

# SCIENCE AND FAITH

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## Congratulations, Your Baby Has a Mutation?

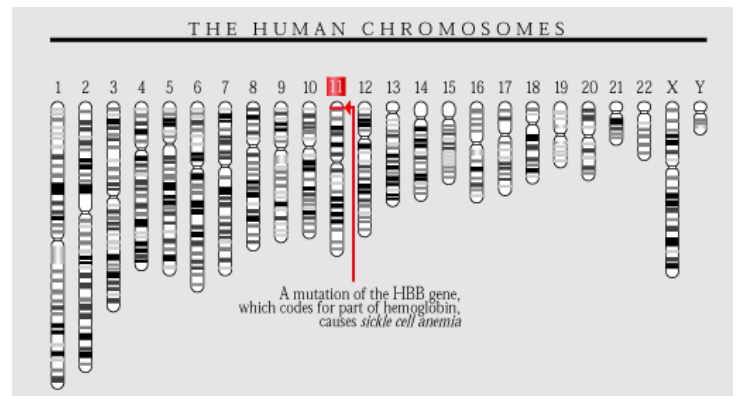
I have been a neonatologist-pediatrician for over 30 years, and I have seen hundreds of mutation affected infants, and read about thousands more in the medical literature. And I have never seen a real live “good” mutation. (Note: a neonatologist is a doctor who specializes in neonates, or newborn care).

In fact, the medical literature is full of reports showing how even a small one amino acid mistake/mutation in the phenomenally complex DNA can cause a profound problem. So how is it the biologist, who has never seen a single human patient with mutation, can claim, or “fantasize”, that mutation is the essence of evolution, which propels organisms to increasing complexity and “advance” to a “higher” species.

In fact, if evolution (or “macro”-evolution to be precise) really works in the real world we would need to have repeated “good” mutations, that, repeatedly “advance”

the species so that, bingo, one day, a “super species” now appears, and we have jumped from one species to another, such as an ape supposedly to a man.

Imagine a neonatologist or pediatrician smiling broadly one evening, and strolling into the delivery room of an anxious mother who has just delivered a baby and awaiting the result of the doctor’s physical examination. The good doctor announces with a wide grin “Mrs. Jones, congratulations. You have delivered a baby with a great mutation!”



### What Difference Do the Letters Make?

*The gene defect that causes sickle cell anemia involves just one letter. And this small change in the sequence has an enormous impact on health.*

Image Source: <http://www.koshland-science-museum.org>



Image Source: <http://www.ama-cmeonline.com>

Sorry, sci-fi folks, this NEVER happens. The word “mutation” in real life is a terror loaded word. We pediatricians say the word softly, quietly, and carefully, and try very hard to use other words around it to “soften” the deadly blow that the mother will sense immediately. No, Alice, there are no good mutations in real life. Maybe in Wonderland.

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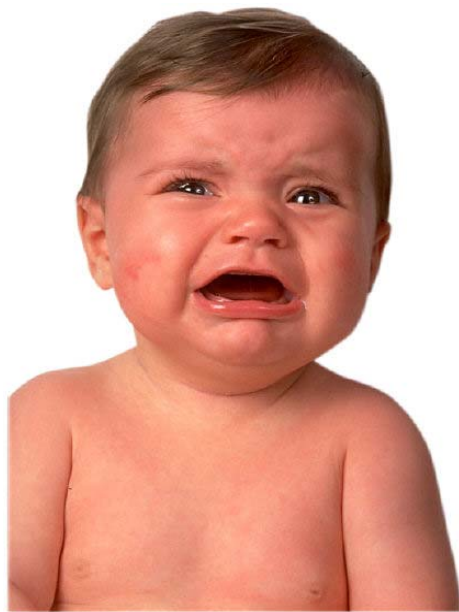
## Mutation (continued)

In an infinitely (and still barely understood) complex strand of DNA, which truly is a mind-boggling work of science and art, everything seems to be there “for a purpose”; (we call such “purpose driven” biology, “teleology” (not theology)). And it is always amusing to watch confident scientists belittle this or that new finding in biology when it is first identified, as something “useless”, but having to eat their words later. Witness the odd use of the word “vestigial” or “junk” sprinkled liberally as adjective for substances of unknown function at first, only to be reported later as “amazing”, or “critical” components of an “intricate system” of controls and programming.

With the amazingly complex molecular structure in every biologic cell, with everything in it seemingly there for a purpose, it is really little wonder that any “mistake” or “mutation” will result logically in a turn not for the better, but for the worse, which is what happens in real life!

“Wait”, you say, “I know of one good mutation, at least. It’s the sickle cell trait that provides protection against

malaria.” Let’s grant that there might be some “advantage” in that regard (and the data for that are not strong, usually simply a rehashing of old poorly controlled semi-epidemiologic studies). However, that needs to be balanced against the fact that sickle cell



“As a doctor I would dread having to announce to the mother that her newborn had a mutation.”

disease is often lethal! How “beneficial” is a condition that could result in early death. Imagine again, the pediatrician smiling broadly, and announcing to the mother “congratulations, you have a sickle cell mutant baby!”

Furthermore, millions of US dollars are spent by the National Institute of Health, and the Sickle Cell Foundation to, get this, find ways to genetically manipulate the sickle cell mutation, or thwart its detrimental effects. If it is so wonderful, why waste all that effort to ameliorate the mutation, Alice?

Furthermore, how does this argument help in the (macro)-evolution theory? That is, how does this help lead to a super species, Alice? Imagine a sickle cell ape, which leads to a (sickle? or non-sickle?) mutant human? Alice, are you still there?

Mutations, Alice, are not the mechanism for evolution, but its death knell.

### **Bible Verses:**

Isaiah 29:14

Therefore behold, I will once again deal marvelously with this people, wondrously marvelous; And the wisdom of their wise men will perish, And the discernment of their discerning men will be concealed.”

Isaiah 29:16

You turn things around! Shall the potter be considered as equal with the clay, That what is made would say to its maker, “He did not make me”; Or what is formed say to him who formed it, “He has no understanding”?

Ps 139:14

I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well.