



Think & Believe

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INCONVENIENT FACTS!

By Dave & Mary Jo Nutting

A very perceptive writer recently wrote the following comments in a letter to **Nature Magazine**:

Some widely held theoretical assumptions are coming into increasing conflict with observational results, and yet those assumptions continue to receive strong support. ... Do we continue to pretend that we have just about got the Universe figured out? ... we may have already passed the point at which it is appropriate for observational results to take precedence over theoretical constructions. There is not yet enough empirical evidence for conclusive scientific decisions ... , but surely science would be better served if a greater attempt was made to loosen the grip of prevailing prejudices. (Robert L. Oldershaw, Amherst College, **Nature**, Aug 30, 1990)

Oldershaw was writing specifically in regards to recent findings relating to the Big Bang theory. However, his comments seem apropos to all scientific disciplines. Science, the search for knowledge, **must** be based upon observations of the **real world** if it is to arrive at the real truth.

Modern science was founded by scientists who studied the real world. Many of these were Bible-believers, like Kepler and Newton, who wanted to "think God's thoughts after Him." They believed in an orderly universe with discoverable natural laws because they believed in a God of order. They wanted to understand the laws that God had set into motion to govern the universe that He had created, so they carefully observed that universe, in a logical, orderly manner.

All too often, modern science has become an abstract affair which deals in theory and speculation far removed from what someone has called, "inconvenient facts." While it is true that modern science often deals with things too small to be seen and too weak to be felt, we must be very careful in how we use instrumentation, and how we interpret results. The further removed from actual observation we get, the larger the role of deduction and inference (and speculation?) becomes. It can be quite tempting to "read more into" the actual facts than are really there.

This temptation is there for both creationists and evolutionists, and both have been guilty at times of manipulating the facts to fit the theories. As creationists, we do not need to "prove" the Word of God. It stands alone without our feeble help. We believe the more faithfully and accurately we study both God's Word and His World, the more clearly we will see that they agree.



Prepare For Takeoff
(See Spotlight on Science)

NOTES & QUOTES

■ For years scientists have thought that the viceroy butterfly was a good-tasting critter that mimicked the coloration of the unpalatable monarch in order to avoid getting eaten. Recently, however, it was discovered that redwing blackbirds, at least, found the viceroy to be less than tasty too. The find is forcing evolutionists to re-think their explanation as to why viceroys look so much like monarchs. It is interesting to hear what they are now saying:

- I think most biologists believed it was set in stone. (Dr. Deane Bowers, University of Colorado, as quoted in **New York Times**, 4/16/91.)
- It kind of shows how some of the obvious things we've assumed have never been tested. (Dr. Jim Miller, American Museum of Natural History, as quoted in **New York Times**, 4/16/91.)

■ How often is something thought to be "set in stone" and later disproved? Consider another recent finding:

- For the first time, astronomers have distinguished individual stars in a galaxy in the Virgo cluster and measured their distance from Earth. Observations of the galaxy NGC 4571, made with a new high resolution camera, support the notion that objects in the universe may lie about half as far away as previously thought. If so, the cosmos as a whole may be smaller than believed. (**Science News**, June 15, 1991, P. 381)

■ We need to remember that the assumed distance to that star cluster has been used to calculate other distances. Since the size of the universe is used as an age indicator, it is quite possible as the article indicates, that the whole universe is much younger than assumed. Could this mean that in one single observation, the universe could lose up to half (5-10 billion years) of its assumed age?

■ Many know that scientists thought the earth was flat, but do you remember the following classic "mistakes?"

- "Nebraska Man," a supposed ape-man, was reconstructed from a single tooth found in Nebraska. It later turned out to be a pig's tooth!
- Piltdown Man was reconstructed from part of a jaw and part of a skull. It has since been shown to be a hoax. The jaw was from an ape, the skull from a modern man.

• The idea of spontaneous generation used to be widely accepted: dirty rags were thought to turn into rats, horsehairs into snakes, etc. Scientists have now "disproved" this idea, yet many still teach that the first living cells came about spontaneously from non-living molecules. Wonder how long this "fact" will stand?

■ Critics claim that this change is the essence and power of science. We would agree, but we would also remind everyone, ourselves included, that science is a human enterprise, and we humans will **never** know **everything**. Therefore our current ideas will always be changing as we learn more. Here are a few more examples of this change:

- Evolutionists used to claim that the fossil record showed good evidence of transitional forms. Now, since they can't find transitions, many are looking for other ways to explain the "gaps."
- Layers, to geologists, usually indicate time. However, when Mount St. Helens erupted, 140 feet of layered material was deposited in just 3 separate episodes in a 2 week period. How will this observation affect the interpretation of other layers in the rock record?
- For years the "Big Bang" has been taught as if it has been proven, but recent headlines proclaimed, "Big Bang Theory Shot to Pieces." (**Denver Post**, 1/3/91. See also, **T & B**, Jan/Feb 1991.)
- Fossil experts have revised their opinion about an object found last year in New Mexico. At first they thought it was a fossilized egg up to 16 million years old. Now they think it's a stomach stone from a cow who threw it up five years ago. How did this misunderstanding arise? Explains a U.S. government scientist, "Mother Nature fooled us." (**Servant Magazine**, Sept. 1990, sent by a **T & B** reader.)
- Catastrophism, once denigrated as an antiquated argument of miracle-mongers, has become respectable again. ... A substantial, perhaps a dominant, component of geologic and biological change may well have occurred in the catastrophic mode. (**Discover Magazine**, Oct. 1989)

■ Indeed, science is always changing, but "**The Word of the Lord endures forever.**" (**I Peter 1:25**)

SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE

Prepare For Takeoff

Children usually study the amazing life cycle of butterflies sometime during the elementary grades. They marvel as they watch the worm-like caterpillar disappear into a dead-looking chrysalis and finally emerge as a beautiful butterfly. How many of us keep this childhood wonder and go on to discover lessons for life as we learn more about these fascinating creatures?

The transformation from caterpillar to adult is truly an amazing feat. Metamorphosis is a complex process involving very precisely tuned chemical changes (see **Think and Believe**, July/Aug, 1990). When the caterpillar enters the chrysalis stage, it is totally changed as it prepares for takeoff. Special chemicals break down the old substances and new ones are formed. The old caterpillar disappears and a "rebirth" takes place as the beautiful butterfly emerges. Though technically having the same genetic make-up, it is a very different creature with a radically new lifestyle. Analogously, "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." (II Cor. 5:17) Have you experienced this radical, life-changing transformation?

The feeding habits of caterpillars are extremely different from those of butterflies. While caterpillars generally have strong jaws for feeding on plants or other insects, adult butterflies have a long, coiled tube, the proboscis, which is used in sucking juices from flowers. At the upper end of the proboscis is a hollow bulb which expands as the muscles contract, lowering the pressure in the bulb. The outside air pressure forces the nectar up the tube. Has your "diet" changed since you became a Christian? Are you feeding daily on the sweet nectar of God's Word?

The eyesight of butterflies is also much changed from that of caterpillars. Caterpillars have six small eyes on each side of the head which apparently enable them to tell light from dark. Butterflies, however, have very sophisticated compound eyes, consisting of thousands of separate lenses. They apparently have good eyesight and color vision. How has your vision changed since becoming a Christian?

Caterpillars destroy millions of dollars worth of valuable crops whereas butterflies usually perform a useful function being vitally important in pollinating fruit trees. Are you actively involved in useful service in the Kingdom of God?

Indeed, butterflies give us a powerful reminder of who we are in Christ. Are you using your flying wings?

The Peppered Moth

The peppered moth (*Biston betularia*), commonly found in England, has gained fame over the years as a classic example of natural selection. Many books use this moth as evidence of evolution in action.

Before the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain, most moths of this species were light colored with irregular black speckles and lines, although dark individuals were occasionally seen. The light ones blended well with the lichen-covered bark of trees, while the dark variety was quite conspicuous. By 1895, after the industrial areas had become blackened with soot and the lichens died off, the dark form of the moth had become more plentiful than the light form.

This phenomenon was studied by Kettlewell, of Oxford University. He found that survival did seem to be color-dependent: more light moths were eaten by birds in areas where the tree bark was dark and vice versa. The conclusion usually drawn from his observations is that this will lead to a shift in the gene frequency which is reflected in the coloration of the overall population. This is considered to be classic evidence of natural selection, though there is some evidence that habitat choice may be involved to some extent. The lighter moths may have migrated to where they could better hide or blend in.

The color variation in the peppered moth might be termed micro-evolution, but it really does not give any evidence as to how macro-evolution can occur. After all, the moths are still moths, and in fact no new forms have ever been observed -- both the light and the dark forms were around before as well as after the Industrial Revolution -- it is simply the relative numbers which have changed.

To really demonstrate a mechanism by which one-celled creatures could eventually become people, it would be necessary to document a mechanism which could generate all the necessary genetic information from scratch. Natural selection cannot do this. Therefore, although the peppered moth is an interesting example of variation in response to changes in the environment, it really does not fit the bill as evidence for evolution. It is, however, an example of variation within an originally created kind.

UPCOMING EVENTS

(Call local contact for time and place.)

August 4-7: Joplin, MO, Villa Heights Christian Church,
417-624-6771

August 11-16: Twin Peaks Family Science Adventure,
Collbran, CO, 303-245-5906

August 18-23: Redcloud Family Mountain Adventure,
Lake City, CO, 303-245-5906.

August 25-30: ICR Summer Institute at the Summit,
Manitou Springs, CO, Contact ICR 619-448-0900.

September 4,11,18, November 6: Grand Junction, CO
Colorado Christian University Creation Course.
Contact us at 303-245-5906.

September 8 & 15: Grand Junction, CO,
Messiah Lutheran, 303-245-2838

September 10-11: IFCA Regional Conference, Calvary
Bible Contact Pastor Solum 303-242-9121.

September 26 - November 1: Midwest/Eastern
Speaking Circuit. Some dates are still available.
Contact us immediately 303-245-5906.

September 30, October 1: Tyler, MN, Tyler Alliance
Chapel, 507-247-3824.

October 17-20: Creation Adventure for Homeschool
Families, Pere Marquette State Park, Alton, IL
(Near St. Louis), Sponsored by Illinois Christian
Home Educators, 708-662-1909.

October 24-26: Lincoln, IL, Lincoln Christian College
Seminary, Junior High Schoolers On Campus.

PLEASE KEEP THIS SCHEDULE AND PRAY FOR US!

Alpha Omega Institute

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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VIDEO REVIEW

Are you looking for a very professional video series defending Biblical Creation? The award-winning series, **Origins: How the World Came to Be**, is extremely interesting and beautifully produced, with around-the-world photography and special effects. It features highly respected scholar and educator, Dr. A. E. Wilder-Smith, who holds three earned doctorates from prestigious universities.

The series has 6 parts which may be used in any order: **The Origin of the Universe; The Earth, A Young Planet?; The Origin of Life; The Origin of Species; The Origin of Mankind; and The Fossil Record**. Each part is 30 minutes long.

This exceptional series is appropriate for teens, adults, and sharp upper elementary school students. If you are serious about spreading the creation message, this series could be used as the basis of an effective home ministry. Save \$50-- Purchase price for home use of these motion picture quality videos is now only \$149.00 for the six-part series, or \$30.00 each.

ATTENTION: WESTERN COLORADO READERS!

Alpha Omega Institute is co-sponsoring the **Back-to-Genesis Seminar** in Grand Junction, March 20-21, 1992. Here's your chance to hear ICR speakers. Yes, that is a long time away, but we need to begin work now. If you would like to help, call Terry at 303-434-3036.

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