



Think & Believe

A Publication of Alpha Omega Institute

Jan./Feb. 1989 Vol. 6, No. 1

Miracles and Science

by Dave and Mary Jo Nutting

In our day of modern science, have miracles been shown to be "scientifically impossible?" The answer to this question depends upon your definition of the word miracle, and your basic philosophical assumptions about the universe. "Miracle" is defined in Funk and Wagnall's Dictionary as "An event that appears to be neither a part nor result of any known natural law or agency and is therefore often attributed to a supernatural or divine source."

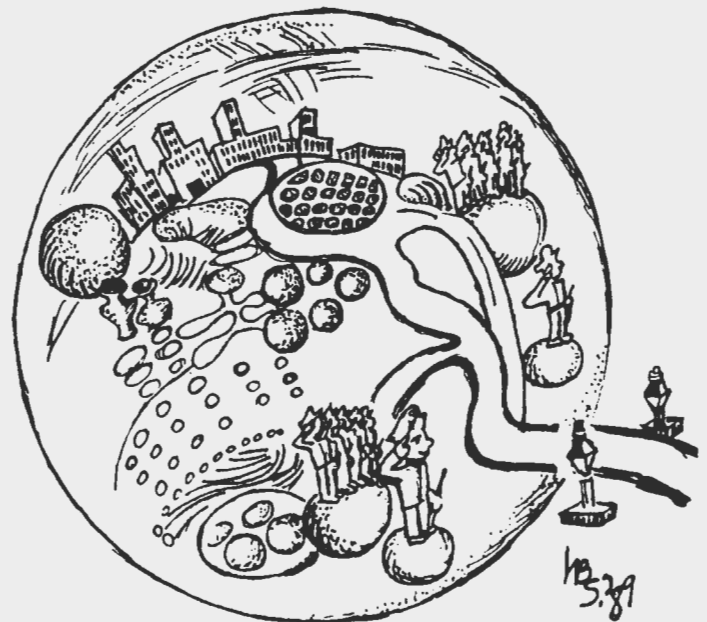
There are many events that may appear on the surface to be miraculous, but upon further investigation a perfectly reasonable naturalistic explanation may be discovered. Sometimes it may be many years before this discovery is made, so many "miracles" may be due simply to our limited understanding of natural events. At other times "miraculous" events may be the result of nothing more than incomplete or mistaken observations or statistically rare events.

While many "miracles" can be explained away on the basis of the above explanations, the question remains as to whether any true miracles are possible. Obviously, for an atheist miracles are seen as impossible. Everything must be explained by materialistic, naturalistic means. However, if God exists, miracles are possible, since He is not bound by "natural law" and can thus intervene in the course of natural and human events as He chooses. As Dr. Henry Morris says, "If God exists, miracles can happen, and if the Bible is true, they have happened."

We believe the Bible is true and God does exist. (For further discussion, see Josh McDowell's *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*.) Therefore, we also believe miracles can and have happened. However, they have been done for a definite purpose. God is a God of order. He has created this

universe and instituted various "natural laws" under which it normally operates, but if and when He chooses He can intervene in His creation according to His purpose. In the Bible, miracles seem to have been done to confirm the spoken word of God or His prophet, to meet serious human need, or to advance God's purposes on earth. God is a God of miracles. The universe had its beginning as a result of God's miraculous creation. It continues under His providential care and will someday be replaced by the "new heavens and the new earth, in which righteousness dwells" (II Peter 3:13). By God's grace and through the death and resurrection of His Son all who believe will have a part in that new creation, and that's the greatest miracle of all.

(Ref: Henry M. Morris, 1984, *The Biblical Basis for Modern Science*, Chp. 3)



The Simple Cell?
(See Spotlight on Science)

NOTES & QUOTES

■ Life is characterized by complex, highly integrated systems. Even evolutionists recognize this. Note the italicized terms in the following quotes (italics added by editor):

- Perhaps the most conspicuous attribute of living organisms is that they are *complicated* and *highly organized*. The cells of which they are composed possess *intricate* internal structures containing many kinds of *complex* molecules. (Lehninger, 1975, *Biochemistry*, p. 3)
- At no point in our examination of the molecular *logic* of living cells have we encountered any violation of known physical laws, nor has it been necessary to define new ones. The *machinery* of living cells functions within the same set of laws that governs the operation of man-made machines, but the chemical reactions and processes of cells have been *refined* far beyond the present capabilities of *chemical engineering*. (Lehninger, 1975, *Biochemistry*, p. 13)
- But it is not just the *complexity* of living systems which is *profoundly challenging*, there is also the *incredible ingenuity* that is so often manifest in their *design*. (Denton, 1986, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, p. 332)

■ Since when does complex "machinery" evolve? Common experience tells us that it takes much intelligence to create machines, they don't just happen accidentally. It seems that "logic," "ingenuity," and "design" are evidence of intelligence, not chance!

- . . . we have no idea what the structure of a primitive cell might have been . . . the simplest cells available to us for study have nothing "primitive" about them . . . no vestiges of truly primitive structures are discernible. (Monod, 1972, *Chance and Necessity*, as quoted in Denton, 1986, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, p. 250)
- We now know not only of the existence of a break between the living and non-living world, but also that it represents the most dramatic and fundamental of all the discontinuities of nature. Between a living cell and the mostly highly ordered non-biological system, such as a crystal or snowflake, there is a chasm as vast and absolute as

it is possible to conceive. (Denton, 1986, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, pp. 249-50)

■ Indeed, evolutionists are willing to exercise a great deal of faith in time and chance:

- The origin of life is such an improbable event. It requires such a precise combination of conditions that the chance that it will occur is infinitesimal. (*Ed.* But he still believes it happened!) (Ernst Mayr, *OMNI*, Feb. 1983, p. 119)
- An honest man, armed with all the knowledge available to us now, could only state that in some sense, the origin of life appears at the moment to be almost a miracle, so many are the conditions which would have had to have been satisfied to get it going. (Crick, 1981, *Life Itself*, p. 88)
- The events involved in the origin of life were extremely unlikely, according to the laws of probability. Given enough time, however, even very improbable events are bound to occur. . . . So, unlikely as living systems are, they had so much time to evolve that the origin was probably inevitable! (Camp and Arms, 1981, *Exploring Biology*, p. 234)

■ Oh, the faith of an evolutionist! We have shown in earlier issues, however, that there just isn't enough time even if you multiply the assumed age of the universe by any imaginable number. These authors need to do the simple calculations so that they too can see how enormous the odds are against their evolutionary views.

■ In this issue we have quoted extensively from Michael Denton's book, *Evolution, A Theory in Crisis* (1985, Adler & Adler). Denton, an Australian medical doctor and molecular biologist, thoroughly examines and demolishes the standard views on evolution even though he is not a creationist. At the same time, he offers no alternative to the objections he raises against standard evolutionary theory. We highly recommend this enlightening book for creationists or skeptics who have a good background in science and who would not touch a creationist book. Get it at your bookstore.

SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE

The "Simple" Cell

Dig back into the recesses of your memory to high school biology. Do you remember a diagram in your text entitled "The Simple Cell"? Well, perhaps it was a simplified drawing of a cell, but there is certainly no such thing as a "simple" cell in nature.

Cells are often called the "building blocks" of living things. They come in a myriad of shapes and sizes. Many are specialized to perform specific duties. Others perform all the functions needed for life, as in the one-celled creatures like the amoeba.

Scientists estimate that there are over 75 trillion cells in the human body. Each of these is a complex, highly coordinated "chemical factory" with thousands of precise, interrelated chemical reactions taking place 24 hours a day. The various parts of the cell are intricately and ingeniously suited to their particular functions.

One of the most fascinating descriptions we have seen of the complexity of the living cell is found in Michael Denton's book, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (1986, Adler and Adler, Bethesda, MD). The following quotation is from this book (pp. 328-329, used with permission):

To grasp the reality of life as it has been revealed by molecular biology, we must magnify a cell a thousand million times until it is twenty kilometres in diameter and resembles a giant airship large enough to cover a great city like London or New York. What we would then see would be an object of unparalleled complexity and adaptive design. On the surface of the cell we would see millions of openings, like the port holes of a vast space ship, opening and closing to allow a continual stream of materials to flow in and out. If we were to enter one of these openings we would find ourselves in a world of supreme technology and bewildering complexity. We would see endless highly organized corridors and conduits branching in every direction away from the perimeter of the cell, some leading to the central memory bank in the nucleus and others to assembly plants and processing units. The nucleus itself would be a vast spherical chamber more than a kilometre in diameter, resembling a geodesic dome inside of which we would see, all neatly stacked together in ordered arrays, the miles of coiled chains of the DNA molecules. A huge range of products and raw materials would shuttle along all the manifold conduits in a highly ordered fashion to and from all the various assembly plants in the outer regions of the cell.

We would wonder at the level of control implicit in the movement of so many objects down so many seemingly endless conduits, all in perfect unison. We would see all around us, in every direction we looked, all sorts of robot-like machines. We would notice that the simplest of the functional components of the cell, the protein molecules, were astonishingly, complex pieces of molecular machinery, each one consisting of about three thousand atoms arranged in highly organized 3-D spatial conformation. We would wonder even more as we watched the strangely purposeful activities of these weird molecular machines, particularly when we realized that, despite all our accumulated knowledge of physics and chemistry, the task of designing one such molecular machine — that is one single functional protein molecule — would be completely beyond our capacity at present and will probably not be achieved until at least the beginning of the next century. Yet the life of the cell depends on the integrated activities of thousands, certainly tens, and probably hundreds of thousands of different protein molecules.

What we would be witnessing would be an object resembling an immense automated factory, a factory larger than a city and carrying out almost as many unique functions as all the manufacturing activities of man on earth. However, it would be a factory which would have one capacity not equalled in any of our own most advanced machines, for it would be capable of replicating its entire structure within a matter of a few hours. To witness such an act at a magnification of one thousand million times would be an awe-inspiring spectacle.

When faced with such fantastic complexity and obvious evidence of design, could any intelligent person attribute it to blind chance? All too many do. However, in Romans 1 the apostle Paul tell us they are "without excuse," because "that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them," yet many "suppress the truth." The evidence is there for all the world to see. God has left His mark on the world. Those with willing hearts find ample evidence of God's handiwork and respond with David the Psalmist, "I will praise Thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Thy works and my soul knows it very well." (Psalm 139)

Think and Believe is published bi-monthly by Alpha Omega Institute, P.O. Box 4343, Grand Junction, CO 81502. Editors: Dave & Mary Jo Nutting. Single copies of this publication are sent free upon request. Please write for permission to reprint material in this publication. Alpha Omega Institute is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your donations are tax deductible.

European Outreach Update

Greetings from Europe! By the time you receive this we should be over halfway through our European Outreach. We praise God for His faithfulness and protection.

We have been reminded over and over again of the spiritual needs here in Europe. This was especially apparent to us in Ireland. At one college, the GEM missionary told us there are only 3 known Christians in an entire student body of 2500. We were pleased with the results of our 5-day seminar there. While numbers were not overwhelming, several non-believers attended the entire seminar and asked many good questions. We pray that God will use this information to break down barriers and prepare the ground for the gospel.

We have been much encouraged by the Fellowships of local believers. So many are new Christians and are very eager to learn. One night, after speaking to a local fellowship group, we were waiting for the train to take us home. The train was very late, and while we waited a lady came down. Ironically, as we talked, she told us she used to teach Genetics and Evolution at the university level. We talked with her for almost an hour before the train finally arrived. Isn't it just like God to delay a whole train system that one person may have the opportunity to hear? Pray that this incident will be a "link in the chain" for her salvation.

We would appreciate your continued prayer. We need God's protection, guidance, and provision. We have had several close calls already and have been fighting various illnesses. Pray too that God will open many more opportunities for us to share with people as we travel the trains. Pray too for boldness and sensitivity on our part. Thanks for standing with us.



Begin Planning Now For Next Summer's Exciting Creation Vacations 1989



CAMP REDCLOUD

Family Mountain Adventure Aug. 13-18
Singles Mountain Adventure Aug. 20-25

Full Creation Seminar *plus*

Exciting Recreational Program

Whitewater Canoeing	Mountain Biking
Horseback Riding	Rappelling
4-Wheel Drive Tour	Trout Fishing

Truly The Time of Your Life



CAMP ID-RA-HA-JE

Mountain Science Experience Aug. 6-11
Designed Specifically for Homeschoolers
"Hands On" Science and Creation Seminar

plus

Fishing	Hiking	Volleyball
Ping Pong	Basketball	Foosball



For more information on these camps, merely write the word **CAMP** and your return address on the enclosed envelope and mail it.

**Alpha Omega
Institute**

P.O. Box 4343
Grand Junction, CO 81502
(303) 245-5906

Nonprofit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Grand Jct., CO Permit No. 393
--

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

IN THIS ISSUE:

- The "Simple" Cell**
- European Outreach Update**
- Creation Vacations 1989**