



Evolution, Junk DNA, and the Real “Science Stoppers”

By Bruce Phillips

For some time, evolutionary critics of Intelligent Design – everyone from Darwinian atheists such as Richard Dawkins to theistic evolutionists like Francis Collins – have labeled ID a “science stopper.” According to them, proposing a designer brings science to a halt, and only materialistic causes need be considered. But there’s a twist to this story.

ID looks primarily at the origin of life. It is now widely agreed that there is no such thing as “simple life.” At the core of life is something called *complex specified information*. This is what we find in our DNA.

The key here is *specified*, meaning the information relates to a standard or function outside itself. We see specification at work when letters on a page reflect an understanding of the words and grammar of a language. Now when we encounter such information, we always find it to be the product of intelligence. Hence the main inference of ID – that the origin of life required the input of intelligence.

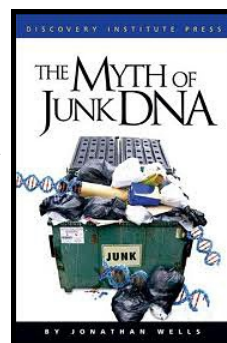
The information in DNA was first thought to be recipes for protein molecules. But when DNA was decoded, we found recipes – but also large stretches of DNA that seemed to be without function.

Evolutionists jumped on this. Finding similar non-functioning DNA in related species, they assumed that these came from older recipes that had become corrupted and passed down the evolutionary tree as useless

baggage. Here it was – molecular proof of evolution! ID researchers, on the other hand, believing that intelligence had a hand in creating genetic information, expected that functions would be found for this material.

For a while there was a stalemate. Evolutionists insisted that lack of functionality was key evidence for evolution. But ID urged a continued search for function. Evolution, with its army of academic and media allies, appeared to be winning the argument.

But then a funny thing happened. A trickle became a stream and then a river as papers were published finding function for this otherwise useless DNA. It was a stunning reversal. And here’s the irony: far from being a “science stopper,” ID had in fact been the “science encourager” urging a continued



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The Areopagus Calendar

Fall Seminars

A History of Christianity In America: From the Civil War To the Emergence of Modern Evangelicalism

Tuesdays, Aug. 30 - Nov. 15
7 PM

Perimeter Church

– and –

Wednesdays, Aug. 31 - Nov. 16
7 PM

Mt. Bethel Community Center
Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Breshears

Fall Forums

“Redeeming the Wounded: Ministering To the Victims of Crime and Violence”

Thursday, August 18th
7:30 PM

Perimeter Church

A presentation by Kellie Wiggins and Claudia Barnes of CVAC (Crime Victims Advocacy Council), an Atlanta-based organization that works with victims of crime and violence.

“American Genocide: The Slaughter of the Protestants In the American Civil War”

Thursday, September 15th
7:30 PM

Perimeter Church

A presentation by
Dr. Jeffrey Breshears

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(Continued)

search for function. It was the evolutionists with their “move, along, nothing to see” approach who were functioning as the real “science stoppers”!

And while we’d like to report that the battle is won and that truth has finally prevailed, the impact of the academy and the media is still on the wrong side. So now the job is to counter what has become “The Myth of Junk DNA” – and no one does it better than **Dr. Jonathan Wells** in his recent book of that title. Dr. Wells, a Ph.D. in molecular and cell biology from the University of California at Berkeley, is a Senior Fellow at the **Discovery Institute**, perhaps ground zero in the intelligent design community. His book is a devastating analysis of this fascinating story and a challenge to those who have so doggedly held to the junk DNA theory.

Dr. Wells, along with Discovery Institute colleagues including **Dr. Jay Richards**, will be speaking at the upcoming “**Science & Faith: Friends or Foes?**” conference in October, co-sponsored by the Areopagus. For more details, please see the calendar announcement in the adjacent column and on our website at www.TheAreopagus.org

If you want the inside track on an exciting development in science that supports the role of a designing intelligence, mark your calendar and join us for this important conference.



Bruce Phillips is an associate director of the Areopagus and the chair of the Areopagus science committee.

The Areopagus Calendar

Fall Forums

(Continued)

“Science & Faith: Friends or Foes?”

Friday and Saturday,
October 14th and 15th
Johnson Ferry Baptist Church
A Discovery Institute Conference
Co-sponsored by The Areopagus
– featuring –

Dr. Jonathan Wells,
Dr. Jay Richards,
and other leading experts in the
field of Intelligent Design

“Defending the Rights of Christians in the Classroom and the Workplace”

Thursday, October 20th
7:30 PM
Perimeter Church
A presentation by
David French
Chief Legal Counsel for the
American Center for Law & Justice

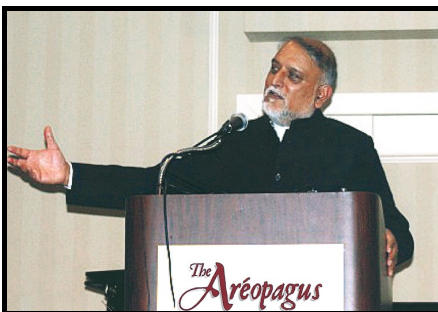
“Kierkegaard, Suffering, And What’s Ailing American Christianity”

Thursday, November 17th
7:30 PM
Perimeter Church
A presentation by
Dr. Timothy Dalrymple
Managing Editor of the Religious
Portal for Patheos.com
What would Soren Kierkegaard, the iconoclastic Danish Christian philosopher and theologian, think of contemporary American Christianity? A sober message – and a warning – from one of the great thinkers in Christian history.

www.TheAreopagus.org

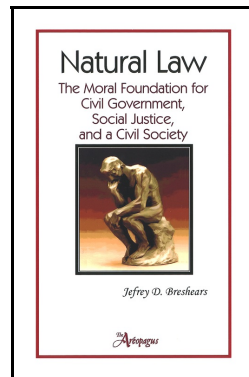


Cardiologist Michael Sabom, author of *Light & Death*, speaks on “Is There Life After Death? The Biblical and Scientific Evidence” at our Areopagus Forum on March 17.



Vishal Mangalwadi introduces his new book, *The Book That Made Your World: How the Bible Created the Soul of Western Civilization*, at the Areopagus Forum on April 21.

A New Areopagus Publication by Dr. Jeffrey Breshears



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The Areopagus

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The Areopagus is a highly cost-efficient ministry considering the many seminars, forums and other events that we sponsor each year. Our annual budget of **\$60,000** covers all of our expenses such as staff salaries, administrative costs, honoraria for speakers, etc.

If you would like to support this ministry financially, be assured that your contributions are much valued and appreciated.

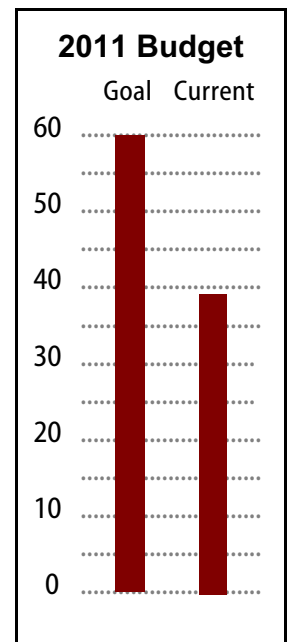
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— OR —

(2) You can contribute by credit card on-line through PayPal at our website home page at www.TheAreopagus.org.



Thank you!

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