METHANE ON MARS COULD SIGNAL LIFE

By Dr David Whitehouse
BBC News Online science editor
Week of March 29, 2004

Note from pastor Kevin: In the following article, the discovery of Methane on Mars, though shocking to the evolutionist, is not a surprise to those who have been following Dr Walt Brown's hydroplate theory of the Noah flood. Walt predicted, in print in 2001, that saltwater would be found on Mars (a prediction which has been verified by facts as reported by NASA last week).

Dr Brown based his prediction on the theory that Comets came from Earth when, according to Genesis 7:11, all the fountains of the Great Deep were broken up. Large amounts of water from under the crust of the earth were jettisoned into space with the energy needed to escape Earth's gravity. Some of the water, rock fragments, and organic material from earth would have been directed at the Moon and Mars. While traveling in space the water would have turned to ice. When the debris collided with Mars, the kinetic energy would have been converted into thermal energy resulting in the melting of the ice, turning it into liquid water that would have flowed on Mars into the low areas close to the impact locations. This explains why a planet whose average temperature is 117 degrees Fahrenheit below freezing shows evidence of past flowing streams of water.

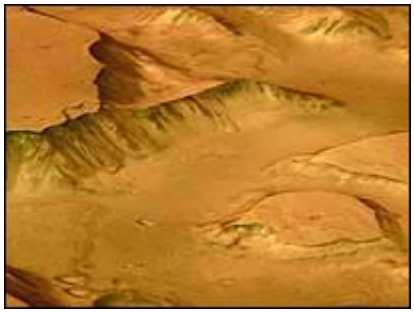
Because of the low mass of Mars, and related little gravity, much of the water has sublimated back into space leaving behind salt and other compounds. The organic material from earth would have stayed in the soil of Mars. The anaerobic bacteria, which also came from earth, have been living off of the organic material since then (about 5,000 years ago). These microbes produce
Methane as a byproduct of decaying organic material. Methane is also found (through light spectrometry) in comet tails.

For details of this theory, the reader is encouraged to visit Dr Walt Brown's web site at www.creationscience.com where the internet version of his book can be read without charge.

Also, the reader can go to www.calvarypo.org, click on sermon archives, click on Radio, and listen (MP3 files) to Dr Walt Brown's interview with Pastor Kevin and Pastor Kevin's January 7, 2004 Radio show (the day after the first Rover landed) where he explains why water and evidence of life are likely to be found by the Mars Rovers.

> 2 Pet 3:3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." 5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6 by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. 7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire

until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. (NKJ)


Is there life beneath the soil?

Methane has been found in the Martian atmosphere which scientists say could be a sign that life exists today on Mars.
It was detected by telescopes on Earth and has recently been confirmed by instruments onboard the European Space Agency's orbiting Mars Express craft.

Methane lives for a short time in the Martian atmosphere so it must be getting constantly replenished. There are two possible sources: either active volcanoes, none of which have been found yet on Mars, or microbes.

Spectral signature
The spectral signature of the gas was seen by the Infrared Telescope on Hawaii and the Gemini South Observatory in Chile.

“Scientists see two possibilities, both of them scientifically important, but one of them is sensational”

Scientists operating the Mars Express Planetary Fourier Spectrometer (FPS) have announced they have detected the presence of methane in the Red Planet's atmosphere, too.
The world's largest telescope, the twin Keck facility on Hawaii, has looked but has yet to report its findings.
But further evidence of methane on Mars will be presented at a meeting next month by a consortium of astronomers using the Canada-France-Hawaii telescope.

Volcanic explanation
Methane is not a stable molecule in the Martian atmosphere. If it was not replenished in some way, it would only last a few hundred years before it vanished.

Scientists see two possibilities, both of them scientifically important, but one of them is sensational.

Nasa's Infrared Telescope detected methane last year
It is possible that the methane is being produced by volcanic activity. Lava deposited on to the surface, or released underground, could produce the gas.

This explanation has some difficulties, however. So far, no active volcanic hotspots have been detected on the planet by the many spacecraft currently in orbit. If active volcanism were responsible then it would be a major discovery with important implications. The heat released by any volcanism would melt the vast quantities of sub-surface ice discovered on the planet, producing an environment suitable for life.

Life on Mars?
On Earth, there are organisms called methanogens - microbes that produce methane from hydrogen and carbon dioxide. These organisms do not need oxygen to thrive, and they are thought to be the type of microbes that could possibly live on Mars.

The twin US space agency rovers that landed on the Red Planet in January will be unable to answer the question of the methane's origin as they are designed for geological work. But future missions could include sensors to analyse the methane to determine where it came from.

The failed Beagle 2 mission had a device that could have sniffed the Martian atmosphere for methane.