

The following is an updated version of the letter summarizing my position.

Published originally on October 4, 2010 8:02 am

<http://www.rationalistjudaism.com/2010/09/case-of-dr-isaac-betech.html>

This letter has not been answered yet.

NS refused explicitly in his blogspot many times to answer it.

Finally NS wrote on October 19th, 2010 his own summary letter. At [this link](#).

I wrote to his blogspot the following:

B”H

Dear Natan.

I read your summary letter.

Again you are misrepresenting my position (and even your position).

Are you ready to discuss your summary letter point by point?

Isaac Betech.

OCTOBER 19, 2010 5:03 PM

And he answered (emphasis mine):

No. But feel free to write a response and publish it in your own venue.

OCTOBER 19, 2010 6:35 PM

B”H

Public clarification

October 20th, ‘10

To whom it may concern:

I

Natan Slifkin (NS) published in his blogspot on Sept. 12, ‘10

(<http://www.rationalistjudaism.com/2010/09/expert-in-science.html>) that a physician [like me] has **zero credibility** when disputing his “science”.

In consequence, in the comment thread of his blogspot, on September 14, 2010 1:01 AM **I invited him to debate:**

“Since I have many times publicly stated that I do not know scientific evidences that prove the evolution of the species, and I do not want “to dispute the entire scientific establishment”, I invite you to a public, intellectual, respectful, protocolized debate; then our rationalist audience will not have to rely on my “zero credibility”, but they will be able to arrive at their own fact-based conclusions.

Please let me know when and where this scientific encounter will take place so I will B”N make all my personal arrangements.”

II

Since then, he has published **many reasons for his constant declination**, in the original comment thread and also on a new post entitled: **"The Case of Dr. Isaac Betech"**

(<http://www.rationalistjudaism.com/2010/09/case-of-dr-isaac-betech.html>).

Then on a new post entitled: **Exposing "Scientific" Anti-Evolutionists**,

(<http://www.rationalistjudaism.com/2010/10/exposing-scientific-anti-evolutionists.html>).

Then on a new post entitled: **Questions on the Young Earth Model of Special Creation.**

(<http://www.rationalistjudaism.com/2010/10/questions-on-young-earth-model-of.html>).

Then on a new post entitled: “**The Wisdom of Rav Hirsch**”,
(<http://www.rationalistjudaism.com/2010/10/wisdom-of-rav-hirsch.html>).

Then on a new post entitled: “**I accept Dr. Betech’s proposal**”
(<http://www.rationalistjudaism.com/2010/10/i-accept-dr-betechs-proposal.html>).

Then on a new post entitled: “**Irrefutable proofs**”
(<http://www.rationalistjudaism.com/2010/10/irrefutable-proofs.html>”).

Then on a new post entitled: “**Summary of the Betech Affair**”
(<http://www.rationalistjudaism.com/2010/10/summary-of-betech-affair.html>).

The reasons or excuses are:

1.

Natan Slifkin said...

Dr. Betech, please don't **waste my time**... September 15, 2010 9:16 AM

I proved to him (September 15, 2010 7:33 PM, September 19, 2010 8:07 PM), from his own writings in the last 7 years, that he does not consider discussing with me a “waste of time”. Additional¹ sources available on request.

2.

NS argued that I am **not objective** (September 15, 2010 10:29 PM).

I clearly stated (September 22, 2010 8:32 AM): “Of course I am ready to draw conclusions from the solid scientific proofs presented in a protocolized debate.”

I hope the same attitude from him.

By the way, I invited NS to a protocolized debate, not a personal conversation. In a public debate, neither one of the protagonists is attempting to persuade their opponent. They are attempting to persuade the audience!

3.

He then (September 22, 2010 7:47 AM) presented a new excuse, that he is not willing to debate because **he is not a scientist... because he is not qualified to determine that my scientific arguments are correct...**

I answered him (September 22, 2010 8:32 AM)

“No problem, if you are not a scientist, you can choose a scientist that will represent you and I will debate with him.”

By the way: NS’s position is difficult to understand; NS initially refused to debate with me on the evolution of the species, arguing he (NS) is not a scientist and even he admits he is not qualified to determine if my scientific arguments are correct or not, and in the following paragraph (September 22, 2010 8:54 AM) NS invited me to a scientific debate on another subject?

How is NS going to evaluate my scientific proofs, if he admits he is not a scientist and also admits being unqualified to determine the validity my scientific arguments?

4.

NS argued (September 22, 2010 7:47 AM) that I **also refused to debate** about other relevant issues...

I clearly stated (September 22, 2010 8:32 AM): “I am willing to agree.

This can be B”H, the second protocolized debate we will be involved in.”

¹ NS email to IB dated 10th Sept. 03

5.

NS argued (September 22, 2010 8:54 AM) **that it is not up to him to prove evolution...**

I answer that it is up to him because he wrote in his book CoC (page 317) that there are “compelling reasons” to believe that even Rabbi Yisrael Salanter has evolved from monkeys.

Surely if his reasons are genuinely compelling they can withstand critical scrutiny.

6.

NS argued September 29, 2010 7:43 AM that I am a liar since I **refuse to discuss what the theological implications** would be.

I answer please prove me that I am lying, and B”N I will try to repair it.

After the debate on the scientific issues (see below) will be concluded, I am also ready to debate the validity of the theological sources presented by NS on these issues.

If evolution is false, why would we want to show that evolution is consistent with Torah?

Logically, it would seem that the first step is to examine the truth of Darwin's theory in the light of the best scientific evidence.

7.

NS argued on October 4th, 2010, that even though he publicly challenged me, I refused, and I am **terrified to debate with him about “Dr. Betech's own model of recent special creation”** (as he named it).

On October 7, 2010 10:16 PM I wrote:

I accept your challenge. For details see <http://slifkin-opinions.blogspot.com/2010/10/dr-betech-accepts-r-slifkins-offer-to.html>

8.

NS argued on October 12th, 2010:

“This is an elaboration of one of the several reasons that I gave for not debating evolution with Isaac Betech. Even if he could out-argue me with regard to evolution, and **even** in the extraordinarily unlikely case that he could convince me that **it is false - it is irrelevant**. Evolution (at least in terms of common ancestry, and all the more so for the antiquity of the universe) has met Rav Hirsch's criterion of gaining complete acceptance by the scientific world. Software engineers, aeronautical engineers and pediatricians are not part of this scientific world.”

On October 12, 2010 7:04 PM I wrote:

Is this an “irrelevant” issue?

In that “extraordinarily unlikely case” that I could convince you that evolution of the species **is false** would you write a **caveat** in your book clarifying that there are not “compelling reasons” for accepting the evolution of the species as a “scientific fact”, and that your book is directed to those people who erroneously accept evolution as a fact?

And he answered on October 12, 2010 7:19 PM

No, I wouldn't, for two reasons.

One is that my goal in that book is not to give my personal views on scientific matters - which I am not qualified to do - but rather to accurately report the state of affairs in the scientific community.

The second reason is that I wouldn't want to make myself look like an **idiot** in the eyes of most of my readers.

9.

NS wrote on October 12th, 2010:

...evolution has gained **complete acceptance by the scientific world**, this is all the more **essential**.

I answered that previously on: IB 19/Sept.'10

Scientific truth is not determined by consensus; it is evaluated by the proofs that support it.

The truth does not become more authentic even though the whole world will accept it.

Guide of the Perplexed, 2:15, Maimonides.

10.

NS argued on October 13th, 2010:

“In fact, **most people have never even heard of you** are not likely to ever hear of you”.

On October 13, 2010 7:59 PM I wrote:

Rambam (one of your favorite rationalists) said:

Shema et haemet mimi sheamarah.

Hakdamat HaRambam Lishmona Perakim.

11.

NS argued on October 17th, 2010.

I Accept Dr. Betech's Proposal!... I only have two minor preconditions...

His acceptance was **so meaningless that even his own supporters seriously criticized him**. See for example what Dr. Lawrence Kaplan, posted on rationalist Judaism on October 17, 2010 6:33 PM.

12.

NS argued on October 17th, 2010.

“According to Betech, if I cannot present **irrefutable proof** of evolution, then it is mistaken for me to claim that are compelling reasons to accept it. Now, this is simply nonsense. Outside of mathematics, there is no such thing as irrefutable proofs...”

On October 19, 2010 6:02 PM I wrote:

If I would modify the standard for the falsifiability of your position, and I **omit the word “irrefutable”**, i.e.:

NS says: There are compelling reasons to accept the evolution of the species.

His position would be falsified if he or his appointed representative fails to present to me even one **scientific** (factual, objective, non-speculative) **proof**, in that case, NS would have to say: I accept that I was mistaken.

In that case, would you agree to debate?

Even though, he did not accept to debate...

See October 19, 2010 7:25 PM

See October 19, 2010 7:47 PM

See October 19, 2010 10:01 PM

After these **12 reasons** and their answers, the reader can decide if they are **reasons or excuses for not debating**.

III

Since NS has **manipulated** repeatedly the flow of information in his blogspot (details available on request), he has **misrepresented** my position, and has not answered many of my questions to him, I want to clearly state my position for anyone who is concerned.

I am ready to discuss in an intellectual, multimedia (sources on screen), respectful, protocolized, neutral, public forum with NS or the representative (Jewish or not) he will choose, on any scientific issue relevant to his 5 controversial books, i.e.

1. Creation of the universe (Big Bang Cosmology).
2. Chemical evolution (increasingly complex elements, molecules and compounds developed from the simpler chemical elements that were created in the Big Bang).
3. The age of the universe.
4. Biological evolution (of the species).
5. "Dr. Betech's own model of recent special creation" (as NS named it).
6. The accuracy of science-related statements made by Chaza'l.
7. As stated above (II 6) after the debate on the scientific issues will be concluded, I am also ready to debate the validity of the theological sources presented by NS on these issues.

IV

I give NS the opportunity to choose in which order he wants to discuss the above issues, with one exception, i.e. biological evolution has to be the first subject, because of the following reasons:

1. I publicly invited him first to debate on biological evolution about 4 weeks ago.
2. His repeated declination with changing and refuted excuses is conspicuous and **almost equivalent to an admission of defeat**, because every time I removed the reason he used as an excuse to decline, he presented a new one.
3. His personal half admission on this blogspot September 28, 2010 10:06 PM "frankly, I really don't understand how the mechanisms of evolution work..."
4. The unrefuted admission of one of the bloggers in his blogspot September 15, 2010 10:05 AM "One cogent thing you have said is that you "do not know scientific evidences that prove the evolution of the species." Well, that much is quite clear..." And similar statements in his blogspot.
5. NS admitted in a previous email public debate with Dr. Ostroff on November 06, the inadequacy of 2 proofs written in NS's books, which some evolutionists use as support for even what is called "the fact" of evolution, i.e. common ancestry. Sources and details available on request.
Of course I am ready to a fresh analysis of every proof NS will like to present.
6. NS admitted on his blogspot on October 10, 2010 7:31 PM
"I, Natan **Slifkin**, admit that I **do not know** of any irrefutable scientific proof supporting the evolution of the species, neither the mechanisms of evolution, nor the common ancestry (the so called "fact" of evolution)."

V

By the way, I would like to know if there are any circumstances by which NS would agree that his position was defeated.

If yes, please define, otherwise, a position that can not be **falsified** cannot be called scientific.

For example:

Isaac Betech says: I do not know any scientific proof that there was evolution of the species.

My position would be falsified very easily if someone presents me just one irrefutable proof; in that case, I would say: I accept that I was mistaken.

So I ask to NS, **please define** how your position could be falsified.

For example:

NS says: There are compelling reasons to accept the evolution of the species.

His position would be falsified if he or his appointed representative fails to present to me even one irrefutable proof, in that case, NS would have to say: I accept that I was mistaken.

I am still waiting for NS's own definition of falsifiability of his position.

And later on (see above II-12), he did not accept to debate even if I would omit the word "irrefutable".

VI

1.

I consider this invitation (I extended to NS) to debate and his acceptance or not, as a very significant point since NS has been represented as a **victim of those critics who refuse** to give him the opportunity of expressing his views.

I am his longstanding ideological critic and I invite him respectfully to defend publicly his stated position on the 2 books he wrote about evolution of the species.

2.

Many years ago, I suggested NS not to publish one of the problematic books (before he published it), because of his hitherto insufficient research; and **I invite him again**, to a polite and intelligent deserved debate, as written in the foreword of his book CoC.

So in case NS would decline again, who would have "**zero credibility**"?

Isaac Betch, M.D.

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P. S.

You may be interested to see some additional points on this issue on:

<http://slifkin-opinions.blogspot.com>

Ver también Latest developments Betch Slifkin 31oct10.doc

[Latest developments: R. Slifkin's refusal to debate](#)