



Think & Believe

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The World As It Is Now

by Dave and Mary Jo Nutting

According to Genesis, when God finished His work of creation, the world was a beautiful place, perfectly balanced and ideally suited as a home for man. Adam and Eve walked in fellowship with God and enjoyed the bounty and beauty of His creation for a while, but then Eve fell for the lie of the Serpent, Adam followed her in disobedience, fellowship with God was broken, and death entered the world.

What really happened at the time of the Fall? What was it like before death entered the world? What forces were in operation to keep the whole system in balance? When did predator-prey relationships develop, and how did the predators develop such remarkable specializations? What function did bacteria, viruses and insects have before the Fall? How did some become harmful to man? What about the thorns and thistles? How did they develop? Were they the natural result of mutations as God withdrew some of His protective care, or were they new creations at the time of the curse? Although these and many more questions intrigue us, **we don't have all the answers.** God has not chosen to give answers to all of our questions, and there is no way for us to study the original creation directly. We can speculate, but we can never know for sure.

We find it hard even to imagine an ecosystem without death. Everything we study in nature today is under the bondage of corruption. Our universe is running down, available energy is being dissipated, resources are being used up, the universe is growing old. These principles are so well known that scientists have formalized them into a "Law," the Second Law of Thermodynamics. However, those who reject the Genesis account have no hint that things might have been drastically different in the past. Science can deal

directly only with the present. By studying the world as it is now, and making the assumption that things have always been pretty much the same, evolutionary scientists speculate about the past; however, that is pure **speculation.** They, too, know they don't have all the answers. The only way any of us could really know for sure would be to have the word of a reliable witness who was there.

The Bible claims to be just that. It claims to be the Word of the God Who was there "in the beginning." Skeptics through the ages have set out to disprove it, but, time after time, have proven themselves wrong instead. What about you? Have you honestly and diligently sought to know the truth about the Bible? If not, isn't it time you did?



*Did Noah blow it?
(See Spotlight on Science)*

NOTES & QUOTES

Lessons from the Ants

■ God has given us many object lessons in nature, to help us learn about Him and His ways. In the Bible He calls our attention to what He has made:

- Go to the ant O sluggard,
Observe her ways and be wise,
Which, having no chief,
Officer, or ruler,
Prepares her food in the summer,
And gathers her provision in the harvest.

[Proverbs 6:6-8]

■ Ants are diligent workers and frequently carry loads larger than themselves. We see immediately the application that we also need to be diligent workers. But what about the other part of this passage? Is it really true that the ants have no chief, officer, or ruler? After all, isn't the queen the ruler of the colony? We thought so, but we found evidence that **the Bible is right again!** We were the ones that were mistaken! *World Book Encyclopedia* agrees with Scripture on this point. It states: "No single ant rules the colony. . . . The queen is not the ruler of the colony. . . . The ant colony has no government, although the tasks are divided among the workers." All the ants in the colony work together, each apparently "knowing" what to do and doing its part. We as Christians can learn from that.

- For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly. . . . [Romans 12:4-6]

■ This principle is certainly well-illustrated in ant colonies. Each ant is made for a particular function and spends its life doing what it was created to do. There are workers, nursery attendants, soldiers, farmers, ranchers, harvesters, and more. Wouldn't things go more smoothly in the church if we all exercised our own gift for the good of all and stopped trying to be something we were never meant to be.

■ Ants are indeed especially suited to their particular job in size, shape, and form. Leaf cutters have mouthparts especially suited for cutting and chewing leaves. The honey-pot ant stores up a sweet substance in its body and becomes a living storage tank giving whenever a need arises. The blockhead ant has a head shaped like a block for barricading the doorway against intruders. Amazon army ants have jaws

specialized for battle and that's all they do. These soldiers don't involve themselves in the affairs of everyday life. Christians, are we mindful of the spiritual battle we are in? Are we totally devoted to our Master, or are we so caught up by the world that we forget the battle? Paul reminds us in II Timothy:

- No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday-life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. [2 Timothy 2:4]

■ One of the most interesting types of ants is the "farmer" ant. These ants actually raise aphids and other types of insects that produce a sweet, honey-like substance. They "milk" the aphids for the "honey" by stroking their backs with their antennae. The ants defend their aphid colony from enemies, and occasionally move them to better feeding spots. Other farmer ants cut leaves in small pieces. They then carry them into their colony, chew them into tiny pieces, and "seed" them with fungus. The tiniest workers tend the crop until the fungus is ready to harvest, and then all share in the feast.

- And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. [Galatians 6:9]

■ Once, while observing a large colony of leaf cutter ants, we were impressed by the teamwork displayed. One ant was struggling with a large load. As it came across the bridge, it slipped and almost fell off. It managed to hang on tightly to the bridge with 2 legs and to the load with 2 more, but was in quite a predicament. At that moment several other ants came to its rescue. At great personal risk, they managed to save the ant and the load. They exhibited well the meaning of Philippians 2:4:

- Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. [Phil. 2:4]

■ God has illustrated many of the spiritual principles from Scripture in the natural world. Have you learned lessons from the ants or some other creature? Drop us a line telling us about it. If you give us permission to use it, maybe someday your story will appear in *Think and Believe*.

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SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE

Mosquitoes: Thorns in the Flesh!

Have you ever thought Noah really blew it when he neglected to swat the mosquitoes that got on the ark? It sure seems that would have saved untold grief for mankind. Of course, mosquitoes could have survived anyway . . . but I doubt if Noah could have kept them off even if he had tried!

We might wonder "Why did God create mosquitoes in the first place? What good are they?" In the present ecosystem, mosquitoes serve as an important source of food for fish, birds, and other insects, but nobody can say for sure what their original function was. We don't know for sure whether or not they ate blood meals before the Fall, but it seems doubtful. Perhaps they all fed on the juices of plants like male mosquitoes do today. Currently only the females suck blood; they need it for producing eggs that will hatch. Unfortunately, this also makes mosquitoes the carriers of some extremely serious diseases like malaria, yellow-fever, sleeping sickness and others.

Though it's hard to remember when we're slapping mosquitoes or swatting flies, by far the majority of insects are not harmful to man. In fact, according to *World Book Encyclopedia*, a study done by the U.S. Department of Agriculture some time ago found fewer than 250 species (about 1/25th of 1 percent) of the insects were detrimental to man or his crops. That's not very many! This fits with the idea that the world was originally created good, and is now deteriorating.

Have you ever considered what a different place this world would be without insects? Of course, we'd have no honey or beeswax without bees, silk without silkworms, or delicacies (?) like fried grasshoppers and chocolate-covered ants. We'd lose a good share of our crops, fruits and flowering plants, since many depend on insects for pollination. Other burrowing insects help to aerate the soil, keeping it suitable for plant growth. Then, too, wouldn't you miss the beauty and delicacy of a monarch butterfly? But mosquitoes . . . who'd miss them?

Whatever their original function, biting mosquitoes, like thorns and thistles, should serve as a reminder to us that we live in a fallen world, tainted by sin and in need of a Savior. Praise God He has provided this Savior and promised a "new heaven and a new earth" where righteousness will rule and the effects of sin will no longer reign . . . and we won't ever have to swat mosquitoes!

Metamorphosis

One of the most amazing phenomena in the animal world is insect metamorphosis, the change in form that occurs as an insect hatches, develops and becomes an adult. This highly complex, fantastically coordinated process seems especially hard to explain by any type of evolutionary scheme.

The insect world exhibits great diversity in the process of metamorphosis but the most fascinating type is complete metamorphosis in which the various developmental stages are amazingly different from each other. In complete metamorphosis, the egg hatches into a stage called the larva, a worm-like or caterpillar stage which bears no resemblance to the adult. Insect larvae often have voluminous appetites and feed on leaves, flowers, and fruits. They may do great harm to crops and other vegetation. The larvae grow and molt (change their outer covering) several times. (This in itself is a complex process involving the interplay of many different chemicals.) They may estivate (become dormant) for a period during the summer or hibernate over winter before entering the next stage. The pupa stage is a resting stage during which the larva is transformed into an adult. Often, the pupa is protected by a cocoon. Many developing insects spend the winter in the pupal stage, although some may develop in just a few days. During the pupal stage, amazingly complex changes take place, as the entire form of the insect changes. Mouthparts change, wings develop, and reproductive organs form. Whole organ systems may actually dissolve and be replaced as adult forms develop. When changes are complete, the adult emerges.

The processes that occur in metamorphosis are amazingly complex and only partially understood. It resembles other types of embryological development, but on a delayed scale with independent stages. Metamorphosis can be influenced by environmental changes, but is hormonally directed. Underlying the whole process are the instructions encoded in the DNA. How could such an amazing sequence develop by chance?

Evolution by natural selection seems to have nothing to contribute to this type of complexity. The whole sequence must be operating in good order or it is no good at all. Just because a certain species is "fit" to survive as a larva offers no guarantee that it will be "fit" to survive and reproduce as an adult. The instructions for the whole sequence must be encoded in the DNA to begin with. The ordered complexity we see in complete metamorphosis fits well with a creation model. It speaks of intelligent design, not accidents and chance.

Upcoming Events

- July 28-29: **Lake Shetek Baptist Family Camp**, Slayton, MN. Contact Louise Sulack, (507) 376-9735.
July 29-31: **Our Savior's Lutheran Church**, Madison, SD. Contact Laurie Rowland, (605) 256-6357.
Aug. 1-2: **Rapid City, SD area**. Contact David Blackhurst, (605) 787-5358.
Aug. 12-17: **Twin Peaks Family Science Adventure**, Collbran, CO. Contact us, (303) 245-5906.
Aug. 19-24: **Camp Redcloud Family Mountain Adventure**, Lake City, CO. Contact us, (303) 245-5906.
Aug. 26-31: **YWAM Discipleship Training School**, Cimarron, CO.
Aug. 31-Sept. 3: **Family Camp**, Tee Pee Bible Camp, Rifle, CO. Contact (303) 876-2108.
Sept. 11-Oct. 9: **Redlands Community Church**, Middle School/High School Tuesday Evening Youth Nights. Contact Rocky Wyatt, (303) 245-9020.

Why Camps?

Some of you may wonder why we devote several weeks each summer to the camp ministry. True, we are "outdoor people" and we do enjoy it, but there's much more to it than that. We have found the camp environment to be ideally suited to a presentation of the creation message. People are away from home, away from the pressures of everyday life, and out in God's beautiful creation where they can think clearly. They have time to hear the lectures, reflect on them, ask questions, discuss ideas, think some more, and ask more questions. This in-depth instructional time, combined with close Christian fellowship, praise and worship times, and just plain fun provide an intense week which usually makes a deep impact on both children and adults. If you haven't been part of a creation camp this summer, we urge you to make plans to attend one next year.

Alpha Omega Institute

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Books Books Books

School is just around the corner and it's time to prepare students for the evolutionary dogma taught as fact that they are likely to encounter in our public schools and media. If you don't have these resources YOU NEED THEM — if not for yourself, then for your grandchildren, nieces, nephews, neighbor children, etc. We all know children who need positive reasons to believe! The books make excellent gifts!

For youngsters of all ages:

The Great Dinosaur Mystery and the Bible, by Paul Taylor (\$12.00)

Dry Bones and Other Fossils, by Gary Parker (\$7.00)

For 5th grade through college:

The Illustrated Origins Answer Book, by Paul Taylor (\$10.00)

For high school and college:

What is Creation Science? by Henry Morris and Gary Parker (\$12.00)

Evolution: Challenge of the Fossil Record by Duane Gish (\$10.00)

For skeptical high school and college instructors:

Evolution: A Theory in Crisis by Michael Denton (\$22.00)

Darwin's Enigma by Luther Sunderland (\$10.00)

For Christian parents, pastors and teachers:

The Genesis Solution by Ken Ham (\$9.00)

Videos:

The Evolution Conspiracy (\$45.00)

Great Dinosaur Mystery (\$21.00)

Mount Saint Helens (\$32.00)

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