



# CSA News

## The Creation Science Association for Mid-America

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in men" Psalm 118:8

Volume 14(4) July/Aug, 1997

### Michael Behe's Black Box

Glenn Kailer

Sometimes when I read a new book I think it deserves a written review. Most often, it seems to me that a book review is of real benefit to those who likely want to know about the book, but haven't heard of it yet, or are saving up their nickels to buy it. I've been reading a book lately that puzzles me. On one hand it seems to be full of science that any creationist would want to know and every evolutionist try madly to suppress. On the other hand, I find myself wondering if a warning might be more appropriate than an endorsement.

The book I refer to is Michael J. Behe's **Darwin's Black Box--The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution**. The front cover and complete title seem to suggest that the author is adding to the scientific case against evolution. Yet, in reading the book, one discovers quite early that the author very clearly declares that he is not a creationist. Although the title promises a challenge to evolution, it is framed more specifically as a challenge to Darwinism. That is to say, evolution must have a different mechanism than Darwinian natural selection working on variation, at least at the biochemical level.

When I purchased my copy, I did so expecting a clear refutation of evolution and defense of Biblical creation. This is not at all what I found. How could I have had such wrong ideas about the direction of the book? I was first introduced to it through the pages of Christianity Today magazine. It seemed that they saw it as a useful addition to anyone's library in the field of Christian apologetics. World magazine, another well-known and highly respected periodical, also seemed to endorse the book as a great Christian resource. Having now read much of what Behe presents, I agree that the science contained in his book is valuable, but his intent and direction are not something I would want a young Christian to have to deal with.

Two questions are raised: 1) What does Behe think he's doing? and 2) What do Christian leaders think they are doing by endorsing his book?

I selected the following paragraph from Behe's first chapter because I think it makes clear that he is not a defender of God's view of creation:

*Evolution is a controversial topic, so it is necessary to address a few basic questions at the beginning of the book. Many people think that questioning Darwinian evolution must be equivalent to espousing creationism. As commonly understood, creationism involves belief in an earth formed only about ten thousand years ago, an interpretation of the Bible that is still very popular. For the record, I have no reason to doubt that the universe is the billions of years old that physicists say it is. Further, I find the idea of common descent (that all organisms share a common ancestor) fairly convincing, and have no particular reason to doubt it. I greatly respect the work of my colleagues who study the development and behavior of organisms within an evolutionary framework, and I think that evolutionary biologists have contributed enormously to our*

### CSA Safaris Are Underway

Over 50 attended Fossil Hunt #1 in East KC. We found many great specimens, including ideal evidence a child could use to support belief in the flood. About 75 attended the Ha Ha Tonka Outing, though a minor injury shortened the stay of several. The general impression was that it was the best ever. Only 19 attended the Western Kansas outing, but the smaller group enabled us to all become better acquainted. The fellowship was sweeter and the opportunity to share ideas was better.

#### Coming up:

- Kansas City Zoo - June 17
  - KC Fossil Hunt #2 August 16
  - Ozark Cave Outing - Sept 20 - 21
  - KATY Bike Trail (Mo. River Bluffs) - Oct 18
  - Squaw Creek Game Refuge & Fossil Hunt - Nov 22
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*understanding of the world. Although Darwin's mechanism--natural selection working on variation--might explain many things, however, I do not believe it explains molecular life. I also do not think it surprising that the new science of the very small might change the way we view the less small.*

Quite clearly, Behe is willing to examine the inadequacies of Darwinian evolution, but assures all that he is still an evolutionist at heart and certainly not a Biblical Creationist. Oddly enough, though, Behe argues persuasively for intelligent design in living systems. For example, one of his lines of reasoning involves what he calls "irreducible complexity." Let's allow Behe to explain his own terminology:

*By irreducible complexity I mean a single system composed of several well matched, interacting parts that contribute to the basic function, wherein the removal of any one of the parts causes the system to effectively cease functioning. An irreducibly complex system cannot be produced directly (that is, by continuously improving the initial function, which continues to work by the same mechanism) by slight, successive modifications of a precursor system, because any precursor to an irreducibly complex system that is missing a part is by definition nonfunctional.*

Behe employs a common mousetrap as an easy to understand example of an irreducibly complex system. No part is expendable to the basic operation, and each part must be correctly proportioned, or designed, in such way as to properly interact with the other parts.

As elegantly stated as this problem for Darwinism may be, I don't see it much different than countless other appeals to design in nature as I have heard and read from Biblical creation scientists. Furthermore, the problem stated by Behe strikes me as problem enough for any form of evolution, not merely the Darwinian version... or the very small. Oddly enough, Behe

does argue for an intelligent designer, but evidently not the Creator revealed in Genesis.

More and more, we are hearing intelligent design confessions from evolutionists. This, my friends, is the very basis of apolo-gia for the Gaian hypothesis, the foundation of the New Age Movement. (Mother Earth Herself is self-directing intention-ally Her own self-evolution, and each of us is a part of Her Glorious Divine mission.) I am not saying that Behe's intent is Gaian, but I am certain that his anti-biblical-creation design arguments will be cheered by the Pagan community--and the cheers of the Pagans will be indistinguishable from the applause of the Christian media. Friends, we are living in a very dangerous time, philosophically and spiritually. Many who call themselves Christian have no discernment as to which God they are honoring. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice." How many who profess faith in Jesus are, in fact, hearing another's voice? Believers in Jesus must be content with a defense of intelligent design by an unknown god. We must clearly defend the Genesis record as received by Moses, and confirmed by the Lord.

As I hear the praise for Darwin's Black Box from Christian leaders, I recall the treatise by Jesus recorded in John 5. You'll remember that Jesus was being persecuted by the religious leaders because God's definition of the Sabbath practiced by Jesus violated the Sabbath code as developed by the leadership of Israel. When Jesus claimed equality with God, the persecu-tion rose such that the leadership wanted to kill Jesus. In the speech which followed, Jesus made it clear that the testimony of God far outweighs the testimony of men. Jesus told the Jews, "You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth. Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved." Jesus was unimpressed by the words of men, but he allowed that men of apparent authority who agree with the testimony of God may bolster our faith. But what of men who authoritatively deny the testimony of God?

*I do not accept praise from men, but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. I have come in my Father's name and you do not accept me; but if someone comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?*

*But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. but since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?*

Jesus plainly calls his disciples to trust the truth of God without concern for the evaluation of men. If truthful men support our faith, that is fine, but if men of self-appointed authority deny the testimony of God, we may confidently follow the Lord's example: ignore them!

All this leads me to sharpening my definition of creation science. It seems to me that Biblical creation begins with the confession that certain knowledge of God "is plain to [man], because God has made it plain to [us]. For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made..." Romans 1:19-20 Employing a sound approach to the legal method of proof, we enter alleged testi-mony of the Creator from Genesis as evidence from the only conceivable witness of the events, methods, and timing of

creation. Within the context of this testimony, we mount up physical evidence together with the testimony of experts in their respective fields of study so as to confirm for many the reliability of the testimony of God. Is our faith, then, in the words of men? No. Our faith rests on the truthfulness of the God who cannot lie. But we feature proofs from the science of man as additional confirmation of the word of God "so that you may be saved."

Just for the record, to paraphrase (or plagiarize) Michael Behe:

*"I have no reason to doubt that the universe is the few thousands of years old that Moses, and many physicists, say that it is. Further, I find the idea of common descent (that all organisms share a common ancestor) absurd in the highest degree (both in the light of the Genesis record and modern biological science), and have no reason whatsoever to accept it.*

Please never forget that Jesus is not impressed with our efforts to certify his authority by the authority of learned men. He is, however, honored by our trust in him when we allow our knowledge of him to direct our studies, our science, our lives.



## More Thoughts on Behe's Black Box

by Tom Willis

Glenn and I discussed a joint article. He submitted his ideas and suggested I reword it and add mine. I felt his stood fine by itself, so I just add a few thoughts.

For some years I have pointed out some simple laws of nature:

- 1 All complex systems owe their existence to an act of creation involving plan and work by one or more intelligent living beings.
- 2 More complex systems require more intelligence, more plan and more work
- 3 The creators of complex systems are always outside of, essentially different than, and transcendent to their creations.
- 4 All complex systems are subject to the inexorable working of the Curse, or Bondage to Decay, which man has attempted to describe in the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics and related phenomena in other fields.
- 5 Complex systems, when seen by any reasonably stable minded person, are always immediately recognized to be created.

The Father said this far better than I in the passage in Romans 1 which was cited in Glenn's article, and it was this passage that led me to propose these Laws of Nature, which I maintain have not, nor ever will be, falsified. Therefore, God and I argue that living systems are created, and everyone knows it!

To illustrate this point, I have suggested that, if a plane-load of atheists were to visit Mars, and they spotted a pocket comb there, not one of them would bother to analyze it chemically, discover it was made from petroleum, and then propose that the volcanoes or other random process on Mars produced the comb. They would all **know** "intelligent life preceded them to Mars." You see, they would know the comb was created. But, they would return to earth and continue to argue that vastly more complex systems, like fish, mice and bears were

produced by random processes, not because of the evidence, but because of the implications of creation.

This "proof" of creation is similar to, but, I believe somewhat different than the "argument from design" proposed by Paley (*"The existence of a watch implies a watchmaker."*), and numerous others throughout history (Newton: *"If required to submit evidence for God, my thumb would suffice."*). However, I believe my position is superior in two key respects: 1. It agrees with God (in Romans 1), and 2. The propositions are stated as **scientific hypotheses** ("All complex systems are created; more complex systems require more creative ability, not less, etc.") **which are subject to repeatability and falsification tests of the scientific method!** I have stated this proposition before numerous audiences and never been challenged.

Now consider the absurdity of Behe's position. He visits Mars with the atheists and finds his mouse-trap and a bear trap. Nearby is a book, stating the date of manufacture, the purpose of the devices, and the operating instructions. Much of the content of the book is verifiable. Thereupon, Behe says to all the atheists, *"Now look you guys, the mousetrap exhibits irreducible complexity, so don't pull any of your Darwinian stories on me, I'm an "Irreducible Complexityist." But don't kick me out of the science fraternity. I'm not a Creationist. I want to state for the record, that, not for one minute will I consider this book to be genuine, or that it actually means what it says. I have no reason to doubt your argument, that the bear-trap evolved from the mouse-trap over millions of years. We should all continue studying the chemical content of these devices until one of us can propose a story of their origin that we will all feel comfortable with."*

You see, Behe has painted himself into an absurd situation.

I have one further point. Creation Scientists have, for hundreds of years, toiled in the vineyard, and led many out of the pit of evolutionism. Behe himself may one day become one of them. But for "Christian" magazines to write such glowing accounts of a book by a man whose present position is so manifestly ludicrous; and give similar billing to Johnnie-come-lately Phillip Johnson, who merely plagiarized the points made by countless individuals, who also pointedly distances himself from Biblical Christianity; and give similar billing to the "Mere Creation Conference," from which Biblical Christians were systematically excluded, all the while virtually ignoring the years of sacrifice and service of people like Henry Morris, Duane Gish, Ken Ham, Steve Austin, and others too numerous to mention, is simply a travesty. As Glenn suggested, these highly-touted newcommers have adopted a positions that

requires no sacrifice, and little commitment. I would expect the perception and words of "Christian" magazines to be a bit superior to the New York Times.



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Two blocks East of 69 Highway (or Switzer) on North side of 95th

Refreshments: 6:15PM - Meeting: 7:00PM Nursery Available: \$2.50 per child (Reservations required for nursery)

**CSA Meeting Tuesday, July 1, 1997**

The Basic Institute in Creation Science

**Is Creation Science?**

by: Tom Willis

A favorite claim of evolutionists everywhere is that their beliefs about the past are *science*, but creation is *religion*. Response from the Christian camp vary all over the place: "They are both religion;" "Neither is science, they are two models of origins;" "They are both faith." One famous creation speaker says "They are the sciences of two different religions." Troubled by all this, I turned to the Bible, where I found that *Creation is so obvious that those who reject it are without excuse*, and that *Creation is believed on faith*. I chose to believe God on this and to seek an understanding... which, as He promised, was given me. I believe you'll find the true answer to all this quite simple, and very valuable.

The Advanced Institute in Creation Science

**The Bible and Science:**

**Towards a Rational Harmonization**

A Video from the International Conference on Creation

by: John Mark Reynolds

A thought-provoking discussion of ways to reconcile apparent conflicts of Scripture and "Science." I think most of us (certainly your editor) will (correctly) reject his proposal. He does bring up many ideas, unfortunately treating most superficially. Nevertheless, analysis of it will be a good exercise. Who knows, perhaps he'll win some converts. (T94004)

CSA meetings are free, educational, useful in evangelism, and even entertaining. Join us

**CSA Meeting Tuesday, Aug 5, 1997**

The Basic Institute in Creation Science

**Radiometric Dating**

**Fascinating New Insights**

by: Glenn Kailer

Knowledgeable evolutionists know there are real problems with radiometric dating, and often admit it. But, publicly they treat it as though it were a real science. Charles and John Lucas have researched an assumption of this "method" that is virtually never mentioned: the assumption that short-lived isotopes have not contributed daughter products found in the rocks. Almost no one I've talked to realizes: this assumption requires belief in an ancient earth and rejection of fiat creation. It is also known to be false, and, if removed, radiometric dating produces evidence for an extremely young earth and cosmos!

The Advanced Institute in Creation Science

**A Biblical-Creation Model & Response for Environmental Difficulties**

A Video from the International Conference on Creation

by: Mark W. Cadwallader

The author shows that the decay we see in the environment is clearly predictable from Scripture. The flaws of "Ecopanthemism" are exposed and a Biblical response proposed. (T9406)

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