

Think & Believe



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AOI Goes to Russia

by *Richard Stepanek*

In February, 2000, Lanny Johnson and I (Rich Stepanek) have a unique opportunity to take the Gospel to Russia. We have been invited by Ilgis, an elder of the Message of Hope Church in Almet, Tartarstan, Russia to teach, train, and equip Russians to further spread the truth of Jesus Christ as Creator and Saviour. The city of Almet is located about 650 miles east of Moscow near the Volga River.

This invitation came as a result of relationships built during past missionary trips that I have taken. In the winter of 1996 I visited the church in Almet and presented the creation message there. They had no previous exposure to this kind of teaching.

The information was overwhelming to them! This opened their eyes to the false philosophies of atheistic evolution that had devastated Russia, leaving people without hope. The Christians there did not have the foundational knowledge for what they believed causing some Christians to question their faith. One Russian Christian asked me concerning the



Rich (fr. left) and Russian church leaders. Monte (far left) is a U.S. missionary who will go with us. Ilgis (rt, with wife Nadya) asked to be equipped to teach creation.

Bible, "How do you know that what you believe is true?" I replied that, "Studying creation science along with the Bible has given me evidence that the Word is true. The fact is, that true science agrees with Scripture, establishing a firm foundation for my Christian faith." I can not explain the excitement and joy that I have seen in the eyes and faces of Christians when they come to the knowledge that Genesis is literally true. My translator Lillyia commented to me after she heard the creation message, "It is all so simple, and it makes sense!"

I discovered that evolution had created a wall preventing people from coming to know Christ as Saviour, and caused confusion about Christ's identity. In my earlier trips to Russia I preached about the death, and resurrection of Christ. As a result, many people claimed to have accepted Christ as Saviour. However, when I returned to Almet two years later, it appeared to me that some of these conversions lacked a sufficient foundation. I believe this was because they did not have the knowledge of the Old Testament, especially Genesis, to teach them of Christ as Creator. In later mission trips to Almet I began by laying the Old Testament foundation before teaching the New Testament truths. With this type of teaching we saw



A number of Russians asked to be lead to the Lord after a previous night's lecture about the existence of God.

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Natural Selection: Friend or Foe?

by *Dr. Dan Korow*

Most evolutionists believe that Natural Selection (NS) and chance mutations over enormous amounts of time propel evolution. In theory, NS suggests that the "most fit" individuals survive, reproduce, and redistribute into the diverse ecological regions of the world.

It is important to recognize that even creationists recognize NS. It is a process we observe in this fallen world. Edward Blythe, a 19th century

scientist postulated NS twenty-four years prior to Darwin's *Origin of Species*. Creationists recognize that NS can effect change, but only on a small scale. It enables a species to maintain its adaptation, *not improve upon it*. In fact, NS is a *friend* to the creation model, promoting a purity of God's created kinds.

Not only is NS a friend to creation, but it presents major problems for

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A lady in Moscow after receiving a Bible.

Call to Action!!

by Andrea Korow



Steve Austin, is an intern who also runs our library.

This issue has some exciting news about upcoming trips to Russia and Mexico. If you want to get involved in Creation ministry on a more personal level, then

prayerfully consider an AOI internship or volunteer position. The rewards are endless!

Why do we need volunteers? Largely because the ministry of AOI and Elk Creek Ranch is expanding. The Lord has opened up more and more speaking engagements, training sessions and other

avenues of ministry. The daily necessities of running the office and coordinating events keeps going while everyone is out speaking. We know that a multitude of hands make quick work of big tasks! Many

office tasks can be broken down into fun, bite-sized chunks that might require only two hours of your time. Other projects, like developing Elk Creek Ranch, will take longer.

Just a few of the general areas in which you could help AOI include:

- Office/Clerical help
- Shipping/Errands
- Computer Operations
- Special Projects/Research
- Envelope Stuffing
- Elk Creek Ranch

If you live near Grand Junction, you may find it convenient to come in for

several hours at a time or a couple days per month. Those who live far away may want to consider spending a few days here in Grand Junction as part of your "vacation ministry".

Another option is that you may even



Naida Tanis, one of several volunteers that help with office and secretarial duties.



Volunteers from Colorado Springs constructed a shower unit at Elk Creek Ranch

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Christians truly understanding the Gospel message from Genesis to Revelation.

I look forward to continuing the work that has been started in Russia. Ilgis has requested that we train and equip him to teach the creation science to his people. We need the finances to purchase equipment for him, to pay translators, and for travel expenses. However, our greatest need is prayer. As we invade Satan's evolutionary domain the spiritual warfare always heats up. If you are lead by the Holy Spirit to help with this mission trip please contact AOI. **T&B**

be able to help AOI right from your own living room!

Some of the benefits of volunteering include:

- Knowing you are needed!
- Learning about Creation
- Meeting some really fun people
- Co-laboring for eternal rewards

Anyone can become a volunteer. We want to work with you to find your strengths and areas of giftedness. Give us a call to find out more details on all of these options. **T&B**

Alpha Omega Returns to Mexico City

by Rich Stepanek

The Johnsons and Stepaneks are excited about traveling again to Mexico City to continue the work that the Lord started last March. During that time, the people were overwhelmed

with the amount of information we presented. Lack of time made it impossible to pass

on all the available information.

This February/March, AOI is

invited back to continue teaching creation. We are scheduling seminars in a number of churches, Christian schools and, Lord willing, some

public schools. We discovered that even in some Christian institutions, the theory of evolution is being

taught as fact. Please pray that with the teaching of the creation

message, the false philosophy of evolution will be replaced with the truth of Jesus Christ as Creator and Saviour. If you know of any one in Mexico

City that might be interested in this ministry, contact AOI at: discovercreation@juno.com.



AOI staff with Pastor Pepe and his wife Claudia.



Many in Mexico were led to Christ by Rosa Maria, (center) after an AOI creation seminar.

Nat. Selection: (from page 1) evolution. Evolution's *imaginary transitional forms* would have incomplete, unusable new structures (i.e. partial wing, partial arm etc.). These isolated, rudimentary aberrations would be *inferior* to the fully formed, fully functional structures of their parents. An intermediate form would be a *detriment*, not having selective competitive advantage. "In other words, natural selection over the long run does not seem to improve a species' chance of survival but simply enables it to "track, or keep up with, the constantly changing environment."¹



The famous biologist D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson {1942} expounded on the negative role of NS: "We begin to see that it is in order to account not for the appearance but for the disappearance of such forms as these that NS must be invoked. And we then, I think, draw near to the conclusion... that the great function of NS is not to originate but to remove ... we see in NS an inexorable force whose function is *not to create but to destroy* ---to weed, to prune, to cut down and to cast onto the fire."² Wesson says, "Natural selection is credited with seemingly miraculous feats because we want an answer and have no other."³

But what about the famous textbook proof of evolution, the Peppered Moth study by Kettlewell during the 1950's? Tree bark lichen died as the industrial pollution deposited soot into nearby forests. Consequently the white bark turned black in coloration. As a result, the light moth population declined and the dark moth population increased. We're told the black moths had a selective advantage of camouflage, since birds ate the more visible white moths.



However, this is *not* an example of Evolution. This environmental stress did not promote any new moth types (i.e. changes within a kind - subspeciation), nor were there any changes between kinds (i.e. moth to butterfly - transpeciation). Both populations of moths were present *prior* to the industrial pollution. No accidental, chance mutation was needed to create this new variation. In fact, both moth types were classified under the same Genus & species (*Biston betularia*). The only difference between them is that the darker moths have more melanin pigment. Since Kettlewell's study exhibits a *population color shift*, and not a new population origination, this is definitely *not an example of evolution*.

Is this really an example of NS? That depends on the cause of these changes. NS *may* have had a role if the increased visibility of the white moth population was naturally selected against.

However, another viable explanation is that the majority of white moths simply migrated to trees in outer rural areas with light colored tree-bark. A population redistribution would not fit the NS mechanism.

Since the 1960's, improved industrial pollution controls have helped restore lichen covered tree trunks to their prior light coloration. To a large extent, the light colored moths have returned as well.

Are these adaptations synonymous with evolution? *No*. Adaptations speak of the *enormous genetic potential* of living creatures. The incalculable complexities of the genome (i.e. total genetic potential of a population) provide a tremendous resource of variation within a kind. This preprogrammed gene pool gives created kinds the ability to adapt to a

variety of conditions.

Even Kettlewell's study itself has been called into question. Research by British scientist Cyril Clark spanning 25 years determined peppered moths to be primarily nocturnal. Rarely do they rest on tree bark during the day. Their daytime absence would minimize enormously the effect color would have on predation. (Kettlewell's original photos were obtained by gluing dead moths onto bark).

Other studies have not repeated these original results. In fact, a poor correlation between population numbers and bark color exists. Even evolutionary biologist Jerry Coyne (University of Chicago), agrees the peppered moth story, which was "the prize horse in

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Please Pray for:

Russia Trip

- Visas
- Translators
- Open doors and hearts
- Finances

Mexico

- Scheduling
- Health/Safety

Elk Creek Ranch

- Approval of water use permit
- Funds for primary structures

Fall Seminars

Adult and kids seminars for the Kansas/Nebraska/Iowa vicinity are being planned. If you or someone you know would be interested, please call (970) 523-9943

Field Trips for 2000!

Can't make it to Camp? Consider setting up your own Creation Vacation Field Trip here in western Colorado. You'll have access to AOI personnel and Resource Library. Your tour could include:

- The Colorado Nt'l. Monument • Dinosaur Museums
- The Grand Mesa • Dinosaur Nt'l. Monument
- Black Canyon Nt'l. Park *Availability is limited!*

Call (970)523-9943 for more details.



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our stable", needs to be discarded.⁴

Since God is the author and designer of this world, He is central and not peripheral to science. The most brilliant minds of science pale infinitely, to the wisdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. The same Creator that spoke the heavens and the earth into existence, became man and died for our sins. The gospel of Evolution is a gospel of naturalism, atheism and humanism, whose savior is NS, mutations, and vast epochs of time. It denies the very existence, character, and identity of the living God. God and God alone deserves our hearts, our lives, our all. **T&B**

References

¹Richard Lewontin (Professor of Zoology, University of Chicago, and Co-Editor of the *American Naturalist*), 'Adaptation', *Scientific American*, vol. 239 (3), September 1978, p. 159

²Thompson, D'Arcy W., (1942). *On Growth and Form: A New Edition*, Cambridge; Cambridge University Press. Republished 1992, New Yorker: Dover (pp. 269-270).

³Wesson, R., 1991, *Beyond Natural Selection*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass

⁴J.A. Coyne, *Nature* 396(6706):35-36.

NOTICE:

DAVE WENT ON VACATION AND THE OFFICE "ELVES" TOOK OVER PRODUCTION OF "THINK & BELIEVE." FEEL FREE TO RESPOND WITH YOUR REACTIONS AND/OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

"New Dinosaur Unearthed"

by Rich Stepanek

The Arizona Republic Friday, Nov. 12, 1999 reported that in the Saharan Desert paleontologists discovered 95% of the bones from a new species of huge, plant-eating sauropod, belonging to the family of giants such as *Diplodocus* and *Apatosaurus*. This creature weighed up to 20 tons and stood 30 feet high. *Jobaria tiguidens* is the name for this new find that was claimed to have been buried by a flash flood about 135 million years ago. It was also reported that a several of these gigantic beasts, some of different ages, were washed together. The pleasant environment in which these sauropods lived was drastically different from the desert climate of today.

That must have been some spring run-off! All of this can be easily explained by Noah's flood picking up these huge creatures and depositing them in large fossilized graves. Some animals would have been ripped apart while others left intact. The collapse of a vapor canopy would explain a change in climate from a pleasant forest to a desert. The environment would shift from an underground water supply, to dependance on the hydrologic cycle. **T&B**

Elk Creek Training Center Update

by Dave Harper



1999 was a productive and fruitful year. We had several work days and one work week/

summer camp. Many projects were accomplished and several more staged for next year. The master plan was completed and our long term planning goals established. A great amount of work was accomplished at the future training center. We are very grateful for all of you who prayed, volunteered time, and contributed finances to make our work projects successful. The entire team has been blessed by God through the efforts of you who have helped. Thank you!

In 2000 we hope to have all our engineering work completed and have the finances to build our first permanent facilities. Please help us pray for equipment, materials, and finances. We will need more volunteers and equipment for the coming year and are excited to see how God will use you in this ministry.

In the meantime, remember: Truth in science can only be found through the source of truth.

Barb, Sarah, and I hope you have a blessed year and that you will be true to your calling in our Lord Jesus Christ.



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