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"No Dinosaur…Ever Breathed Fire"

by Eric Lyons

of Apologetics Press

*In a book he authored in 1998 titled The Genesis Question, well-known progressive creationist Hugh Ross ridiculed the idea that behemoth and leviathan were dinosaurs. According to Ross,*

*“No creatures on Earth, alive or extinct, fit the literal descriptions of the animals that God described to the patriarch Job in Job 40:15-41:34. No dinosaur…ever breathed fire or smoke or had bones of iron and brass.”*

*Ross has chosen to believe that the magnificent creatures described by God in His second speech to Job were the hippopotamus and the crocodile.*

Eric, I agree that the hippopotamus and the crocodile do not fit the biblical descriptions. But it is also true that the descriptions do not fit any dinosaur either.

The descriptions do however, sound like exactly what you would expect from any book ... of fairy tales.

*Like so many professed Christians who have attempted to amalgamate the long evolutionary ages with the biblical account of Creation,*

Eric, that was so typically Christian of you: any fellow Christians who don't accept your bizarre interpretation of the Bible can't be a *real* Christian, like you, but must be relegated to *professed* Christians.

Where have I heard seen this tactic used before? Oh yeah, Westboro Baptist uses it all the time to disparage any Christians who don't share their hatred of just about everything that moves. You are in good company, Eric.

*Ross’ reservations to accept the likelihood of behemoth being a dinosaur and leviathan being a dinosaur-like, water-living reptile are not the result of a sensible, judicious exegesis of the biblical text.*

Eric, which "dinosaur-like, water-living reptile" are you claiming can breathe fire?

*A man who believes that dinosaurs “dominated the Earth’s land and sea life from 250 million to 65 million years ago,” and that “no credible evidence whatever suggests for the coexistence of primates and the great dinosaurs,” obviously will have a difficult time accepting that behemoth and leviathan, which lived as the same time as Job, were dinosaurs.*

Eric, Ross isn't alone in his delusion. Nearly every scientist alive shares his odd belief; and Eric, many of those scientists ... are Christians.

*[For information on the cohabitation of humans and dinosaurs, see Harrub and Thompson, 2003.]*

Eric, for information on the real world, see any encyclopedia.

*[For a discussion on the reality and the identity of behemoth and leviathan, see Lyons, 2001.]*

Eric, did you just reference yourself?

I believe you just did.

*Two of the main reasons Ross gives for rejecting the dinosaur-like features of these creatures are: (1) “no creatures on Earth, alive or extinct, fit the literal descriptions;” and (2) “no dinosaur…ever breathed fire or smoke.” According to Ross, these “facts” present a problem when Bible students understand these creatures as being dinosaurs.*

Eric, another reason for rejecting the behemoth as a dinosaur is that the Bible refers to the behemoth's navel. Do you see the problem Eric?

The problem is that dinosaurs did not have navels ... they laid eggs.

*I have two questions for Dr. Ross, which I wonder if he could answer for us. First, although admittedly no creature alive today fits the “literal descriptions” of leviathan and behemoth, how can Ross confidently assert that no extinct animal resembles the description of behemoth or leviathan?*

Hey Eric, you don't need Ross for that one. I can answer it for you. The reason it can confidently be asserted that no extinct animal resembles the leviathan is because there has never been any fossil found that had structures that would have allowed it to breathe fire.

*How does Ross know what every creature that ever has walked on Earth looked like?*

Eric, he never claimed that he did. No one knows that. We only know what has walked the Earth based on the evidence we have found; and scientists have found no evidence for your fire-breathing dragon.

*How does he know what feats they were able to perform?*

*Ross might suggest: “But common sense tells us no creature had ribs of “iron” or bones of “brass.”*

*Agreed. But, by employing such metaphors and similes, any reasonable Bible student can understand that God was stressing the fact that behemoth’s bones were extremely solid—like they were made of solid metal.*

Eric, since those verses do not claim to be metaphors or parables, how do you determine when to interpret the Bible literally and when to dismiss them as metaphors?

I ask because it looks an awful lot like you dismiss them as metaphors when they are too embarrassing, or difficult, for you to defend.

*Interestingly, although dinosaurs had the largest, most massive bones of any known animal that has ever walked this Earth, and even though they are known to have the most massive tails of any animal ever known, which could reasonably be likened to a “cedar,”*

Eric, only a delusional creationist, like you, could find similarity between flesh and wood.

*Ross has chosen rather to believe that behemoth was a hippo—an animal with a tail shorter than many dogs and cats.*

Eric, Ross should have just gone with the myth idea. Then fundamentalists, like you, would be back to square one trying to prove that your fairy tales are true.

*A second question I wish Hugh Ross could answer for us is how he can be so certain that “no dinosaur…ever breathed fire or smoke.”*

Eric, don't bother Ross - I can answer that one too. We have no evidence that dinosaurs or *any* animal has ever breathed fire. When you can produce evidence to support a fire-breathing anything, I'm sure scientists would be very interested in examining it. So Eric, do you have any?

And Eric, only your God would be stupid enough to create a fire-breathing dragon, and then send it to live ... in the sea.

No wonder it went extinct: every time it tried to catch something, the damn water kept putting out the flames.

*By his own admission, Ross never has seen a dinosaur (he believes they became extinct 65 million years ago),*

Eric, I recognize that argument. That's the old "were you there" argument that I knew you were going to use. It's hard to believe that anyone could be stupid enough to use such a lame argument, but "you people" have exceeded all limits on stupidity.

*and thus obviously he never has observed every dinosaur or dinosaur-like creature that ever walked on land or swam in the oceans.*

Eric, like all Ghost Worshippers, your only defense is to attempt to switch the burden of proof. You have no evidence for fire-breathing dragons, so you appeal to the most ignorant people by demanding that others disprove your delusions. It is not our duty to disprove your delusions - it is your duty to prove them.

But I have to be honest here, Eric. The fact that your religion has reduced you to the point where you are willing to publicly humiliate yourself by trying to defend the existence of fire-breathing dragons ... is proof of what religion does to the brain.

It turns it into a quivering mass of useless jelly.

*Truly, as Henry Morris observed in his book Biblical Basis for Modern Science: “To say that the leviathan could not have breathed fire is to say much more than we know about leviathans (or water dragons or sea serpents).”*

Eric, we know nothing of leviathans, water dragons, or sea serpents, because there is no evidence to suggest that such creatures exist anywhere outside the human imagination.

*When a person considers that electric eels can produce enough electricity (500-600 volts) to stun a horse without ever shocking itself, that anglerfish and fireflies can produce “light,” that the komodo dragon can store deadly bacteria inside its own mouth, and that bombardier beetles can produce a stream of noxious gas that can be expelled from their bodies at 212 degrees Fahrenheit, it is not difficult to accept the possibility that certain dinosaurs or dinosaur-like, water-living reptiles were capable of expelling certain hot gaseous fumes that might briefly ignite.*

Eric, the leap from well-understood biological phenomena to imaginary fire-breathing dragons cannot be justified by any evidence. Therefore, it is not only difficult to accept, but nuts to do so.

Eric, look at it this way: it is not really me calling you nuts, it is your own words which prove ... that you are fuckin' nuts.

*Hugh Ross, it seems, has forgotten that all animals, including the dinosaurs, were designed and created by God on days five and six of Creation.*

See Eric, that presents another problem, because if your Bible were correct, then we would expect to find dinosaur fossils mixed in with all the rest - but we don't. The fossil record falsifies the biblical version of events.

*If Jehovah wanted to create one or more dinosaurs that could expel fire, smoke, or some deadly chemical out of their mouths without harming themselves, He certainly could have done so.*

Nice assertion Eric. But you are assuming facts not in evidence, such as the existence of your invisible ghost, which we have yet to see.

*Bearing in mind the way that He described leviathan to Job in Job 41:18-21, and considering that many secular stories have circulated for millennia that describe “fiery dragons,” it is logical to conclude that He did create such creatures.*

Actually Eric, it is only logical to assume that writing fairy tales and legends is an old and widespread practice. There is no logical reason to assume they represent real creatures, any more than the monsters described in modern fairy tales.

*It seems fitting to ask Dr. Ross the same rhetorical question God asked Abraham long ago: “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” Who is Ross to say that “no dinosaur…ever breathed fire”?*

Eric, it really doesn't matter what Ross says. It only matters what the scientists say. And Eric, they all agree ... you are full of shit.

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

Muscle Molecule Spurs Fat Cells to Slim Down

A new study helps explain the link between exercise and weight loss. Just in time for all those New Year’s resolutions to exercise more, scientists now have a better idea of how the body turns pain into gain. Exertion stimulates muscles to release a molecule that modifies fat cells, turning them into calorie-burning machines.

Exercise works the muscles but affects cells throughout the body, even in the brain. An important player in this process is a protein called PGC-1α. In exercising muscles, it activates genes that ramp up energy use. But its impact extends beyond these tissues. The protein somehow indirectly prompts, for example, white fat—the energy-storing variety that pads our hips and stomachs—to switch on genes that are characteristic of brown fat, a form that burns calories. However PGC-1α doesn’t travel outside muscle cells, so researchers aren’t sure how its influence spreads.

By sifting through the secretions of PGC-1α-making muscle cells, researchers have nabbed one molecule that might be doing the protein’s bidding: β-aminoisobutyric acid (BAIBA). They found that BAIBA induces white fat cells to become more like brown fat cells, altering their gene activity patterns; and it stimulates other cell types, stoking fat metabolism in the liver.

These effects may translate into a healthier metabolism. When mice lapped up water laced with the molecule, the rodents lost weight and were better at absorbing glucose.

Does BAIBA produce similar modifications in humans? Researchers analyzed blood samples from more than 2,000 subjects. They found low BAIBA levels in people who had risk factors for heart disease and diabetes, such as high insulin and high cholesterol. In contrast, after couch potatoes taking part in a different study began an exercise program, the concentration of BAIBA in their blood jumped 17%.

These findings suggest that BAIBA is PGC-1α’s molecular emissary. But BAIBA isn’t the only such messenger. Two years ago, another group identified another example: the protein irisin. But because exercise triggers complex effects in multiple tissues and organs, it’s no surprise that other factors could be found.

It’s too early to say whether BAIBA can be developed into a drug that would help people lose weight or fend off metabolic diseases like diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Researchers plan to study it extensively in animals to see if there are any odd side effects. In the meantime, if you want to keep your New Year’s resolution, you should probably hold on to that gym membership.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

Sam Harris (no biography - previously quoted)

"In fact, 'atheism' is a term that should not even exist.

No one ever needs to identify himself as a “non-astrologer” or a “non-alchemist.”

We do not have words for people who doubt that Elvis is still alive

or that aliens have traversed the galaxy only to molest ranchers and their cattle.

Atheism is nothing more than the noises reasonable people make

in the presence of unjustified religious beliefs."