

# ACTS & FACTS



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*Exploring the  
Limitations of the*  
**SCIENTIFIC METHOD**

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## Reflections on the Debate

Creation–evolution debates played a primary role in the early upswing of interest in creationism. In the 1970s, debates became major events on university campuses and were often the first time students were exposed to a credible case for creation. Dr. Duane Gish—senior vice president of ICR for 34 years—participated in almost 400 debates; my father, Dr. Henry M. Morris, took part in more than 100. But now the debates have pretty much ceased. Several leading evolutionists cautioned their colleagues to avoid them, and with good reason. The creationists seemed to always win.

Over the years I was involved in about 30 debates and, strangely, enjoyed it. My background is in geology, while the debates mainly centered on biology and paleontology. Whenever one was scheduled, I hopped on the learning curve, reading everything the opposing professor had written. I was often nervous, but afterward wondered—was that the best the evolutionists could do? It seemed that none had good scientific arguments.

My first debate was in high school, right after my father wrote *The Genesis Flood* with John Whitcomb. Evolution–creation was a hot topic. My biology teacher arranged for the outspoken class evolutionist to debate me, the quietest kid in class. My opponent began by defining evolution as “change.” A baby grows into an adult, a caterpillar changes into a butterfly. Change happens, therefore evolution is true. I focused on the evolutionary claim that whales evolved from a land animal. This idea was so ludicrous on its face that no one would believe it. As I recall, I won the debate 28–2.

The theme of defining evolution as change recurred numerous times in later debates. Once I faced the entire faculty of a large university. I insisted that evolution speaks of specific change, of basic types of animals evolving into different types. I challenged the faculty—who had barred students from attending—to demonstrate this sort of transformation from the fossil record. Finally, one brave professor said she was an expert in fossil clams and had evidence that clams had changed. I agreed, but requested that she show how this was proof of evolution. Even with the changes, the clams remained clams.

On a lecture/debate tour in Moscow before the Iron Curtain was lifted, the evolutionists insisted that the main reason they believed in evolution was the existence of pain, suffering, and death, the same reason Darwin gave. The God of the Bible would certainly have done things differently, therefore there is no God and evolution by natural selection is the best alternative. Of course, there is an answer to that: the introduction of sin into God’s very good creation. Change happened at the curse, but it wasn’t evolutionary change.

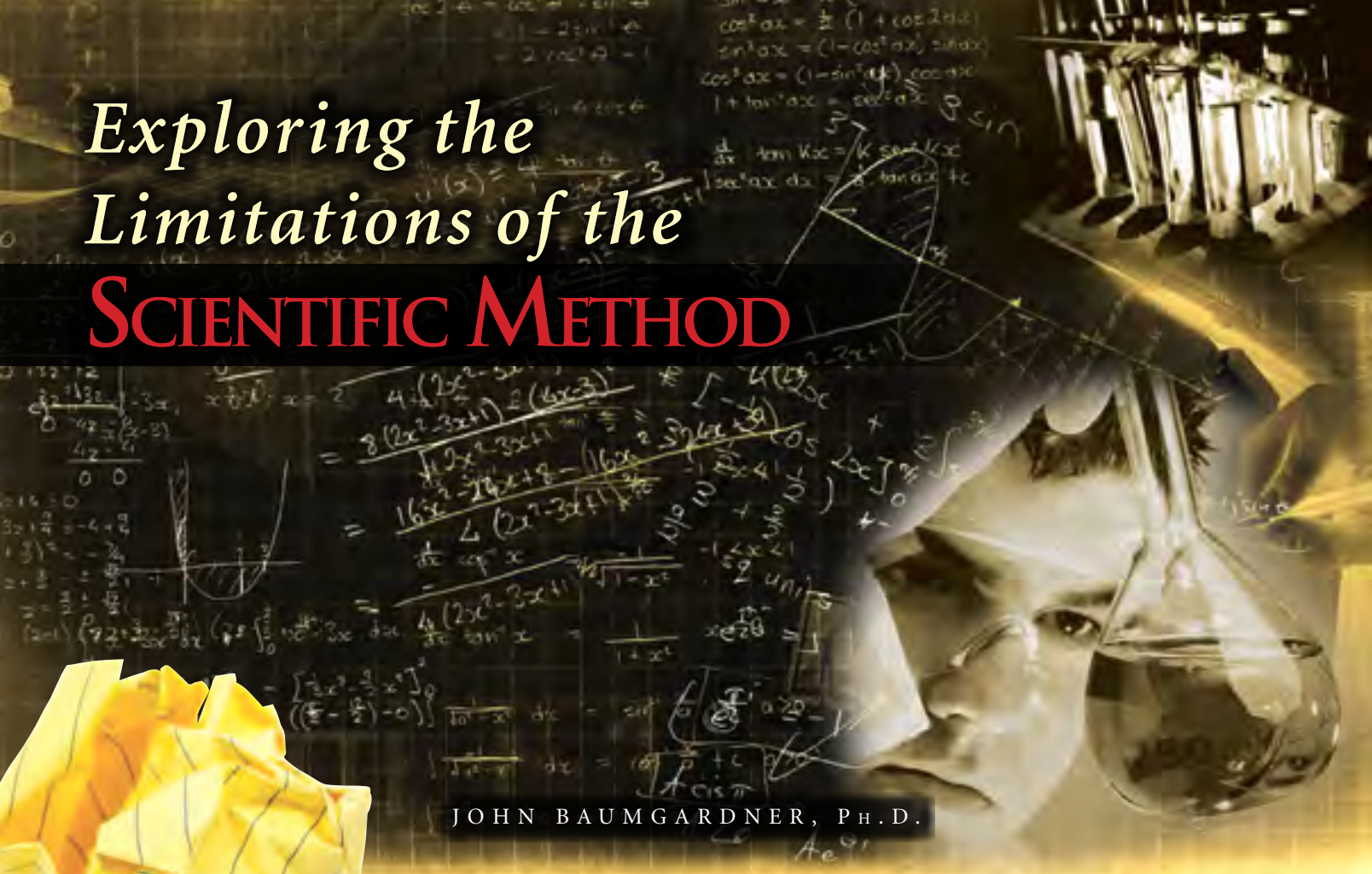
Today we face an important choice. Christ offers that we can put off the old and be “renewed in the spirit of your mind” (Ephesians 4:22-24). We can “repent” or change our minds, attitudes, and actions, and accept Christ’s solution to the sin problem. We should also repent of our wrong thinking about origins and cease ascribing to natural processes the abilities and intelligence clearly reserved for God.

  
John D. Morris, Ph.D.  
PRESIDENT

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# Exploring the Limitations of the SCIENTIFIC METHOD



JOHN BAUMGARDNER, P.H.D.

**I**n this day of iPods, cell phones, the Internet, and other fruits of modern science and technology, most people have at least a passing awareness of the concept of the scientific method. But just what is this process that undergirds such spectacular technological advance and development? If it can give us satellites showing the world's weather in real time, is it possible for this method, under certain circumstances, to fail?

## The Method Defined

Frank Wolfs, Professor of Physics at the University of Rochester, provides his undergraduate physics students with a good working definition of the scientific method: "the process by which scientists, collectively and over time, endeavor to construct an accurate (that is, reliable, consistent and non-arbitrary) representation of the world."<sup>1</sup>

Professor Wolfs, as a research scientist himself, points out some of its limitations: "Recognizing that personal and cultural beliefs influence both our perceptions and our interpretations of natural phenomena, we aim through the use of standard procedures and criteria to minimize those influences when developing a theory. As a famous scientist once said, 'Smart people (like smart lawyers) can come up with

very good explanations for mistaken points of view.' In summary, the scientific method attempts to minimize the influence of bias or prejudice in the experimenter when testing a hypothesis or a theory."<sup>1</sup>

## Four Essentials of the Scientific Method

Just what are these "standard procedures and criteria" that scientists apply in their attempt to arrive at an accurate and reliable representation of the world in which we live? Most scientists, including Wolfs, boil them down to the four following essentials:<sup>1</sup>

1. Observation and description of a phenomenon or group of phenomena.
2. Formulation of a hypothesis to explain the phenomena. (In physics, the hypothesis often takes the form of a mathematical relationship.)
3. Use of the hypothesis to predict other phenomena or to predict quantitatively the results of new observations.
4. Performance of experimental tests of the predictions by several independent experimenters.

If the experiments bear out the hypothesis, it may come to be regarded as a theory or law of nature. If they do not, the hypothesis must be rejected or modified. As Wolfs explains, "No matter how elegant

a theory is, its predictions must agree with experimental results if we are to believe that it is a valid description of nature. In physics, as in every experimental science, 'experiment is supreme' and experimental verification of hypothetical predictions is absolutely necessary."<sup>1</sup>

Wolfs further notes that this necessity of experiment in the method is tantamount to requiring that a scientific hypothesis be testable. "Theories which cannot be tested, because, for instance, they have no observable ramifications (such as, a particle whose characteristics make it unobservable), do not qualify as scientific theories."<sup>1</sup> It is fairly obvious that if a hypothesis cannot be tested, it should more properly be called a conjecture or speculation, in which case the scientific method can say little about it.

## When Does the Scientific Method Fail?

Are there circumstances in which the scientific method ought to work, but for which the method does *not* provide "an accurate representation of the world"—that is, a correct description of the way things really are? Unfortunately, the answer is yes. As Professor Wolfs mentions above, "personal and cultural beliefs influence both our perceptions and our interpretations of natural phenomena." If the

hypothesis-testing process fails to eliminate most of the personal and cultural biases of the community of investigators, false hypotheses can survive the testing process and then be accepted as correct descriptions of the way the world works. This has happened in the past, and it happens today.

Some of the most glaring examples of this failure of the scientific method today have to do with the issue of origins. There are two fairly obvious reasons for this: 1) many of the crucial processes occurred in

tion does not deliver the sort of upward genetic improvement that is generally believed and claimed.<sup>3</sup> The reason is that natural selection is “blind” to the vast majority of mutations—it cannot act upon a favorable mutation to accentuate it or a deleterious mutation to eliminate it unless the mutation has a sufficiently large effect on the fitness of the organism in its environment. Because the vast majority of mutations are below the threshold for natural selection to detect, most bad mutations accumulate unhindered by the

and difficult-to-test hypothesis has been invoked—namely, the Copernican Principle,<sup>9</sup> which posits that the entire cosmos is just like what we observe from the earth, at least at large scales. A result is that gravity perfectly cancels at large scales and keeps the cosmos from being inside a black hole during the early phases of a Big Bang. All Big Bang models depend critically on this hypothesis. The fact that the Copernican Principle up to now has been untestable means, strictly speaking, that Big Bang cosmology cannot be viewed

## “ PERSONAL AND CULTURAL BELIEFS INFLUENCE BOTH OUR PERCEPTIONS AND OUR INTERPRETATIONS OF NATURAL PHENOMENA. ”

the past and are difficult to test in the present; and 2) personal biases are especially strong on topics related to origins because of the wider implications.

### **Skipping the Test**

Perhaps the most prominent example in this category is the hypothesis that mutation and natural selection produce continuous genetic improvement in a population of higher plants or animals. For the past 90 years, scientists in the field of population genetics have developed sophisticated mathematical models to describe and investigate these processes and how they affect the genetic makeup of populations of various categories of organisms. The work of R. A. Fisher, J. B. S. Haldane, and Sewall Wright between 1918 and 1932 laid the foundation for the field of population genetics. This work in turn, over a period of about a decade (1936–1947), led to the formulation of what is referred to as the neo-Darwinian synthesis or the modern evolutionary synthesis. This so-called modern synthesis integrated the concept of natural selection with Mendelian genetics to produce the unified theory of evolution that has been accepted by most professional biologists.

But does this theory of evolution, formulated essentially in its present form more than 60 years ago, truly deliver on its claims, especially in light of what we now know of how living systems work at the molecular level? The answer is an unequivocal no! In brief, the proteins that make up living systems require such a precise level of specification to be functional that a search based on random mutation can never succeed.<sup>2</sup> It is complete scientific foolishness to claim otherwise. That is why there are no papers in the professional genetics literature that explicitly demonstrate this to be a reasonable possibility.

Perhaps even more surprising, natural selec-

tion process, resulting in a downward decline in fitness from one generation to the next.<sup>4,5</sup> Because bad mutations outnumber favorable ones by such a large factor, their cumulative effect utterly overwhelms that of the few favorable mutations that may arise along the way.

For more than 30 years, professional population geneticists have been aware of the profound difficulties these realities present to the theory of evolution.<sup>6,7</sup> These problems were treated as “trade secrets” to be researched within their own ranks but not to be publicized outside in the broader biology community. Thus, the crucial step of hypothesis testing has been “postponed.”

Most professional biologists have therefore been misled into believing that the theoretical foundation of the neo-Darwinian synthesis is secure when, in reality, the foundation is a sham. The neo-Darwinian mechanism can readily be shown to produce exactly the opposite consequences to those that are believed and claimed.<sup>3,4,5</sup> The reason for this state of affairs is that the scientists involved have allowed their personal biases to interfere with and to short-circuit the usual hypothesis-testing step of the scientific method.

### **Geology and Cosmology**

A similar state of affairs persists in the geological community, which interprets the primary sedimentary units of most of the fossil-bearing part of the geological record as having been produced by gradualistic rather than catastrophic processes, when the evidence is abundantly in favor of the latter.<sup>8</sup>

Likewise, in cosmology, to avoid the inference that the earth is near the center of the cosmos, as implied by isotropy of redshift and of cosmic microwave background energy, a highly speculative

as authentic science since it relies in a critical way on an untestable hypothesis.

### **Conclusion**

In summary, science is a social enterprise. Scientists are human and share the same weaknesses as all members of the human race. The scientific method fails to yield an accurate representation of the world, not because of the method, but because of those who are attempting to apply it. The method fails when scientists themselves, usually collectively, allow their own biases and personal preferences to short-circuit the hypothesis-testing part of the process. ●

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*Dr. Baumgardner is Associate Professor of Geophysics at the ICR Graduate School.*



# Ice Age Glaciers at Yosemite National Park

LARRY VARDIMAN, P.H.D.

Glaciers once filled Yosemite Valley almost to the top of Half Dome, stretching over Tuolumne Meadows and to Tioga Pass near the top of the Sierra Nevada. Large fields of granite that are now exposed were planed down by the movement of the glaciers as they ground downhill, leaving behind evidence of their presence and direction of travel. But if glaciers occurred after the Genesis Flood, how did they form and why have they disappeared?

One scenario is that the Genesis Flood—which ended about 4,500 years ago—left the oceans as warm as 120°F in places, causing a large amount of evaporation. This moisture would have been gathered by winds and blown across the continents, producing heavy precipitation. In California, the Sierra Nevada mountains form a long north-south barrier perpendicular to the flow of air off the Pacific Ocean. Here, the warm, moist air would have been lifted to higher, colder elevations, resulting in large quantities of snow. Precipitation would have been enhanced by a strong jet stream that is believed to have tracked across the southwestern United States during the Ice Age, below its current position along the northern tier of states. These strong winds moving moist air over the area of Yosemite

National Park would have produced glaciers. When the oceans cooled two to three thousand years ago, the precipitation would have decreased, permitting the glaciers to melt.

Today, Yosemite National Park generally sees snow only in winter, which then completely melts during summer. Because the sea-surface temperature of the Pacific Ocean off the coast of California dropped after the Flood from an estimated 120°F to a current average winter temperature of about 60°F, the Ice Age ended. Occasionally the sea-surface temperature along the California coast will warm by 1-3°F during what is called an El Niño event. Although these warmer temperatures lead to an increase in storminess and precipitation, the unsettled weather during these periods typically lasts only a year or two and doesn't produce enough snow to form permanent glaciers.

To facilitate the study of the Flood's meteorological impact, a weather and climate model called MM5 has been installed on ICR's Epiphany research computer. Numerical simulations will be conducted of conditions that would lead to more precipitation and glaciers in Yosemite National Park. Variations of the sea-surface temperature of the Pacific Ocean off California will be introduced to see what

effects they have on the magnitude and distribution of snow, with a particular focus on short-term cold periods during generally warm sea-surface conditions.

One goal is to find an explanation for some of the short-period fluctuations in the distribution of glaciers at the end of the Ice Age. As the glaciers melted, cold water likely flowed into the ocean and chilled the surface water. This cold sea-surface temperature would have reduced the evaporation and may explain fluctuations in glacial coverage in Yosemite, like those of the Younger Dryas event on the east coast of the United States and Europe. The results of this research effort are scheduled to be presented at the upcoming International Conference on Creationism in August 2008, with a completion of the study over the next few years. Through science, we continue to learn of the works of our Creator, who “casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold? He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow” (Psalm 147:17-18). ●

*Dr. Vardiman is Professor of Atmospheric Science and Director of Research.*



## 2008 International Conference on Creationism

The Institute for Creation Research is the proud co-sponsor of the sixth International Conference on Creationism. Originally scheduled for August 3-6 in San Diego, the gathering has been moved to August 4-6 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The conference will feature papers and presentations by the world's leading creation science researchers and speakers, including several ICR scientists. For more information or to register, visit [www.icc08.org](http://www.icc08.org).

## MARCH 2008 EVENTS

■ **March 2-7**

Alamo, TX  
Bibleville Conference  
(Morris III) 956.787.2024

■ **March 6-8**

Redmond, WA  
Northwest Christian Education Conference  
(Hoesch) 425.844.9286

■ **March 4-6**

Fort Worth, TX  
National Grace Conference  
(Criswell, Sherwin) 972.257.1160

■ **March 28-30**

Lapeer, MI  
Genesis Presentations  
(J. Morris) 810.664.2838

## Take a Creation Education Vacation in Florida



This spring, you and your family can join Dr. Gary Parker, Professor of Biology for ICR Graduate School (ICRGS), and his wife, Mary, for a unique adventure in creation science.

**April 13 to 18 and April 27 to May 2**, the Parkers' Creation Adventures Museum near Arcadia, Florida, is offering hands-on workshops, classes, and field trips. Come explore the world of fossils and the wonders of nature from a biblical creation perspective.

For costs, reservations, or further information, contact Dr. and Mrs. Parker at

**863.494.9558,**

or visit [CreationAdventuresMuseum.org](http://CreationAdventuresMuseum.org).

Course credit is available for participating ICRGS students. For more information, contact Dr. Patricia Nason at [pnason@icr.edu](mailto:pnason@icr.edu).

Man of Science, Man of God:

# Johann Kepler

CHRISTINE DAO



**Who:** Johann (or Johannes) Kepler

**What:** Father of Physical Astronomy

**When:** December 27, 1571 – November 15, 1630

**Where:** Born in Weil der Stadt, Württemberg, Holy Roman Empire, of German nationality

Johann Kepler developed a love for astronomy at an early age. He observed the Great Comet of 1577 when he was six and the 1580 Lunar Eclipse, events that no doubt fueled his curiosity and enthusiasm for science. Although he originally wanted to be a minister and studied theology at the University of Tübingen, Kepler accepted a position in 1594 as a mathematics and astronomy teacher at a Protestant school in Graz, Austria. He later became an assistant to Tycho Brahe, the court mathematician to Emperor Rudolf II. Upon Tycho's death, Kepler inherited his position, as well as his extensive archive of planetary observations.

Kepler is best known for discovering the three mathematical laws of planetary motion ("Kepler's Laws") that established the discipline of celestial mechanics. He also discovered the elliptical patterns in which the planets travel around the sun. At a time when the sun and other celestial bodies were still widely believed to circle the earth (geocentrism), Kepler defended Nicolaus Copernicus' theory that planets orbit the sun (heliocentrism) and sought to reconcile it with Scripture.<sup>1</sup> He revolutionized scientific thought by applying physics (then considered a branch of natural philosophy) to astronomy (seen as a branch of mathematics).

An "unorthodox" Lutheran, Kepler

had a deep love for Christ and the inspiration and authority of Scripture. He is frequently quoted as saying, "O God, I am thinking Thy thoughts after Thee." Strong theological convictions prompted him to find a connection between the physical and the spiritual, and his scientific discoveries led him to believe he had uncovered God's geometrical plan for the universe. In Kepler's view, the universe itself was an image of God, with the sun corresponding to the Father, the stellar sphere to the Son, and the intervening space to the Holy Spirit.

Life, however, held many trials for Kepler. His Protestant beliefs won him little favor with the Catholic church, and the Lutheran church shunned him for his sympathies with Calvinist beliefs. He was forced to relocate more than once to avoid persecution, as well as to escape political dangers from ongoing wars. He suffered the deaths of his first wife and several young children. In addition, fellow scientists did not immediately accept his scientific discoveries. Galileo Galilei and the French mathematician and scientist René Descartes ignored his 1609 work *Astronomia nova* (*A New Astronomy*). Even his mentor Michael Maestlin objected to his introduction of physics into astronomy.

Yet Kepler stayed true to his faith, as evident in his written works, and his scien-

tific discoveries would eventually win him acclaim, legitimize the discoveries of his contemporary Galileo, and serve as a major influence on the scientists who came after him. His famous work *Harmonies of the World* (in Latin, *Harmonices Mundi*) begins:

I commence a sacred discourse, a most true hymn to God the Founder, and I judge it to be piety, not to sacrifice many hecatombs of bulls to Him and to burn incense of innumerable perfumes and cassia, but first to learn myself, and afterwards to teach others too, how great He is in wisdom, how great in power, and of what sort in goodness.<sup>2</sup>

At the end, Kepler concludes:

Purposely I break off the dream and the very vast speculation, merely crying out with the royal Psalmist: Great is our Lord and great His virtue and of His wisdom there is no number: praise Him, ye heavens, praise Him, ye sun, moon, and planets, use every sense for perceiving, every tongue for declaring your Creator...to Him be praise, honour, and glory, world without end. Amen.<sup>3</sup> ●

#### References

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3. "Epilogue Concerning the Sun, By Way of Conjecture," *ibid*.

Ms. Dao is Assistant Editor.



# NEW DOORS IN DALLAS

HENRY M. MORRIS III, D.M.I.N.

After much toil and prayer, an empty building shell has been transformed into the new ICR academic and research center. Several faculty members are now in residence, along with the IT Department. The geology and biology laboratories are ready to begin operations. The theological library has been unpacked and the books carefully shelved, and a revised and automated warehouse and fulfillment center is in business.

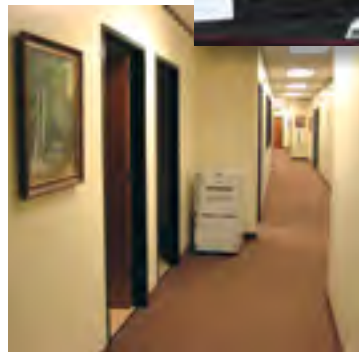
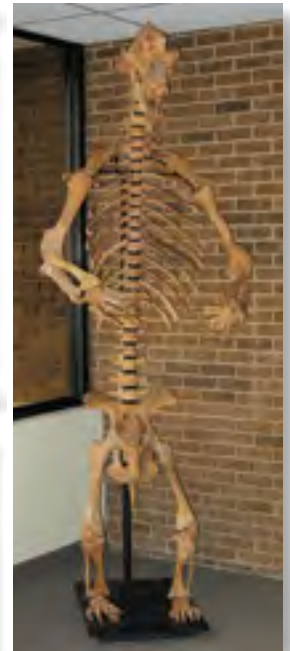
By God's grace and provision, the move of our headquarters from Santee to Dallas is nearing completion. For now, the Museum of Creation and Earth History remains in California, along with our radio operations, pending the completion of the radio studio in Dallas. We appreciate your prayers and messages of encouragement during this time of transition.

The Dallas campus has also welcomed some new additions. The administration building has a fresh "look" with the installation of a façade on the face of the building, and a new monument sign—specially designed with a base that looks like Grand Canyon strata—has been added to further identify ICR's headquarters.

Our latest building residents come with an imposing pedigree. At a natural science auction earlier this year, ICR acquired some impressive fossil specimens. Boris the cave bear graces our lobby, ready to greet visitors. And Levi—short for Leviathan (Job 41)—is a mosasaur, a giant marine reptile. We were able to introduce these newest members to the ICR Board during its regular meeting in January.

We are continuing to recruit additional support and research staff. Please remember us in your prayers. Even with all the changes, ICR's mission and ministry remain the same. It is exciting to see the Lord open new doors for us in Dallas. ●

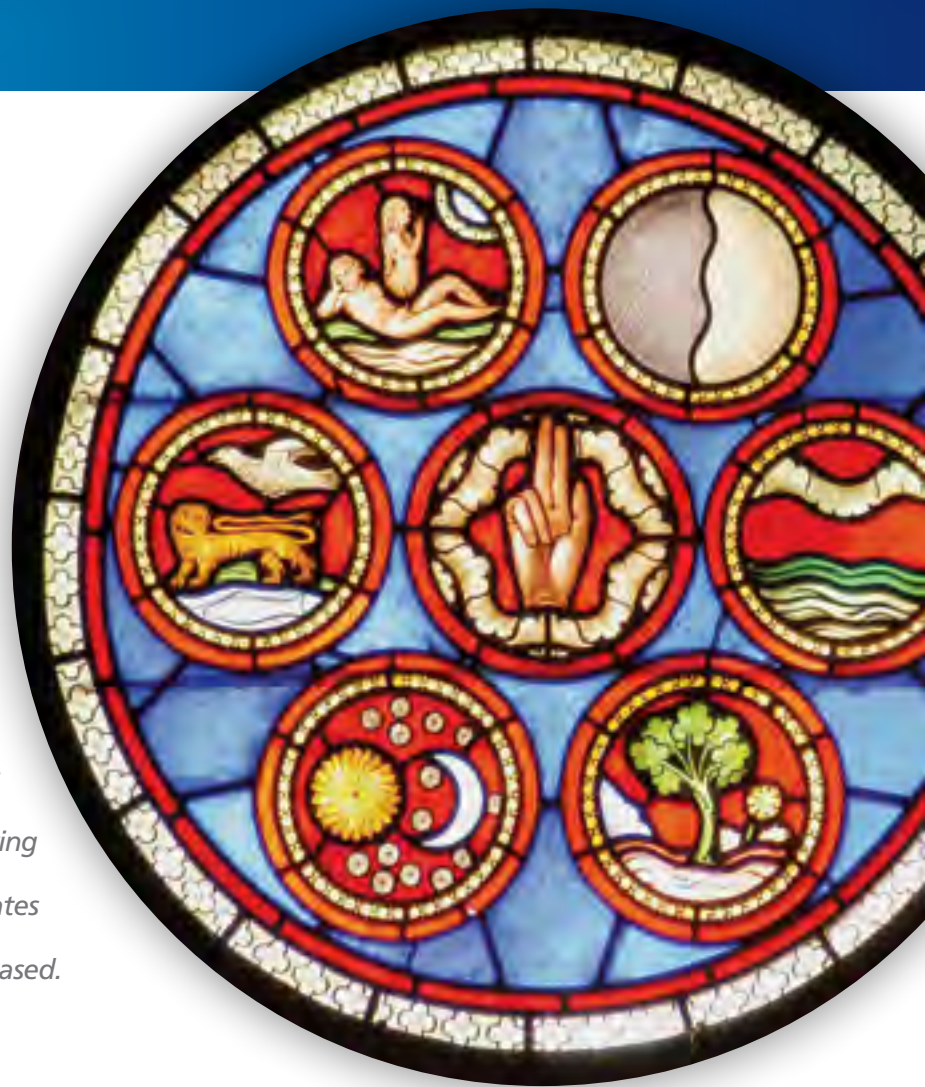
*Dr. Morris is Chief Executive Officer of the Institute for Creation Research.*



# The Principles of CREATIONISM

HENRY M. MORRIS, P.H.D.

*February 25, 2008, marks two years since the founder of the Institute for Creation Research, Dr. Henry M. Morris, passed into glory. In honor of this man of God, we have adapted the following article written by Dr. Morris, which so clearly states the principles upon which this organization is based.*



**C**reationism can be studied and taught in any of three basic forms, as follows:

- (1) **Scientific creationism** (no reliance on biblical revelation, utilizing *only scientific data* to support and expound the creation model).
- (2) **Biblical creationism** (no reliance on scientific data, using *only the Bible* to expound and defend the creation model).
- (3) **Scientific biblical creationism** (full reliance on *biblical revelation* but *also* using *scientific data* to support and develop the creation model).

These are not contradictory systems, of course, but supplementary, each appropriate for certain applications. For example, creationists should *not* advocate that biblical creationism be taught in public schools, both because of judicial restrictions against religion in such schools and also (more importantly) because teachers who do not *believe* the Bible should not be asked to *teach* the Bible. It is both legal and desirable, however, that *scientific* creationism be taught in public schools as a valid alternative to evolutionism.


In a Sunday School class, on the other hand, dedicated to teaching the Scriptures and “all the counsel of God,” biblical creationism should be strongly expounded and emphasized as the foundation of all other doc-

trine. In a Christian school or college, where the world of God is studied in light of the Word of God, it is appropriate and very important to demonstrate that biblical creationism and scientific creationism are fully compatible—two sides of the same coin, as it were. The creation revelation in Scripture is thus supported by all true facts of nature; the combined study can properly be called scientific biblical creationism. All three systems, of course, contrast sharply and explicitly with the evolution model.

The evolution and creation models, in their simplest forms, can be outlined as follows:<sup>1</sup>

Evolution Model	Creation Model
1. Continuing naturalistic origin	1. Completed supernaturalistic origin
2. Net present increase in complexity	2. Net present decrease in complexity
3. Earth history dominated by uniformitarianism	3. Earth history dominated by catastrophism

The evolution model, as outlined above, is in very general terms. It can be expanded and modified in a number of ways to correspond to particular types of evolutionism (atheistic evolution, theistic evolution, Lamarckianism, neo-Darwinism, punctuated equilibrium, etc.).



Creationists should not advocate that biblical creationism be taught in public schools. It is both legal and desirable, however, that scientific creationism be taught as a valid alternative to evolutionism.

The same is true of the creation model, with the biblical record giving additional specific information that could never be determined from science alone. The three key items in the creation model above are then modified as follows:

### **Biblical Creation Model**

1. Creation completed by supernatural processes in six days.
2. Creation in the bondage of decay because of sin and the curse.
3. Earth history dominated by the great flood of Noah's day.

Creationists, however, do not propose that the public schools teach six-day creation, the fall of man, and the Noachian flood. They do maintain, however, that they should teach the evidence for a complex completed creation, the universal principle of decay (in contrast to the evolutionary assumption of increasing organization), and the worldwide evidences of recent catastrophism. All of these are implicit in observable scientific data, and should certainly be included in public education.

Both the scientific creation model and the biblical creation model can be considerably expanded to incorporate many key events of creation and earth history, in terms of both scientific observation on the one hand and biblical doctrine on the other. These can, in fact, be developed as a series of formal principles<sup>2</sup> of scientific creationism and biblical creationism, respectively, as listed below:

### **Principles of Scientific Creationism**

1. The physical universe of space, time, matter and energy has not always existed, but was supernaturally created by a transcendent personal Creator who alone has existed from eternity.
2. The phenomenon of biological life did not develop by natural processes from inanimate systems but was specially and supernaturally created by the Creator.
3. Each of the major kinds of plants and animals was created functionally complete from the beginning and did not evolve from some other kind of organism. Changes in basic kinds since their first creation are limited to "horizontal" changes (variations) within the kinds, or "downward" changes (e.g., harmful mutations, extinctions).
4. The first human beings did not evolve from an animal ancestry, but were specially created in fully human form from the start. Furthermore, the "spiritual" nature of man (self-image, moral consciousness, abstract

reasoning, language, will, religious nature, etc.) is itself a supernaturally created entity distinct from mere biological life.

5. Earth pre-history, as preserved especially in the crustal rocks and fossil deposits, is primarily a record of catastrophic intensities of natural processes, operating largely within uniform natural laws, rather than one of uniformitarian process rates. There is therefore no *a priori* reason for not considering the many scientific evidences for a relatively recent creation of the earth and the universe, in addition to the scientific evidences that most of the earth's fossiliferous sediments were formed in an even more recent global hydraulic cataclysm.
6. Processes today operate primarily within fixed natural laws and relatively uniform process rates. Since these were themselves originally created and are daily maintained by their Creator, however, there is always the possibility of miraculous intervention in these laws or processes by their Creator. Evidences for such intervention must be scrutinized critically, however, because there must be clear and adequate reason for any such action on the part of the Creator.
7. The universe and life have somehow been impaired since the completion of creation, so that imperfections in structure, disease, aging, extinctions and other such phenomena are the result of "negative" changes in properties and processes occurring in an originally perfect created order.
8. Since the universe and its primary components were created perfect for their purposes in the beginning by a competent and volitional Creator, and since the Creator does remain active in this now-decaying creation, there does exist ultimate purpose and meaning in the universe. Teleological considerations, therefore, are appropriate in scientific studies whenever they are consistent with the actual data of observation, and it is reasonable to assume that the creation presently awaits the consummation of the Creator's purpose.
9. Although people are finite and scientific data concerning origins are always circumstantial and incomplete, the human mind (if open to the possibility of creation) is able to explore the manifestation of that Creator rationally and scientifically, and to reach an intelligent decision regarding one's place in the Creator's plan.

### **Principles of Biblical Creationism**

1. The Creator of the universe is a triune God—Father, Son and Holy

The two systems are completely compatible. All the genuine facts of science support biblical creationism and all statements in the Bible are consistent with scientific creationism.

- Spirit. There is only one eternal and transcendent God, the source of all being and meaning, and He exists in three Persons, each of whom participated in the work of creation.
- The Bible, consisting of the thirty-nine canonical books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven canonical books of the New Testament, is the divinely-inspired revelation of the Creator to man. Its unique, plenary, verbal inspiration guarantees that these writings, as originally and miraculously given, are infallible and completely authoritative on all matters with which they deal, free from error of any sort, scientific and historical as well as moral and theological.
  - All things in the universe were created and made by God in the six literal days of the creation week described in Genesis 1:1-2:3, and confirmed in Exodus 20:8-11. The creation record is factual, historical and perspicuous; thus all theories of origins or development which involve evolution in any form are false. All things which now exist are sustained and ordered by God's providential care. However, a part of the spiritual creation, Satan and his angels, rebelled against God after the creation and are attempting to thwart His divine purposes in creation.
  - The first human beings, Adam and Eve, were specially created by God, and all other men and women are their descendants. In Adam, mankind was instructed to exercise "dominion" over all other created organisms, and over the earth itself (an implicit commission for true science, technology, commerce, fine art, and education) but the temptation by Satan and the entrance of sin brought God's curse on that dominion and on mankind, culminating in death and separation from God as the natural and proper consequence.
  - The biblical record of primeval earth history in Genesis 1-11 is fully historical and perspicuous, including the creation and fall of man, the curse on the creation and its subjection to the bondage of decay, the promised Redeemer, the worldwide cataclysmic deluge in the days of Noah, the post-diluvian renewal of man's commission to subdue the earth (now augmented by the institution of human government) and the origin of nations and languages at the tower of Babel.
  - The alienation of man from his Creator because of sin can only be remedied by the Creator Himself, who became man in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, through miraculous conception and virgin birth. In Christ were indissolubly united perfect sinless humanity and full deity, so that His substitutionary death is the only necessary and sufficient

price of man's redemption. That the redemption was completely efficacious is assured by His bodily resurrection from the dead and ascension into heaven; the resurrection of Christ is thus the focal point of history, assuring the consummation of God's purposes in creation.

- The final restoration of creation's perfection is yet future, but individuals can immediately be restored to fellowship with their Creator, on the basis of His redemptive work on their behalf, receiving forgiveness and eternal life solely through personal trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, accepting Him not only as estranged Creator but also as reconciling Redeemer and coming King. Those who reject Him, however, or who neglect to believe on Him, thereby continue in their state of rebellion and must ultimately be consigned to the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.
- The eventual accomplishment of God's eternal purposes in creation, with the removal of His curse and the restoration of all things to divine perfection, will take place at the personal bodily return to the earth of Jesus Christ to judge and purge sin and to establish His eternal kingdom.
- Each believer should participate in the "ministry of reconciliations" by seeking both to bring individuals back to God in Christ (the "Great Commission") and to "subdue the earth" for God's glory (the Edenic-Noahic Commission). The three institutions established by the Creator for the implementation of His purposes in this world (home, government, church) should be honored and supported as such.

Even though the principles of scientific creationism can be expounded quite independently of the principles of biblical creationism, the two systems are completely compatible. All the genuine facts of science support biblical creationism and all statements in the Bible are consistent with scientific creationism. Either system can be taught independently of the other or the two can be taught concurrently, as the individual situation may warrant. ●

#### References

- See Morris, Henry M., ed. 1974. *Scientific Creationism*. San Diego: C.L.P. Publishers, 12.
- These principles were adopted by the staff of the Institute for Creation Research and incorporated permanently in its By-Laws.

This article was adapted from Morris, Henry M. 1980. "The Tenets of Creationism." *Acts & Facts* 9 (7).



Henry M. Morris • 1918-2006

Life's amazing complexity cannot be denied. We see all around us a seeming universality of perfection. The inner complexity of living creatures is matched by symbiotic relationships between life forms, a mutual dependency that defies a sequential appearance of the entities involved. Nature has balance, from the intricate food chain to a recycling of resources. The plant and animal kingdoms give every appearance of having been created, on purpose, by a very wise Creator.

Evolutionists see the same universality of perfection, yet they deny any creative agent. The irreducible complexity of life that seems obvious to anyone who believes in the existence of a supernatural Creator, is ascribed by evolutionary scientists to unthinking natural causes.

How can they do this? Is it logical? Is it credible? What is the thought system that permits such a conclusion? It behooves us from time to time to remind ourselves of the parameters of evolutionary thinking.

#### Naturalistic Explanations

First and foremost is a faith commitment to naturalism, an interpretive system in which natural causes are the only ones allowed. Some adherents have even gone so far as to redefine "science" as "naturalism." Instead of science being the search for truth, it becomes the search for a believable naturalistic explanation for every scientific observation.

Other naturalists would insist that even if creation and intelligent design are true, they cannot form the basis for a valid scientific approach. Not all evolutionists are atheists, but evolution is atheistic at its core. So the first secret of evolution is that all explanations must be naturalistic. If there is a God, He must be arbitrarily kept out of science and scientific interpretations. Even if naturalistic explanations strain credulity, they are accepted and supernatural causes are categorically shunned.

#### Time

Next is a reliance on deep time—time enough for virtually anything to happen. Evolution depends on beneficial mutations as a mechanism for change, genetic modifications that confer some selective advantage to the mutated being. These are unspeakably rare—indeed, none have ever been

documented that have actually added information to the genome. Some mutations may have produced a temporary advantage that could be selected by natural selection, but such changes actually involved the loss of a trait, a reduction in the genome's complexity.

Evolution would require trillions of beneficial steps to turn a single-celled organism into a man. We have never observed such positive genetic steps, but in millions and millions of years it is supposed that they would happen sometimes. So time seemingly solves the problem.

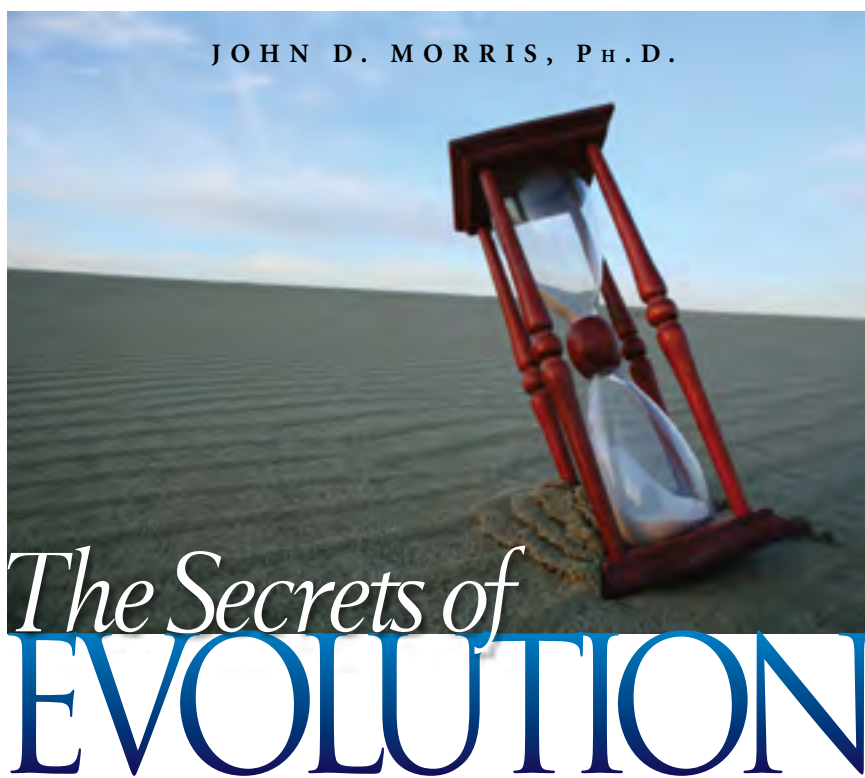
#### Death

Then there is the evolutionary necessity of struggle and death. Survival of the fittest actually means extinction of the unfit. The vast majority of individuals, as well as types of individuals, must be sacrificed for the select favored few to survive. For instance, the dinosaurs' extinction allowed mammals to flourish, supposedly leading to the emergence of man. If there is no death, there is no evolutionary progress.

Naturalism, time, and death—how strong a scientific foundation are they? Obviously, we have no way of knowing absolutely that no supernatural agent has ever acted. We live in a world in which we observe only natural processes, but how could we know what happened in the long ago past? Like-

wise, we have no assurance of immense spans of time in which these natural processes operated. We are locked into the present, and the inaccessible past lies beyond our reach. And death—is it a creative power? Does death by natural selection produce higher forms of life? Quite the reverse: death is an ending, not a beginning.

Evolutionary thinking relies on these questionable concepts to present itself as scientifically plausible. But as we have seen, these secrets are neither necessary nor logical. Rather, they are a choice, a position willingly taken in spite of overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Evolutionary theory has become an entire worldview, a way of interpreting the evidence—but it is a worldview with a very shaky foundation. ●



*Dr. Morris is President of the Institute for Creation Research.*

# Red Butte: Remnant of the Flood

WILLIAM A. HOESCH, M.S.

Image used by permission of Dr. Steven A. Austin.

Sixteen miles from Grand Canyon's south rim, a cone-shaped butte rises like a lone sentinel 1,000 feet above the Coconino Plateau floor. Thousands of tourists rush past on Arizona Highway 64 without giving it another thought, yet this humble little hill testifies to a remarkable past.

Red Butte is composed of flat-lying shales of the Moenkopi Formation, overlain by Shinarump Conglomerate of the Chinle Formation. Continuous exposures of these two formations are not found for tens of miles around, yet they occur here. These strata sit on a foundation of flat-lying and resistant Kaibab Limestone, the rim rock for most of Grand Canyon and surface of the Coconino Plateau. A basalt (lava) flow tops the butte, protecting the softer layers below from erosion. Lava ordinarily flows downhill, so how did it get on *top*? Answer: it flowed onto a surface that was once 1,000 feet higher than the present Coconino Plateau! Strata of the Moenkopi, Chinle, and perhaps other formations were stripped away by erosion. Red Butte stands as the most prominent vestige of this once continuous layer.

The butte's shale slopes tell another story. These shales belong to the Moenkopi Formation, a stratum that can be traced across parts of Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico. Lateral equivalents of the Moenkopi may extend to Connecticut, England, Germany, Spain, and Bulgaria.<sup>1</sup> Fossil plants, crinoids, brachiopods, gastropods, bivalves, ammonoids, nautiloids, arthropods, fish, reptiles, and labyrinthodont amphibians have been recovered from Moenkopi strata in the Grand Canyon region.<sup>2</sup> To explain this odd assortment of terrestrial and marine taxa, and the persistence of the strata, geologists envision for western North America "a broad, continental plain that was periodically flooded by an ocean."<sup>3</sup>

A global Flood may provide the framework for a more credible

depositional model. During the Flood, sediment-choked waters deposited 1,200 meters of flat-lying "Grand Canyon strata" and around 4,000 meters of Mesozoic strata (seen today atop Utah's Grand Staircase to the north, and Arizona's Black Mesa to the east). The unique vertical movements in the earth's crust during the Flood's retreat<sup>4</sup> uplifted the region, and an enormous quantity of soft sediment was removed from its top—a volume far greater than that excavated from Grand Canyon proper.<sup>5</sup> Red Butte is a tiny remnant from this vast erosion. When the strata gained sufficient internal strength to stand as near-vertical walls, Grand Canyon itself was incised into the plateau.

Deposition and erosion on such scales boggle the mind, yet they unquestionably took place. This humble little butte challenges geologists to think big. Perhaps this is why the Grand Canyon region fits so well with a global Flood model of earth history.<sup>6</sup> ●

#### References

1. Ager, D. 1993. *The Nature of the Stratigraphical Record, Third Edition*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
2. Doelling, H. et al. 2000. Geology of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Utah. In Sprinkel, D.A. et al (eds.), *Geology of Utah's Parks and Monuments, Utah Geological Association Publication 28*. Salt Lake City: Utah Geological Association, 189-231.
3. Anderson, P.B. et al. 2000. Geology of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Utah-Arizona. *Ibid*, 301-335.
4. "At thy rebuke [the waters] fled... They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them" (Psalm 104:7-8). The Hebrew text suggests vertical movements in the earth's crust whereby the mountains went up and the valleys went down, allowing the Flood waters to retreat.
5. Mesozoic strata are conspicuously or nearly absent for an estimated 9,000 square kilometers around Grand Canyon, though they are present to thicknesses in excess of 4 kilometers in the adjacent Grand Staircase and Black Mesa regions. Erosion is estimated to have removed 36,000 cubic kilometers, dwarfing the approximately 4,000 cubic kilometers excavated from Grand Canyon (see Steven A. Austin's book *Grand Canyon: Monument to Catastrophe*, available at [www.icr.org](http://www.icr.org)).
6. A tour of the Grand Canyon region will be conducted by ICR scientists April 11 to 20, 2008. See page 2 for more information.

Mr. Hoesch is Research Assistant in Geology.



# The Face on Mars: A Teachable Moment

DAVID F. COPPEDGE

In 1976, Viking snapped a photo from Martian orbit that looked like a human face staring up from the plains of Cydonia. It launched a worldwide enterprise of imagination. For countless hours on late-night radio, enthusiasts offered speculations about long-lost civilizations that left monuments to their presence, along with conspiracy theories that NASA was covering up evidence. More recent orbiters with better camera resolution began to show the feature's true "face"—a windswept mesa. Photos from Mars Express in 2006 and Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter in 2007 have quieted all but the most incorrigible believers.

Our brains tend to find faces on mountains and messages in noise. Sometimes, though, genuine designs are hard to discern. How can we reliably detect intentional design versus the results of chance or natural law? It is tempting to ridicule the gullibility of believers in the Face on Mars, but we can make it a teachable moment. Turn the question around. Say that one day aliens land on Mars and find one of our rovers. Even if it were rusted and inactive by then, would they know it was a relic of civilization, rather than a product of the natural forces—wind, erosion, chemistry, electromagnetism—acting in the planet's environment?

As explained in the excellent film *Unlocking the Mystery of Life*,<sup>1</sup> design can be inferred when a structure 1) is improbable and 2) matches an independently specifiable pattern. Design as an explanation is a last resort after

chance and natural law have been ruled out.<sup>2</sup> Using these principles, the Face on Mars is explainable by chance and geological processes. The faces on Mt. Rushmore, by contrast, are both improbable and specified by the well-documented faces of four American presidents. It is ironic that the SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) program, staffed as it is by staunch evolutionists, depends on this ability to separate intelligent design from chance and natural law.

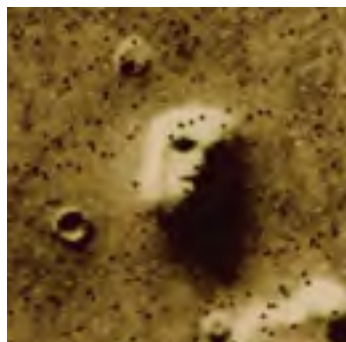
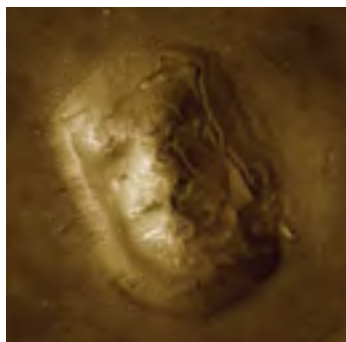


Image taken in 1976 by the Viking 1 Orbiter.



Higher-resolution image taken in 2001 by the Mars Orbiter Camera.

The Face on Mars can be a useful introduction for teachers and parents who want to present a lesson on design detection. Compare objects that look similar and ask whether they are products of intelligent design, chance/natural law, or both. Some examples would be cannonballs and concretions; burrow tracks and hieroglyphics; an archery target and a radiohilo; cave paintings and cave formations; a river and an aqueduct; columnar basalt and steel girders; sand ripples and sand castles; lenticular clouds and skywriting; a trail cairn and a random rock pile. Show these on a screen and have

volunteers decide if they are "designed" or "not designed." Ask them how they know. Throw in some difficult ones, like a solar eclipse, or abstract art, or a bush trimmed like a rabbit next to a real rabbit. These discussions will lead to deeper questions about information, communication, and primary versus secondary design.

As Christians, we need to understand that not everything in nature is a product of God's direct intervention. In His rule over nature, God sometimes speaks in the thunder (primary causation, special revelation).<sup>3</sup> More often, He lets the thunder obey the natural laws He has ordained (secondary causation, natural revelation).<sup>4</sup> Since much of our creation apologetic depends on an argument from design, it is important that we understand and apply it properly. Some well-meaning Christians infer design when it is not warranted. When highly-improbable patterns fit an independent specification, though, the design inference can be

compelling. The Face-on-Mars people deserve to blush for their credulity. The right kind of design reasoning can save face. ●

#### References

1. Available at [www.icr.org/store](http://www.icr.org/store).
2. Natural law is also designed by God, of course, but is usually considered secondary causation—i.e., not requiring direct intervention.
3. John 12:28-30; Revelation 10:3-4.
4. Psalm 29; Psalm 19:1-4.

David Coppedge works in the Cassini Program at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. The views expressed are his own.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Thank you so much for your faithfulness, even when we were broke. We just refinanced everything, so the mud's clearing up. Thank God for the greatest little book (next to the Bible) on earth—Dr. Henry's *Days of Praise*. He'll be up there 2 years soon (February 25). What a blessed man of God. I will be more faithful this year—the *Days of Praise* must keep going forth. There is *nothing* compared to it.

— E. & S.A.

I have been receiving your *Acts & Facts* publication for a few months now and am receiving rich blessings from you. I decided the best way to further this type of work you do for God's Glory is to make monthly donations. I feel that steady monthly donations is the best way to help. I pray that others will be led to do the same.

— D.H.

It is difficult to adequately express the appreciation and ministry to my soul and spirit that ICR has been over the years. Having first been introduced to Henry Morris' writings in 1975 and receiving *Acts & Facts* since the late '70s—it has been immeasurable. It is my sincere hope and desire to assist the ministry as God enables—and am confident that He is able...By the way, I love the new format.

— S.P.

Thank you, all, for all of your dedication, thorough work, loyalty, perseverance, boldness to the Word of God, and true science. Much appreciated and very beneficial to myself and family.

— C.M.

One of my fellow workers [said] that he was not a Christian. I was able to ask him if he knew what it really means to be a Christian... He knew that one needs to believe in Jesus, but that he thinks there is no evidence that God exists. Your [December 2007] *Acts & Facts* came with the article on snowflakes. I was able to challenge him to read the article and then see if he still can say there is no evidence. He did read the article and was extremely quiet afterward...we were not able to have any more conversation about the issue, but his whole attitude seems changed.

— D.H.

**Note from the Editor:** Thank you to the many people who responded to our survey regarding a possible change to the size of our quarterly devotional booklet *Days of Praise*. We appreciate your participation and the many notes of encouragement we received, and we are prayerfully considering whether to issue *Days of Praise* in a new, more compact version, or in a large-print edition. We will keep you posted.

Have a comment? Email us at [editor@icr.org](mailto:editor@icr.org). Or write to Editor, P. O. Box 59029, Dallas, Texas 75229.

## Radio Log



### This month on "Science, Scripture, & Salvation"

W E E K E N D O F M A R C H 1

#### *Ask a Creation Scientist*

Did we come from apes? Did Noah's Flood really happen? Are fossils millions of years old? These are three major issues in the continuing debate over origins. What do creation scientists have to say about these divisive topics? Find out this week on *Science, Scripture, & Salvation!*

W E E K E N D O F M A R C H 8

#### *Design of Fruit Trees*

Many of us enjoy sweet fresh fruit or delectable hot fruit desserts. The trees that give us such wonderful food are flowering plants that continually reproduce themselves. How do they do it? Listen in to learn about these fantastic fruit-bearing trees that the Creator has given to us!

W E E K E N D O F M A R C H 15

#### *Marine Deserts*

Most people would describe a desert as a vast amount of land with little to no available water. However, deserts are not exclusive to dry land. What other kind is there? Get your feet wet on the topic of underwater desert regions!

W E E K E N D O F M A R C H 22

#### *Science of the Crucifixion*

As we celebrate Easter and remember the victorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is important to consider just how much He suffered and sacrificed for us on the cross. There's so much more to Christ's ultimate sacrifice of death than we may realize. How high a price did He pay for our sins? You'll have a greater appreciation for the Creator after hearing this broadcast.

W E E K E N D O F M A R C H 29

#### *Star Light, Star Bright*

Evolutionists use the issue of distant starlight as a strong point in their argument for origins by chance with no divine intervention. Of course, evolution isn't true; but if the earth is only a few thousand years old, just how are we able to see light from stars that are millions of light-years away? Don't miss this intriguing discussion!

To find out where you can hear ICR broadcasts, please email [radio@icr.org](mailto:radio@icr.org) with your name and address. We will gladly send you a radio station listing for your state. If our programs are not aired in your area, we would be happy to send you a free demo packet for you to take to your local Christian station.





# Mighty Mites

HENRY M. MORRIS IV

Many cultures value the practice of charitable giving. The Internet especially is full of websites devoted to various ways of giving to charity, the majority of which devote much of their text to “big” donations through estates, trusts, endowments, etc. But that’s the way the world thinks—bigger is always better. Big money makes larger programs possible, which require bigger budgets to support, which in turn demand even more money to sustain. It can lead to a self-destructive cycle that shifts the focus towards meeting budgetary goals and away from the purpose for which the charity or ministry was established in the first place.

At ICR we strive mightily to avoid letting that happen by remaining true to God’s Word so that He—and only He—is glorified in the end. While large donations are certainly welcome additions to our ministry, we know that large gifts are not possible for most people who feel led to partner with us. And in fact, gifts of any size can be unbiblical if given in the wrong spirit. Consider the words of our Creator in Mark 12:41-44:

And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

Notice our Lord’s commendation of the widow’s seemingly small gift. He was not impressed with the large donations of the rich, for they “did cast in of their abundance” and had plenty left over to maintain their lavish lifestyles. Rather, Christ was pleased enough with the widow’s

“farthing” (one fourth of a penny in the old English monetary system) to call His disciples over to point out this truth: God measures a gift not by its size, but by the motive for which it is given and the sacrifice it represents. Truly, the widow’s two mites accounted for more than all the other gifts combined, for in her poverty she gave “all that she had, even all her living.”

Perhaps some people have been reluctant to give a small gift, rationalizing that it could do little to further the Lord’s work. And yet the example set by this widow clearly shows that God is not interested in the size of a donation, but in its motivation and its proportion to the “treasure” in the giver’s life (Matthew 6:21). As such, consider the following: if only 10 percent of those who are currently receiving our material and are not yet partners with us gave \$10 per month, the Lord would use them to add over *one million dollars* by the end of 2008. Many “mites” add up, and can become mighty for our Lord’s work!

Please know that ICR prayerfully and carefully applies the resources provided by the Lord to further His ministry. We could not function without the help of many who, like us, wish to share the wonders of His majestic creation so that many can come to a saving knowledge of Him. We encourage you to give wisely. Consider the needs of your family, consider the needs of your home church. And as you make your plans, will you prayerfully consider whether our Lord would have you join us? Your help will make a difference! ●

*Mr. Morris is Director of Donor Relations.*

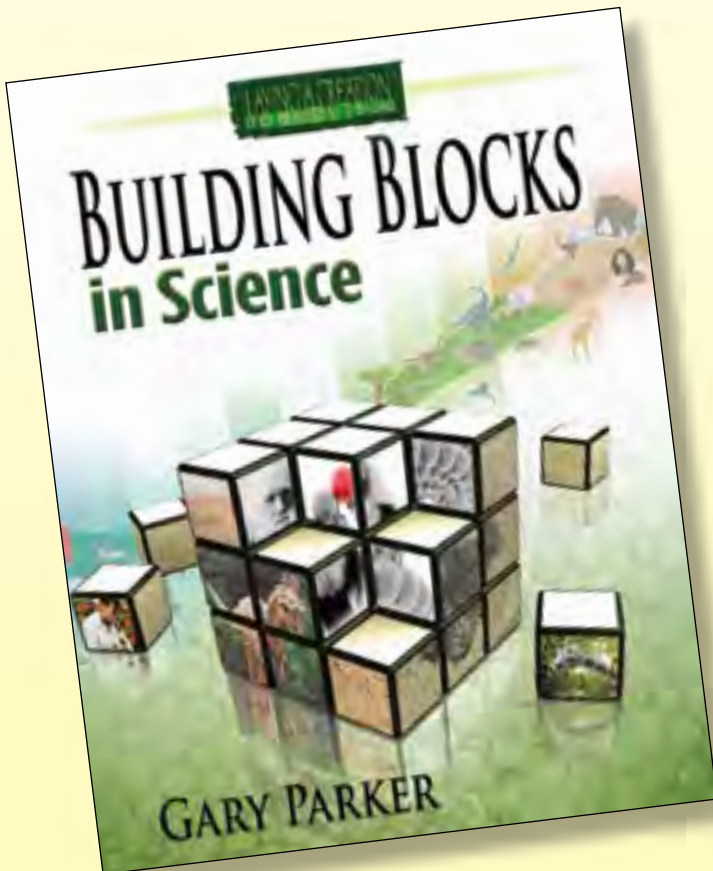




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## Scientific Creationism

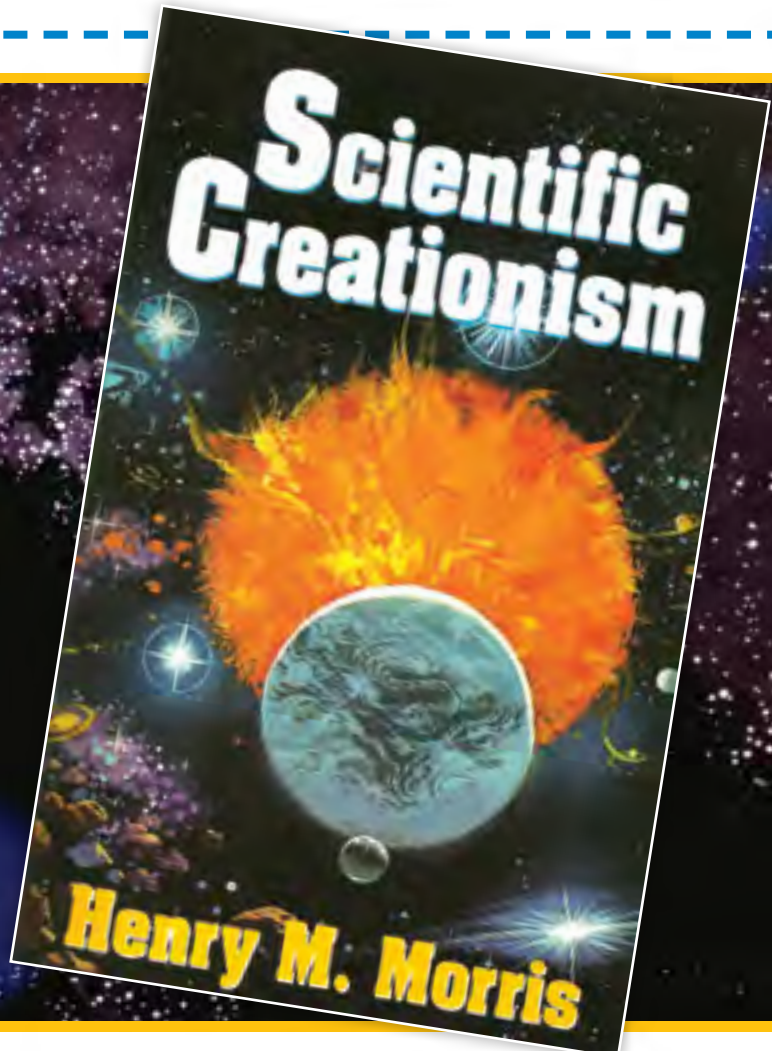
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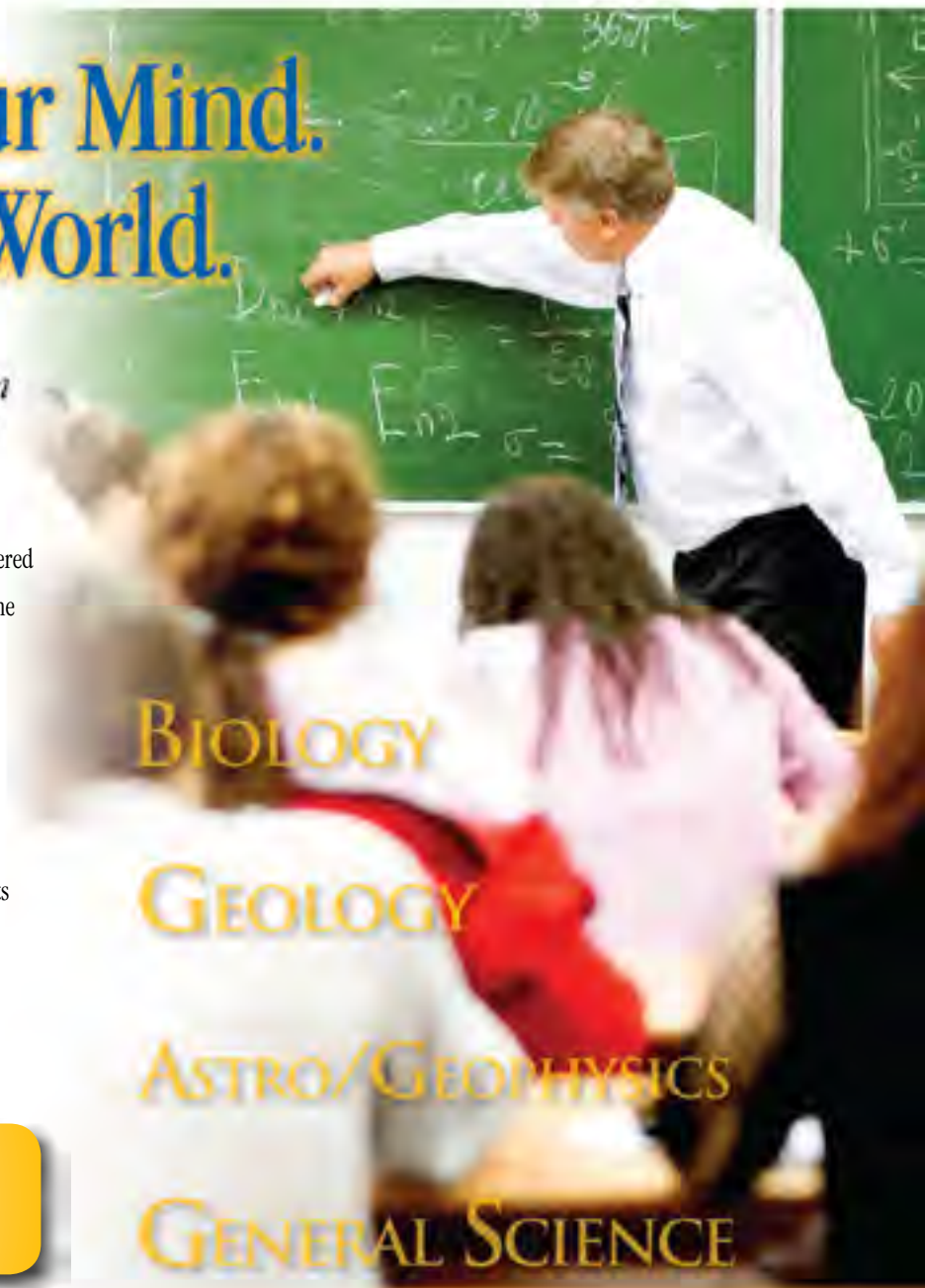
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