

December 2002

NOTE FROM CHAIRMAN, MARK STEPHENS

As we approach the celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who was there at the beginning and participated in the creation, TASC wishes all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

TASC would like to extend to you a special invitation to attend our Thursday, December 12 Christmas celebration meeting.

ATTENTION: MEETING LOCATION CHANGE

The place for our December meeting will not be Providence Baptist. It will be nearby at **Calvary Presbyterian Church, 6520 Ray Rd, Raleigh, 7:30 pm.**

We will have a brief talk by Fred Johnson, PhD, on what Jesus had to say about the Genesis account of creation and how the reality of the recorded events brings hope for what lies ahead. The talk will be followed by a time of fellowship with some Christmas hors d'oeuvres, desserts, and drinks! So please, if you have been to a meeting this year or if not, come out and join us to celebrate a successful year in 2002 at TASC and to join in a prayer for service to our neighbors in 2003.

We also take this time at the end of the year to ask for your financial support. We hope that you are encouraged by the articles and news that we provide. Your contributions are needed now. Please take time now to write out a check and send your tax deductible contribution in the envelope provided or to the address in the header of the newsletter.

God bless,
Mark Stephens

OUR INCREDIBLE BRAIN GIVING CREDIT AND WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

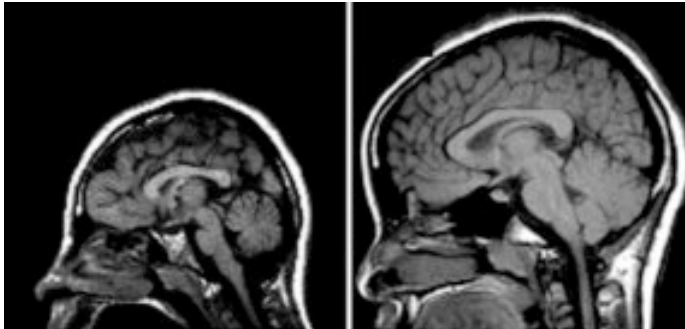
Even with all of the recent advances in computer science, the brain remains the most complex and astounding central processing unit (CPU) on earth. In most computer systems, information is carried by hardware, wires and electronic parts. In the body, nerves cells are the wires that

carry information back and forth from the central nervous system. In just one human brain there may be more wiring, more electrical circuitry, than in all the computer systems of the world put together. Our brains give us the ability to understand God's Word, to worship Him, to communicate with one another, to plan and create, to appreciate beauty, to compose music, to paint pictures, to write, to understand mathematics, to control energy, to organize, to reason, to be self-conscious, to laugh at ourselves, and to think abstractly.

What a wonderful thing—this brain of ours. It probably baffles evolutionary scientists and proclaims the need for a designer God more than any other physical "thing" on earth. Indeed, in a recent article from a leading secular science journal (*Science News*, Nov. 16, 2002, Vol. 162, No. 20), an expert in the field of brain studies, Dr. Bruce Lahn at the University of Chicago, stated that "[V]ery little, if anything, is known about the genetic basis of brain evolution." He called it "a complete blank slate." Nevertheless, this same article, "Sizing Up the Brain—Mutations that produce small brains may reveal how human intelligence evolved," goes on to credit the random, mindless and soulless process of evolution for our glorious and ingenious central processing unit. Let's briefly examine the basis for this.

The article in *Science News* focuses on genes that control the formation of the cerebral cortex of our brain, the largest structure of the human brain. It is not much thicker than an orange peel, but contains billions of nerve cells that folds and refold into the deep creases of the brain's surface. Because the human cerebral cortex surface area is about 1,000 times greater than that of the mouse, and 3-4 times greater than that of a chimpanzee, many scientists believe that its rapid evolutionary expansion is the primary reason for our greater intelligence. The *Science News* article claims that "by pinpointing genes that seem to regulate the size of the cerebral cortex, the scientists have set the stage for studies into what genetic changes produced the rapid expansion of the cerebral cortex as primates, including humans, evolved."

The *Science News* article goes on to describe work by several researchers that are investigating the causal factor in microcephaly, a genetic mutation that results in the cerebral cortex growing very slowly, "reaching a size no bigger than that of early hominids" (see figure below).



These scans show the smaller brain of a 13-year old girl with microcephaly (left) and the normal brain of an 11-year old girl (right). C. Woods/*Nature Genetics*

These scientists believe that if they can isolate the mutated genes that cause this smaller brain size, they will be one step closer to understanding how human brains evolved. The major assumption in this research is *the belief that humans evolved from animals that were less intelligent and had smaller brains*. Contrary to this major assumption, there is a great deal of evidence suggesting that the earliest known civilizations were extremely intelligent and had brains even larger than modern day humans.

Neanderthal skeletons found in caves of Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia had brain capacities *larger* than modern man's by more than 13%. Though evolutionists have gone to great lengths in an attempt to make them seem more ape-like¹, Neanderthal was fully able to speak, was artistic and was religious.² Even earlier fossil remains, including a skull (Skull 1470) thought to be over 2 million years old are reported to have a large brain case and perfectly *human* appearance. Regarding this particular find, its discoverer, Richard Leakey, stated "either we toss out this skull or we toss out our theories of early man.... It simply fits no previous models of human beings." He concludes that this skull "leaves in ruins the notion that all early fossils can be arranged in an orderly sequence of evolutionary change."³

In addition, our ancestors may not have accumulated the knowledge (through experience) that we have today, but they had great intelligence and were incredibly resourceful^{4, 5}. We know that prior to the Flood, technology was sufficient to allow for the building of a huge (450 ft. long, 75 feet wide, 45 feet tall) ocean-going vessel. Soon after the Flood civilizations were capable of moving 40 ton rocks and making batteries and nautical computers.⁶ In fact, an authoritative secular scholar of Egyptian history, Elsa Marston, has written that "a remarkable fact about ancient Egyptian culture is that it did not develop gradually dur-

ing its three-thousand-year existence but took shape, to a large extent, right at the start."⁷

UK researchers have claimed that our brains are at (or very close to) the maximum information-processing capability possible.⁸ They determined this from modeling the balance between the nerve cells and the nourishing blood vessels, while looking for ways for the brain to evolve to more intelligence. One said it would be hard to improve on what "evolution had already achieved." Isn't it more logical, more statistically feasible that the reason for this perfection is that the brain was designed *from the start* by an all knowing, all omnipotent God? In the words of Henry Morris, "There is something about the human body therefore, which is uniquely appropriate to God's manifestation of Himself.... He designed it, not like animals, but with an erect posture, with an upward gazing countenance, capable of facial expressions corresponding with emotional feelings, and with a brain and tongue capable of articulate, symbolic speech."⁹ Only man has the capacity to know God and hold *spiritual* communion with Him through prayer, praise and worship, and only man has the ability to fulfill God's need for love. ❧

Jeffery Gift, PhD

1. Cuzzo, J. 1995. Neanderthal Children's Fossils. *Creation Ex Nihilo* 17:1.
2. Lubenow, M.L. 1998. "Recovery of Neanderthal mtDNA: An Evaluation." *CEN Technical Journal*. 12(1):87-97.
3. Leakey, R. 1973. *National Geographic*, June, 1973, p. 819.
4. Criswell, D. 1995. Ancient Civilizations and Modern Man. *Creation Ex Nihilo*. 17:2.
5. Cardno, S. 1998. The Mystery of Ancient Men. *Creation Ex Nihilo* 20:2.
6. For a detailed book on this subject, see James, P. and Thorpe, N. 1994. *Ancient Inventions*. Ballantine Books, New York, NY.
7. Marston, E. 1996. *Cultures of the Past: The Ancient Egyptians*. Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish Corporation, Tarrytown, NY.
8. *New Scientist* 153:2066:14, January 25, 1997
9. Morris, H. 1976. *The Genesis Record*. Master Books, El Cajon, CA, p. 74.

WOODPECKER: EVOLVED?

Woodpeckers are quite valuable controlling those insects that attack trees, and they possess several extraordinary physical processes. Unlike other birds, their feet are anchored to the trunks of trees with two backward and two forward-facing toes, reinforced by sharp claws, and strong tendons and muscles, plus stiff tail feathers tipped with spikes.

These creatures eat as many as 2,000 ants, or hundreds of beetle larvae in a day. To locate them they peck fifteen or

sixteen times a second, striking the tree trunk with one thousand times the force of gravity. To protect the bird's brain they are blessed with a much thicker skull than other birds, and the skull is separated from the beak by very effective shock-absorbing tissue. In addition, the beak is furnished with a chisel tip, and narrow nostrils protected from sawdust by tiny feathers.

Here is the part proving special intelligent design. To retrieve insects from the deep holes a one-of-a-kind, very long tongue is provided, beginning and anchored in the right nostril. It splits and passes beneath the skin over the right and left domes of the skull, and thence it passes into the floor of the mouth. To aid in retrieving insects this long tongue has bristles pointing backwards, and a special sticky glue to entrap the insects.

Can you imagine how blind chance could possibly move the origin of the tongue from the floor of the mouth over the top of the skull to the right nostril? ❏

Isaac Manly, MD

MEETING NEWS

At our November 14, TASC monthly meeting, board member and secretary, Al Cadwell, MBA, provided a talk on "Genesis Creation". Al provided evidences for the validity of the Biblical account of creation and how it is foundational to our Christian belief, not just a theologically symbolic story telling us about our origin and our Creator. Al shared how the activities during the creation week, the flood, and Noah's ark are explained credibly with supporting scientific evidences. He contrasted these explanations to naturalistic evolutionary theory and pointed out how our creation view or the evolution view affects one's attitude toward righteous living or sin, need for reconciliation to God, and one's outlook on life and the hereafter. Al pointed to the hope that we have in God, our creator, versus the lack of hope in the evolutionary belief.

On November 21 Al Cadwell also accompanied Mark Stephens to appear on the "Take a Stand" TV program aired on Raleigh, cable TV Channel 10. Al was interviewed by the host, Joe Reilly, and represented TASC very well by his clear explanations of the topic of "Genesis Creation" as outlined above in his talk to TASC. Mark updated the audience of the activities around the Cobb County Georgia Board of Education's stand to allow the teaching of scientific treatments of origins in their public schools other than the evolutionary viewpoint, i.e., the teaching of intelligent design. Mark shared that he had sent a follow-up, congratulatory letter to the Board of Education on behalf of TASC. His letter included an appeal for Cobb County to provide resources such as creation science materials from the Institute for Creation Research (ICR) to the school libraries so that teachers and students could access these materials for study and teaching. Mark included an

ICR catalog in his letter to the board for a possible resource. This was the third appearance by TASC members on the TV program since July. It has provided a great avenue to get the creation science message out in contrast to the evolution view. We expect future invitations to TASC to appear on the "Take a Stand" TV program.

TASC SPEAKERS

TASC provides speakers for church, civic, and educational organizations that would like to hear the creation science message. On November 12, 2002 TASC provided the Charm 4-H group with a hands-on time with 5-9 year old home school students. Charlie Liebert helped design a program that the children really enjoyed. Next month TASC will be providing a speaker for a middle school FCA group in north Raleigh. We will be expanding our speaker list for approved speakers. Anyone interested in becoming a speaker for TASC please contact Phil Johnson at (919) 553-3273 or benzpj@netzero.com. Also anyone in a group needing a speaker for their group should also contact Phil at the above information.

COMING EVENTS

Thursday, December 12, 7:30 P.M., Calvary Presbyterian Church, 6520 Ray Rd, Raleigh.

Please not the location of this meeting.

Christmas celebration and fellowship. As outlined in the invitation at the beginning of this newsletter, please come out and bring someone with you for the Christmas celebration, food, treats, and fellowship! In addition, Fred Johnson, PhD will speak briefly on what Jesus had to say about the Genesis account of creation and how this affects our understanding of life, death, and Christ's redemptive work. Come join us for some Christmas cheer and a faith-building message.

DIRECTIONS TO CALVARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 6520 RAY RD., RALEIGH (PHONE 781-9015)

Proceeding West from Providence Baptist on Glenwood Ave. toward Durham: Turn right at McDonald's onto Millbrook Road. Continue North 1 mile and turn left onto Leesville Road. Continue about 0.3 mile and turn right onto Ray Road. Calvary Church is 0.2 mile on right. SEE YOU THERE!!

Thursday, January 9, 7:30 P.M., Providence Baptist Church, 6339 Glenwood Ave., Raleigh

Mark Stephens, Chairman, will use a portion of this first meeting of 2003 for input from our TASC members on 2003 activities and programs that can impact our TASC mission to fortify our citizens' faith in God. Also, Mark will provide a creation science message, excerpts of significant activities in 2002, and outlook for 2003. Please plan to attend, ask questions, and take the opportunity to provide your input and support to TASC for 2003.

You may send your tax-deductible contribution to TASC at the address in the header of this newsletter.

I would like to subscribe to the *TASC* newsletter.
(Suggested annual donation is \$10 to go to publication costs.)

I appreciate the educational outreach of *TASC* and would like to contribute to ongoing and new outreach activities.

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