roots. The test, developed at the University of Leicester in England by Dr. Alec J. Jeffreys, is called DNA fingerprinting. DNA is contained in every cell. The test relies on special probes and other new tools of molecular biology to detect the various lengths of the DNA strands, which are unique in each individual. The scientists calculate that the chances of two people having the same test results are one in a billion or more. The only known exceptions are identical twins. Experts say that DNA fingerprinting might someday help solve mix-ups of newborn babies in hospitals, aid in identifying lost people, and help determine parentage. (Lawrence K. Altman, in New York Times)**

**We all live under the same sky, but we don't all have the same horizon. (Konrad Adenauer)**

**At bottom every man knows well enough that he is a unique being, only once on this earth; and by no extraordinary chance will such a marvelously picturesque piece of diversity in unity as he is, ever be put together a second time. (Friedrich Nietzsche)**

**The platypus is already considered one of the world's most unique animals. This furry, semi-aquatic mammal lays eggs, has a duck's bill and a beaver-like tail, and males are venomous. It may sound impossible, but this weird animal has just gotten weirder. Scientists recently discovered that when put under ultraviolet light, a platypus' fur glows green and blue. Biofluorescence, or the absorption and re-emittance of light as a different color, is common among fish and birds, but extremely rare for a mammal. Why do they glow? Scientists don't know. (The Daily Chronicle)**

**Always remember you’re unique, just like everyone else. (Encyclopedia of One Liners Web site)**

**No two humans have the same scent. *(Uncle John’s Bathroom Reader: Wise Up!, p. 303)***

**Children will find it interesting that no two persons have identical skin formations, not even twins. This is demonstrated in fingerprinting. The fingerprints of the left hand even differ from those of the right hand. (Susan Smith James, in Let's Live magazine)**

**Billy picks up two of the plastic Christmas snowflakes and asks his Mom: “No two snowflakes are supposed to be alike! How come these are all exactly the same?” (Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)**

**Even though there are more than 10 (to the 22nd power) stars in the universe, each is unique. No two stars have exactly the same properties. A star has so many variables in its makeup that the probability of two identical stars is zero. These variables include the total number of atoms, size, and temperature. Some stars show obvious color and brightness differences. Others require spectroscopic study to detect their particular identify or fingerprint. (Donald B. DeYoung, in Astronomy and the Bible, p. 56)**

**If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away. (Henry David Thoreau)**

**Tongue prints are as unique as fingerprints. (David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 28)**

**Mona Lisa’s smile may always be a mystery, but now we know what her voice sounded like, said Toshi Maeda in Reuters.com. Japanese acoustics expert Dr. Matsumi Susuki measured Mona Lisa’s face and hands to create a model of her skull. He used these calculations to figure out her tone of voice. Each person has a unique voiceprint, and Suzuki claims the voice he’s created is 90 percent accurate. “The lower part of her face is quite wide and her chin is pointed,” said Suzuki. That extra volume means she’d have a low voice, while the pointy chin “adds mid-pitch tones.” His vocal re-creation allows the portrait to say, “I am the Mona Lisa. My true identity is shrouded in mystery.” Suzuki’s previous work has helped criminal investigations – in one case, he successfully aged a person’s voice by a decade, and a broadcast recording of it led to an arrest. (The Week magazine, June 16, 2006)**

**The pattern on a humpback **whale**'s tail is as unique as a fingerprint. The underside of a whale's tail is as distinctive as a fingerprint. (L. M. Boyd)**

**No two zebras are striped exactly alike. (L. M. Boyd)**

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