

diseases' in which the infective agent, though yet to be established with certainty, appears to contain no nucleic material (DNA/RNA) but apparently only protein.

There is actually mounting evidence that such agents may in fact be, in each case, merely an abnormal form of an existing brain protein with the capacity to interact with its normal counterpart so as to transform that normal form into its 'twisted self'. Such an 'infective agent' would not multiply by normal biosynthetic mechanisms, but would spread by slow progressive biochemical corruption of supplies of existing brain proteins.

If so, then the source of this abnormal protein is likely to be mutation, as suggested by the inherited forms of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. In a fallen world, there is of course no difficulty explaining the origin of such an 'infective protein' in the case of kuru as a result of a *de novo* mutation in one individual. The abnormal protein can then go on to contaminate other subjects one after the other by direct post-mortem contact or ingestion.

Carl Wieland,
Brisbane, Queensland,
AUSTRALIA.

REFERENCES

1. Wieland, C., 1994. Diseases on the Ark. *CEN Tech. J.*, 8(1):
2. Ferry, G., 1994. Of mice, men and cattle. *New Scientist*, 142(1927):36.

DINOSAURS AND DRAGONS

Dear Editor,

Thank you very much for fresh issues of **Creation** magazine and **CEN Tech. J.** It was especially interesting for me to read a paper by Mr Nierman on dragons¹ and find his version of the problem very close to my one. By the way, have you realized that his St

George used skill very much like our Daniel's — 'by thrusting balls of pitch and straw down the beasts' throat'?

I would be very thankful to you if you could send to Mr Nierman my best Christian regards and a couple of notes, which he may find both interesting and useful

(1) St George. We find St George first mentioned in church chronicles as a komit (advisor and military chief) of emperor Dioklitian. He was born in Kappadokia and executed together with the emperor's wife (she was a Christian also) on April 23, AD 303 at Nikomidia (today called Ismide — I hope my English spelling is correct). The tale about St George fighting with a dragon is more traditional than chronicle, but contains a lot of interesting details. The dragon lived in a lake in the Lebanese mountains not far from Beirut, which then belonged to Phoenicia. Its inhabitants worshipped the dragon and made human sacrifices (it is not clear whether the dragon was carnivorous, or priests were killing victims themselves). Like it usually happened in legends, St George arrived just on the day when the noble sacrifice (king's daughter) was chosen. He went to the lake, met the dragon, pinned it to the ground with a spear and trampled it with his horse's feet (maybe the dragon was not very big). Then he bound it (the reptile was enduring enough), dragged it into the town, and cut off its head in the presence of hundreds of witnesses.

(2) Zmey Gorynych (that is, Serpent Son-of-the mount) is a very popular monster of Russian folklore. Until the end of the 9th century Slavonic written language did not exist at all. Nevertheless we have a very long painting tradition, which, I believe, goes from pre-writing times. It shows Zmey Gorynych as a sauropod-like creature with a stegosaurian ridge of spines. Nevertheless Zmey Gorynych has three heads usually, while the word for 'three' may not have been a defi-

nite number, but just meant 'few'.

Sergei Golovin,
Christian Scientific Center 'Parthenit',
Simferopol, Crimea,
UKRAINE.

REFERENCE

1. Nierman, D. L., 1994. Dinosaurs and dragons. *CEN Tech. J.*, 8(1):85–104.

Dear Editor,

I have just received the **CEN Tech. J.** and I like the expanded format and increased amount of material. Keep up the good work!

D. L. Nierman's article¹ and Dr Taylor's article² both raise intriguing questions regarding the post-Flood survival of dinosaurs. I am inclined to agree with the position that certain passages in modern Bible translations should indeed be rendered in reference to dinosaurs.

For instance, the NIV renders Job 30:29 thus: 'I have become a brother of jackals, a companion of owls.'³ According to **Strong's Concordance** the word translated 'jackal', *tanniyn*, is 'a marine or land **monster**, that is, **sea-serpent** or **jackal**: — dragon, sea-monster, serpent, whale.' Owls are hardly associated with whales, and presumably not with sea-monsters. This leaves the 'land monsters' — dragons/serpents and jackals. Significantly, the King James Version does not use the word jackal, preferring instead to render the passage 'brother to dragons'.

I believe the next passage of Scripture provides two critical clues. Job 30:30 reads (NIV): 'My skin grows black and peels; my body burns with fever.' Both sections of this verse make better sense if *tanniyn* refers to a reptilian monster rather than a dog-like jackal. The reference to black and peeling skin, for example, suggests an analogy to molting reptiles.

As for a body burning with fever, jackals are warm-blooded — that is, capable of regulating their own body temperature — and adapted to warm

climates anyhow. This does not encourage the use of 'jackal' in Job 30:29. By contrast, virtually all⁴ living reptiles are cold-blooded — more properly described as an inability to internally regulate body temperature. The inability to efficiently regulate body temperature on hot days would cause the body of a large reptile (that is, dinosaur) to 'burn with fever', in agreement with the passage.⁵

Based on these considerations I conclude that Job 30:29 should properly be rendered, 'I have become a brother of dragons [dinosaurs], a companion of owls.'

Eric J. Blievernicht,
Southfield, Michigan,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

REFERENCES

1. Nierman, D. L., 1994. Dinosaurs and dragons. *CEN Tech. J.*, **8**(1):85–104.
2. Taylor, C. V., 1993. Dinosaurs in the Bible. *CEN Tech. J.*, **7**(2):169–171.
3. The King James Version also refers to owls, but the New American Standard Bible replaces 'companion of owls' with 'companion of ostriches'. This does not significantly affect my argument.
4. Readers may be interested to learn that the first report of a reptile capable of internal temperature regulation was made by Dr Wayne Frair, a former president of the Creation Research Society. *Creation Research Society Quarterly*, **31**(1):7.
5. I realize there are grounds for believing at least some dinosaurs may have been warm-blooded. However, a creature of great mass would have difficulty getting rid of excess heat on hot days if it did not have specialized radiative structures such as the large ears on elephants. Thus, even 'warm-blooded' dinosaurs may well have 'burned with fever' on hot days.

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the paper entitled 'Dinosaurs and Dragons' in *CEN Tech. J.*, **8**(1). There certainly are a number of tantalizing bits of evidence as to the actual existence of dragons and their possible identification as dinosaurs living in recent times. The main problem I have with this whole subject is, however, why no bones or other bits of these animals have been preserved. Having visited many cathedrals in Europe and seen the great care with which

various religious relics have been preserved since medieval times, I find it hard to believe that the bones of these slain dragons would not have been preserved in some fashion so that they could be examined today.

Several of the 'sightings' referred to in the article seem highly problematical to me. Primary among these is the reference to French workmen in 1856 finding a live pterosaur in a tunnel after blasting a boulder out of the way. Even if one grants the possibility that such an animal could have still been living at that time, it strains credulity to believe that it would somehow be existing alive underground. And if a scientist had been called in to examine the animal and had identified it as a pterosaur, why weren't the animal's remains preserved?

Likewise, I am a bit suspicious of the claim that the Japanese postage stamp issued in 1977, which included as part of the design the skeleton of a plesiosaur, had anything to do with whatever it was that the Japanese fisherman had dredged up off of New Zealand a few months earlier. The stamp itself is simply a commemorative stamp honoring the 100th anniversary of the founding of the National Science Museum in Tokyo, and nowhere have I been able to find any mention of such a connection or anyone who could corroborate the story. While I haven't been able to do an exhaustive search, I feel that with what I have done, I would have run across something to substantiate such a connection if the decision to include the plesiosaur in the stamp design had anything at all to do with what the fishermen had discovered. Normally, stamp designs are completed months before actual printing, and while there was a roughly five month period between the discovery and the issue date of the stamp, that hardly seems like enough time for the ship to have returned to Japan, scientists to have done some analysis, and the normally slow wheels of bureaucracy to have designed that stamp on the basis of the findings (which were obviously in dispute, since some scientists identified the tissue samples as being 'almost identical to that of a

basking shark or a closely related species').

My purpose in bringing this problem up is not to discount the possibility of the existence of recently living dinosaurs or to categorically claim that the abovementioned claims are fraudulent. I do not have enough information to prove things either way. My point is that we should be careful about grasping out after straws for data to back up our assumptions. That is, after all, the same thing the evolutionists have been doing, as certain overzealous followers of that 'religion' have in the past stooped to fraudulent claims to bolster their theory (for example, the 'Piltdown Man' fraud). Given the nature of this debate, the same sort of phenomenon is possible in the creationist camp — something that we must be careful of if we are to maintain the kind of credibility necessary to convince others that there is indeed a Creator, who is the God of the Bible.

Timothy D. Boyle,
Tsukuba-Shi, Ibaraki,
JAPAN.

Dear Editor,

I refer to the 'Dinosaurs and Dragons' article in *CEN Tech. J.*, **8**(1), page 91, Figure 9.

In the interest of technical accuracy, I would like to point out that the aircraft you have silhouetted are **not** those described in the figure text. The top silhouette is not of an F-15 Eagle but rather of a McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II. The bottom silhouette is not of a MiG-21 Fishbed, but rather of a MiG-23 Flogger. Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 show silhouettes and descriptions on these four aircraft. Note: these silhouettes are not to the same scale. They are copied from the book *Jane's World Aircraft Recognition Handbook*, by Derek Wood. It is a fifth edition, published in 1992 by Jane's Information Group.

Sheldon Miller,
Kenaston, Saskatchewan,
CANADA.

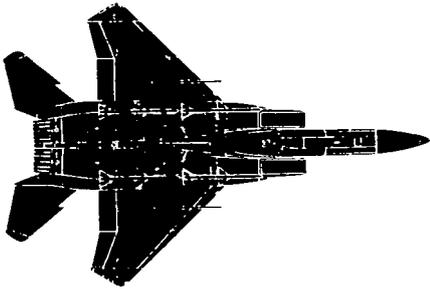


Figure 1. McDonnell Douglas F-15 Eagle.

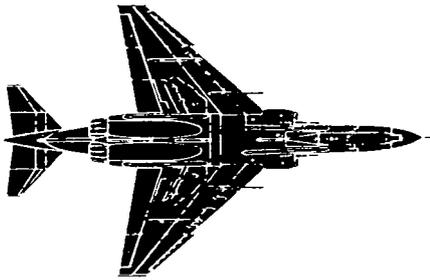


Figure 2. McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II.

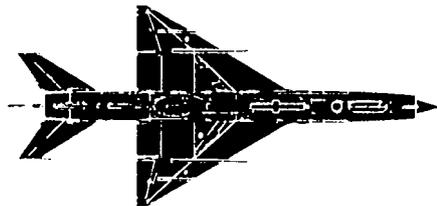


Figure 3. Mikoyan MiG-21 'Fishbed'.

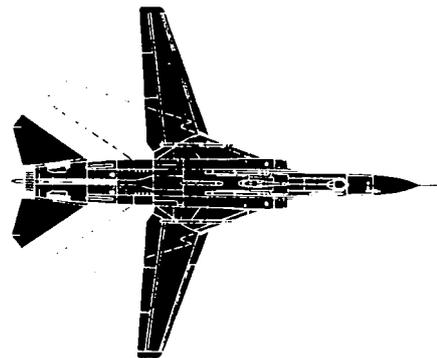


Figure 4. Mikoyan MiG-23S 'Flogger B'/'E' 'G'/'K'.

Dear Editor,

In the article 'Dinosaurs and Dragons' in *CEN Tech. J.*, 8(1), page 91, Figure 9 are silhouettes of two jet planes labelled 'F-15 Eagle' and 'MiG-21'. Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 are silhouettes from William Green's *Observers Book of Aircraft*, 1978 edition, which show the

aircraft in your journal are the F-4 Phantom and Mikoyan MiG-23S (swing-wing). I hope this resolves any confusion.

Paul J. Smelter,
Springfield, Illinois,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Our thanks to the above two sharp-eyed subscribers for picking up this error. Because we missed this, we obviously are not aircraft enthusiasts like these two, nor is the author in question who was responsible for this inadvertent mistake.

— Editor

NOAH'S ARK

Dear Editor,

Further to the article on Noah's Ark in *CEN Tech. J.*, 8(1),¹ it is interesting to note that both Brunei's 1844 'Great Britain' and the 1935 'USS Oregon' were built to exactly the same proportions as the Ark, that is, length ten times the height, six times the width. They are considered to have been the most stable ships ever constructed, having the optimum dimensions for riding storm-waves, being virtually uncapsizeable.

According to Torah tradition, Noah spent 120 years building the Ark, and God told him personally to plant trees in advance in order to grow to the correct size. The main beams were 300 cubit (at least 450 feet) *unitary* lengths which had grown to *precisely* the required size. Remarkably, the oldest living things today are the 4,500 year old pines of California and Canada, which even today can reach 400 feet in height. This would tie in with the opinion that the 'gopher' wood (Genesis 6:14) refers to pine. Some researchers hold that the speed of light was much faster in the past, and that floral and faunal growth was faster, larger and more efficient, due to lower fluid viscosities, faster diffusion, ion transfers, electron movements, etc.

Noah's Ark had a degree of holiness comparable to the sanctity of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. Both their dimensions are not arbitrary, but relate to fundamental aspects of the metaphysical structure and dynamics of God's universe.²

REFERENCES

1. Hong, S. W., *et al.*, 1994. Safety investigation of Noah's Ark in a seaway. *CEN Tech. J.*, 8(1):26-36.
2. Zimmerman, C., 1984. Torah and Reason.

Amnon Goldberg,
London,
UNITED KINGDOM.

The pines in California referred to are of course the bristlecone pines, and our information is that they rarely grow more than a few feet in height.

— Editor

THE SPEED OF LIGHT — A CRITIQUE OF BOUNDS' METHODOLOGY

Dear Editor,

I read with interest Bounds' criticism¹ of Setterfield's work on the decrease in the speed of light and the latter's very adequate reply.² Bounds' second article³ I considered to be extremely poor and in need of a rebuttal. My concern sprang not from the fact that he was critical of the proposition that the speed of light was faster in the past, but the one-sided and unobjective way in which he argued his case. For truly objective scientists, surely the aim is to discover the truth, wherever it may lead. It seems to me that Bounds' arguments failed to reach this criterion.

Since then, his papers have been referred to by others as being a reasonable critique, but the authors seem to be unaware of the weakness of Bounds' arguments that need to be demonstrated and his ignorance of certain facts that need to be publicised.