

HIS

Nature

Every good and perfect gift is from above,
coming down from the Father of the
heavenly lights.

JAMES 1:17

ISSUE
II

DIVINE ETCHING

Just over 100 years ago, a remarkable 15-year-old from Jericho, Vermont, began to seek the beauty of God in the harsh and transient world of winter. Wilson "Snowflake" Bentley, as he was known by townsfolk, became the first person to successfully photograph snow crystals up close. His exploration of snow under a microscope led him to see every flake as a "miracle of God's beauty." Mr. Bentley is also credited with saying that "no two snowflakes are alike," a statement that has yet to be refuted and one that points us to, among other things, the unmatched skill of Christ our Creator.

Snow is a vast collection of ice crystals that take form around tiny specks of dust in the atmosphere. These crystals possess extremely delicate and intricate shapes—frozen sculptures of almost endless variety. Even the names scientists use to describe snowflakes give us a sense of Christ's winsome creativity: needles, columns, cups,



*Stellar Dendrite
Snow Crystal*

pyramids, ferns, branches, skeletons, plates, sheaths, scrolls, planes, and stars.

God uses cold, dry clouds to fashion column snowflakes—fascinating tubes of frozen water. And he applies slightly warmer temperatures (22°–26°F) to sculpt "needle snow." But the most recognizable and elegant snow crystals are "dendrites"—what we typically think of when we imagine snowflakes. The hands of Christ create these six-sided, icy stars in humid clouds and at cold temperatures (0°–10°F). The more time these flakes are allowed to spend in the moist womb of snow

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clouds, the more intricate their designs become. It's amazing to think that trillions of fragile flakes are born and grown in the body of swirling storms!

The humidity and temperature of snow clouds help regulate the general type of snowflakes formed, but these factors alone cannot possibly explain their stunning artistry. The problem is that there's little in the simple structure of water or the environment of a cloud to account for the almost infinite number of extremely ornate snowflake designs.

The Bible lends us help in understanding this snowy mystery: "Since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made" (Romans 1:20). Each flake is a divine etching in ice that proclaims something of the magnitude of Christ's infinite beauty.

It is impossible for us to imagine the vast difference between us and our holy God (Isaiah 55:8), but if anything in nature comes close to illustrating this for us, surely it is snow. Consider what happens when a snowflake lands in our hands. It melts because its alien splendor is incompatible with our flesh.

Sadly, our present state of being is hostile to this loveliness of our Lord.

So often in life, our joys fade away quickly, overshadowed by the trials we daily encounter. Be encouraged. Jesus can use these difficulties to make you more like himself by immersing you in his captivating glory. Jesus died on a cross that our wickedness might be washed away and that our sins might be covered by his awesome righteousness (Psalm 51:7). Our lives can then reflect—like the blinding purity of freshly fallen snow at midday—the stunning beauty of his face (Colossians 3:4).

Someday soon we will be exposed to God's consuming glory (Hebrews 12:28-29) Will we be prepared? Compared to the Almighty, we too are just "specks of dust." The only way we can join the "snow-covered peak" of Christ's dazzling majesty in Heaven is to take on the pure nature of God's Son.

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This is what I seek: . . . to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD.

PSALM 27:4