

FAITH matters

October 6, 2025

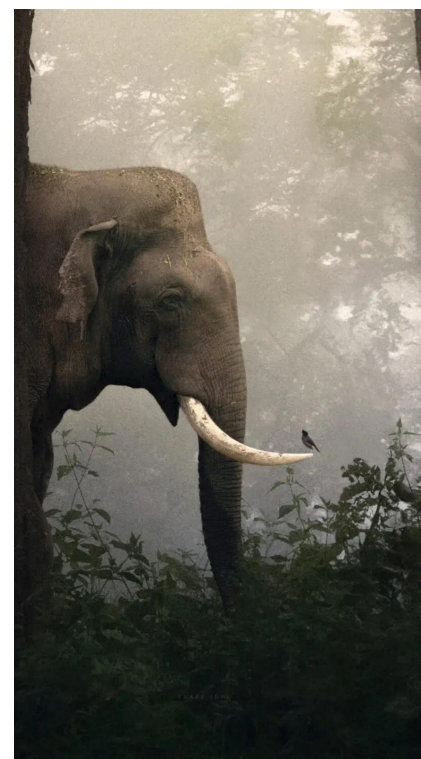
Isn't it interesting how one is 'provided for' in unexpected times and ways? I thought I was going to write a 'dry bones' Faith Matters this time and then.....

In an article in Northern Express the director of The Botanic Garden in Traverse City is quoted, "The goal of creating inclusion both in biodiversity and community (includes) ...gardens, like so many things that have transcended centuries, ... turning back to that (history) with intention and celebrating biodiversity in both the environment and society can be a way to grow relationships....You know, its interesting you get into gardening because you love plants, but you also find out you love the people just as much, if not more." How true - eg Holey Diggers!

Then this picture and article came to me from My Modern Met.Com, the article written by Jessica Stewart (September 25m 2025) interviewing the photographer, Shaaz Jung.

"In a stunning photo, an elephant appears from behind a tree. Smoky jungle mist sits in the background in what would already be a lovely photo. But at a closer glance, its clear that the elephant is not the only character in this story. Perched on the tip of the elephant's tusk is a small black bird, which almost appears to be gazing into the large animal's eyes.

This is no ordinary bird, but a *myna bird*. The myna bird, a member of the starling family, has a mutualistic relationship with elephants. They eat parasites and lice that inhabit the elephant's skin, providing a service to keep the pachyderm healthy while enjoying a tasty meal. Thanks to Jung's



exceptional photography, the world can see just how special this “friendship” really is. The elephant appears to glance down, “thanking” his friend for his efforts.

In a fast-paced world where technology and science are rapidly progressing, these relationships show us how important it is to stay connected with the natural world. There’s much to give and take from nature, and though we are humans, we must not forget that we are also mammals and just mere threads in the fabric of this earth. Our existence and relationship with our planet should be symbiotic, not one-sided.”

Jung is quoted, “As a naturalist and a guide, I love educating people about these lesser-known interactions that are essential to keeping the ecosystem healthy and stable. It makes us look beyond megafauna and into the little worlds of mutualism that are thriving in plain sight, which, unfortunately, most people are oblivious to.”

Genesis 1:26 - 28; 2:15, Psalm 24:1 and Matthew 25:14-30. We are assigned to be stewards of creation. To care for, manage, and protect the earth and its resources. To be amazed at the relationships in nature and blessed by our relationships with the people who touch our lives and with whom we are ‘in community’. May It Be So!! Praise God!

~Written by Pat Sheafor

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8190 Lincoln Rd. Beulah, MI 49617
231.882.4241
www.benziestandrews.com



Benzie St. Andrews | 8190 Lincoln Rd | Beulah, MI 49617 US

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