

Think Believe

Discover Creation...Worship the Creator



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Lessons in Trust: God Orchestrates Our Steps

by Dave Nutting

What?! Sell our house?? Leave Alaska, our college teaching positions, our ministry with students and move back to the “Lower 48?” As hard as this was, we clearly felt God calling us into creation ministry, and it was obvious that living on an island in Alaska was not the best place to base a traveling ministry!

Fast forward. One phone call and the house was sold. We headed south where I assisted my dad in his lapidary business (rock shop). I did this for 3 years while beginning our creation teaching. In 1982, we packed up our sons (ages 6 and 4) and headed to San Diego, CA, to attend the Institute for Creation Research Graduate School.

We started AOI living mostly off funds from the sale of our house in Alaska and some donations. The bottom of that barrel was looming ahead. “What are we going to do???” was a frequent question. “God will provide” was my pat answer, while wondering to myself, “Just what **are** we going to do? Teach math at the college?” Forget that! They knew my “heretical” views on evolution. We kept praying.

One day, while doing some research at the university library, I distinctly heard an emphatic voice in my mind saying, “**Go see them in the math office NOW!**” It was so clear! Immediately, I packed up

my books and headed to the math office. As I got to the office door, I was greeted by, “Dave Nutting! Boy, could we use your help down here! Would you consider taking a position with us?”


That job provided needed income to continue developing AOI. God supplies! Yet, after just a year and a half, my contract was not renewed. Why? “Oh, we’re just doing something different,” they said. However, as suspected, we later heard it was said, “He got too ‘creationist’ for us at this university.” As difficult as that trial was, it freed us up to devote all of our time to AOI again.

All these lessons in trust confirmed that God orchestrates events to lead and guide in various ways – sometimes through His written Word, sometimes through a “still, small voice,” and sometimes through a louder voice saying: “**Go Now!**” God also led us through “open doors” and some “closed” ones. He used the cancellation of a week-long engagement to open amazing doors behind the Iron Curtain in Hungary and ultimately, to Mongolia. A revolution in Albania led to our

speaking to 2/3 of the Christians in the country of Malta. God is in control!

With all these experiences of God’s provision in the back of my mind, I was “all ears” when I heard of research indicating that God “pre-engineered” His creatures with an ability to quickly “adapt” to varying environmental pressures. Mary Jo was especially excited as for years she had said there had to be a mechanism built into organisms unlike the blind natural selection proposed by Darwin. Now, cutting-edge research is uncovering cases of pre-engineered design that some are calling “Gene Switching,” “Mediated Design” or “Continuous Environmental Tracking.” (See Ellie Huspen’s page 3 article.)

Truly, our God is **big, powerful, and wise!** He created the heavens, the earth, and all that is in them. (Ex. 20:11) He is also the God Who created the intricate details of our bodies, including each cell’s amazingly complex DNA! He

knows and cares about the details of our lives – our hopes, dreams, struggles, and sin. Moreover, He is wise, loving, and powerful enough to meet us and provide. Indeed, as the song goes, “Our God is an Awesome God!” 



“Ant-i-freeze” Freezes Evolution

by Dave Nutting



With the extremely cold weather across much of the United States in January, including the normally mild south, I suspect many of you were checking your car’s antifreeze levels. Did you know that some living creatures produce their own antifreeze?

I reported in the January/ Feb 1997 issue of Think & Believe that equatorial zone ants were able to produce antifreeze when placed in a colder northern latitude. Sadly, I have not been able to locate the original source for the 1997 T&B article. Please let me know if you find it! However, in hunting for that original source, I came across an article referencing similar research.

In 1959, Time Magazine¹ reported that Biochemist Fred Smith from the University of Minnesota had discovered

antifreeze (glycerol) in hibernating beetle larvae that was absent in summer larvae. Suspecting a built-in mechanism, this led to his study of black carpenter ants. His research found that the carpenter ants from a warmer climate in Maryland did not have antifreeze, but when taken to Minnesota with colder temperatures, they quickly produced antifreeze. When they were warmed up again, they no longer did. These changes occurred within a couple days, not over millions of years of mutation and natural selection.

I’d love to see further research on this topic. If verified, it could provide one more example

supporting the idea of pre-engineered design where the Creator has placed the ability to respond to environmental changes in living organisms. (See page 3 for more information on the idea of pre-engineered design.)

God even cares for ants! **AOI**

¹ <https://time.com/archive/6827858/science-ant-automobile>

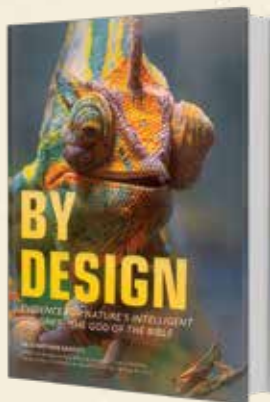


By Design by Dr. Jonathan Sarfati

Review by Dave Nutting

I was so impressed with this book that we decided to offer it again.

By Design is truly astonishing! At 9 x 11 inches, it’s thick and has amazing detail – but with the look of a coffee table book. Its 325 full-color pages are loaded with photographs and illustrations. Truly, I can’t imagine anyone dismissing the reality of our Designer-God if they read it. Skeptics might say, “We can imagine how mutations, coupled with natural selection, might produce



these features over millions of years.”

First of all, the words “might” and “imagine” are not scientific words. A multitude of examples in this book defy slow and gradual evolutionary mechanisms. There is a great, illustrated section on birds by design – why feathers did not evolve from scales (no dino to bird evolution!). There is also a section on eyes by design, origin of life, and a multitude of practical evidence with enough easy-to-read detail for those

wanting to dig deeper.

Dr. Jonathan Sarfati has written many other creation books that are hard for evolutionary skeptics to answer. For sure, this one will cause the brain cells of many entrenched skeptics to be quite inflamed! That is, if they are willing to read it! However, the format and huge amount of top-notch, eye-catching graphics will be hard to ignore.

The book’s price is worth every penny! If, after reading it, you don’t agree, ship it back to us for a full refund! Remember your purchase helps the ministry of AOI.

\$39 + S/H **AOI**

Environmental Tracking: A Proactive Form of Adaptation

by Ellie Huspen (AOI Intern)

Let me pose a question to you: In nature, does the environment change the creature slowly over time, or does the creature change quickly in response to the environment? These are the sorts of questions that are now being wrestled with by both evolutionary and creationist biologists.

An example of this is a forty-year research project, started in 1973, on Darwin's famous finches of the Galapagos Islands. The researchers discovered that the finches' beaks were affected by the availability of food during drought cycles. During these periods, plants produced

tough seeds that were difficult to eat. While the finches with larger beaks could eat them, the finches with smaller beaks struggled. This resulted in more finches with larger beaks.

When the drought broke, however, the population shifted back quickly.

Further research revealed that there were distinct regions in the finches DNA that controlled beak size and shape. These genes were turned on or off by "gene switches" that regulated how traits were expressed. The information in the genes did not change, but its expression did.

In large part, the varying beak shapes and sizes of Darwin's finches have now been shown to be caused – not by irreversible changes to the finches' DNA – but by the organism's use of epigenetics. "Epi" comes from Greek, meaning "over" or "on" – in this case, a layer of information operating over and above the genes. Epigenetics allows genes to change their function without changing their structure. While these changes can be reversed, they can also be inherited by an organism's descendants.

Male mice were exposed to a cherry-almond aroma, which coincided with an electric shock. This conditioned the mice to react in fear to the scent. Soon, the mice showed signs of fear whenever they smelled cherry-almond – even without being shocked. Once this status was achieved, the researchers bred the affected males with unaffected female mice. The resulting offspring, even three generations removed, reacted fearfully to the cherry-almond scent despite never experiencing a shock associated with it.

For all it can do, epigenetics still needs the base DNA in order to affect the change. In other words; the finches or mice already had the base information they needed in order to adapt to their environment. It was the epigenetics, however, that detected changes in the environment, responded appropriately, and then passed that information on to their descendants. The Institute for Creation Research (ICR) is working on incorporating this concept into a model called Continuous Environmental Tracking (CET). This engineering-based

model states that organisms have internal systems that "track" changes in their environments such as temperature, water chemistry, or availability of food, and utilize pre-programmed capabilities to adapt appropriately. One example of CET is the

Mexican tetra (*Astyanax mexicanus*.) This species has two extreme variations. The first is a surface-dweller with perfectly functioning eyes and normal coloring. The second is a cave-dweller with no eyes at all and a transparent body. The surface-dwelling fish lives in conditions of high pH and high oxygen, while the cave fish lives in water with low pH, low oxygen and low light.

It was believed that this differentiation came about by slow and

gradual adjustments through random mutations and natural selection.

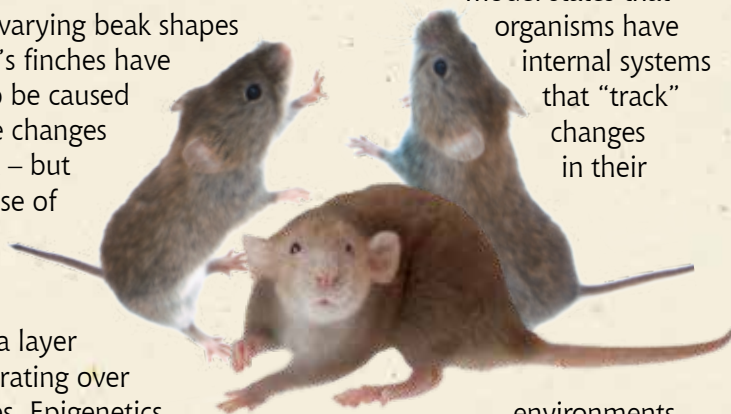
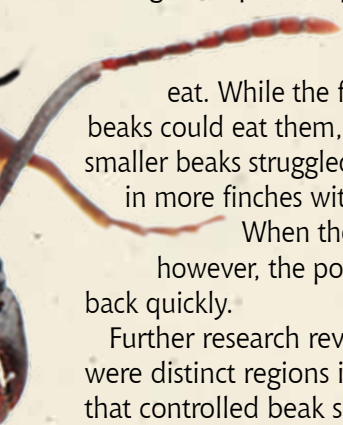
However, recent research has shown that Mexican tetra can adapt to their environment very quickly – possibly while still in the egg. When researchers raised normal Mexican Tetra in water that mimicked cave water, the young developed with a wide variety of eye sizes; some had no eyes at all.¹

ICR's own lab research has shown also that when juvenile cave fish were placed in conditions simulating daylight, they dramatically increased in pigmentation. Conversely, when surface dwelling fish were put into cave conditions, they decreased pigmentation across their entire body.²

ICR is researching to see whether cave dwelling fish can fully "switch" to become surface-dwelling again. If so, this would demonstrate one more pre-engineered mechanism of adaptation designed into living organisms. **AOI**

¹Blind Cavefish Shed Light on Creation. Brian Thomas. (2014) icr.org/article/blind-cavefish-shed-light-creation

²Continuous Environmental Tracking: An Engineering Framework to Understand Adaptation and Diversification. Gulluzza, Randy, and Phil Gaskill. (2018) <https://doi.org/10.15385/jpicc.2018.8.1.17>



Director's Column

by Dave Nutting




Are you tired of winter yet? Or maybe it's already spring where you are! In any case, summer will be here before you know it. It's not too early to make summer vacation plans!

We'd like to invite you to include one of AOI's Creation Tours in your plans. Our "Vacations with a Purpose" provide opportunities to see for yourself some of the beautiful and amazing wonders of God's Creation. See evidence of God's design and the impact of the Fall and Flood on God's "very good" earth. Also, witness the results of post-Flood events right up to today. Come alone, bring a friend, or bring your kids and

grandkids for a wonderful time of fun, facts, and fellowship!

This summer, AOI is offering two Creation Tours of Yellowstone (Aug 21-25 and Aug 28-Sep 1). We also offer custom tours of Colorado National Monument, Arches, Canyonlands, and other features of Colorado and Utah. Contact us to register or to get more info.

"We so enjoyed our [Yellowstone] trip with you [Dave, Mary Jo & Diane] and were truly blessed to be able to share the experience with our kids and grandkids. God is truly using and blessing your ministry!" – C. B.

Thank you for taking the time to show and tell amazing things about God's creation! I enjoyed it. One of my favorite parts of the tour was when the canyon walls echoed what people yelled – K.G. P.S. I hope I never forget what has happened today! 

Host a seminar!

Email AOI@DiscoverCreation.org
or call (970)523-9943.



Training with AOI

Want to learn to share creation with kids or adults? Be able to stand firmly yourself and teach others! You don't need to move to Grand Junction or plan to teach Creation as a career. How about teaching Sunday School at your church or for your own family? Who knows where that might lead? Individualized training options range from short term or longer and can be accomplished online or in person. For information, email DaveNutting@DiscoverCreation.org.

Please support AOI.

If our ministry has encouraged you, please consider partnering with us.

AOI Local Tours

to fit your schedule.

- Arches
- Canyonlands
- CO National Monument
- Black Canyon

Email DaveNutting@DiscoverCreation.org
for information.

Yellowstone Tour

Aug 21-25 and Aug 28-Sep 1, 2026



Great family adventure!

Call AOI at (970) 523-9943 or visit:
DiscoverCreation.org/camps-tours



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