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Our Declining Genes: What Can Be Done?

Editorial Comment by Warren Krug

Genetically the human race seems to be declining and declining fast. So says the April-June issue of *Creation* magazine.

Creation reports on the work of researchers who have looked into the mutations children have acquired from their parents.

Matthew Hurles, co-leader of the study, says they were surprised to learn that most mutations in a some families come from the father, as they expected, but in other families most come unexpectedly from the mother. The researchers were also surprised to learn that children in some families can inherit ten times as many mutations as children in other families.

The scientists estimated that each one of us receives approximately 60 new mutations from the sex cells of our parents—mutations that our parents did not have in their own genomes.

So why is this bad news? Aren't mutations in the long run supposed to be the engine that drives our evolution onward and upward so that we as a species become better and better, eventually becoming superhumans?

Common experience tells us that mutations are not generally or ever a good thing. Even in our everyday language, if someone who doesn't like us calls us a "mutant," we know it is not in any way a compliment.

There may be some mutations called "beneficial mutations" that afford an organism a minor advantage, but they usually seem to have a negative side. As one example, bacteria can mutate to make them more resistant to some antibiotics. But the mutations can also make them more vulnerable in other environments

The truth is most mutations are at least a little bit harmful, and these mutations are adding up. Think of the long ages of such early men as Methuselah (969 years) and Adam (930 years), and compare them to current life spans. Yes, better nutrition and medicine may be helping increase life spans over the recent past, but these increases are tapering off.

While geneticists don't seem to have an answer to this situation, the Bible does. For us followers of Jesus, our limited earthly life spans will turn into lives that never end in heaven. This happy message needs to get out to anyone who is worried about his/her fading genes. *LSI*

—Warren Krug, editor