



Lesson 5

Creation vs. Evolution—[Part I]

Apologetics Press Introductory Christian Evidences Correspondence Course

CREATION VS. EVOLUTION—[PART I]

There are two very different, and totally opposite, explanations for the origin of the Universe and the origin of life in the Universe. Each of these explanations is an entire world view, or philosophy, of origins and destinies, of life and meaning.

One of these world views is the concept of **evolution**. According to the theory of evolution, the Universe is **self-contained**, which means that everything in the Universe has come into being through random processes without any kind of supernatural involvement. This view says that the origin and development of the Universe (and all life in it) can be explained by time, chance, and continuing natural processes. According to evolutionary theory, all living things have arisen from a single-celled organism, which in turn had arisen from something nonliving (such as an amino acid or a protein).

The second world view is the concept of **creation**. According to the theory of creation, the Universe is **not self-contained**. Everything in the Universe has come into being through the design, purpose, and deliberate acts of a supernatural Creator Who, using processes that are not continuing today, created the Universe, the Earth, and all life on the Earth (including all basic types of plants and animals, as well as humans).

There are two and only two possibilities concerning origins. One or the other of them must be true. That is to say, all things either can, or cannot, be explained in terms of ongoing natural processes in a self-contained Universe. If they can, then evolution is true. If they cannot, then they must be explained by a process of Creation.

Both evolution and creation may be called scientific models, since both may be used to explain and predict scientific facts. Obviously the one that does the better job of explaining/predicting is the better scientific model.

In order to examine properly the two models, they must be defined in general terms, and then each must be compared to the available facts. **Evolution** includes the evidence for a gradual appearance of present life over eons of time, with complex kinds of life emerging from “simpler” kinds, and ultimately from nonliving matter. **Creation** includes the evidence for a sudden appearance of complex life. The creation model denies “vertical” evolution (also called “macroevolution”—the emergence of complex organisms from simple organisms), and change between kinds (such as an amoeba gradually changing into a man), but does not challenge “horizontal” evolution (also called “microevolution”—the formation of species or subspecies within created kinds, or genetic variation such as a species of birds gradually getting a smaller beak or a species of moth changing its colors over time).

IMPORTANCE OF THE CREATION/EVOLUTION CONTROVERSY

The creation/evolution question is not an insignificant issue that concerns only a few scientists or a few religionists. In one way or another, the issue touches almost every field of study and every part of life. It deals with two opposing world views. Therefore, it is (or should be) of interest to everyone. Various states in America have discussed enacting laws that would not allow the teaching of only one theory of origins. Books are being written by evolutionists that attack the creationist view; books are being written by creationists that attack the evolutionist view. The news media have become involved. National science associations, teachers' associations, and political associations have become involved. Both sides acknowledge that the controversy is not likely to "go away" any time soon.

There was a time when creationists, and their arguments, largely were ignored by many in the scientific field. But that hardly is the case now. There is good reason why evolutionary scientists have become alarmed enough to consider creation a threat. For example, in 1981 an Associated Press/NBC News poll found that no less than 86% of the people polled wanted creation to be taught alongside evolution in the public schools. On November 28, 1991 the results of an additional Gallup poll were released. According to the pollsters, 47% of the respondents acknowledged belief in a recent creation of man; only 9% expressed belief in a strictly naturalistic form of evolution. A 1997 Gallup survey found that 44% of Americans (including 31% who were college graduates) subscribed to a fairly literal reading of the Genesis account of creation, while another 39% (53% of whom were college graduates) believed God played at least some part in creating the Universe. Only 10% (17% college graduates) embraced a purely naturalistic, evolutionary view. The results of a Gallup poll released in August 1999 were practically identical: 47% stated that they believed in a recent creation of man; 9% expressed belief in strictly naturalistic evolution. In its March 11, 2000 issue, the *New York Times* ran a story titled "Survey Finds Support is Strong for Teaching 2 Origin Theories," which reported on a poll commissioned by the liberal civil rights group, People for the American Way, and conducted by the prestigious polling/public research firm, DYG, of Danbury, Connecticut. According to the report, 79% of the people polled felt that the scientific evidence for creation should be included in the curriculum of public schools.

These results were unexpected by evolutionists, who would have expected most people to believe in evolution since it has been taught as a fact in most public schools and textbooks. It is no wonder that many evolutionists are becoming alarmed regarding the creationist position.

Even certain scientists who are not creationists are able to recognize that creation is a **legitimate scientific concept** whose qualities at least deserve to be compared with those of evolution. Some go so far as to make statements that “lean” more toward the scientific respectability of creation than toward that of evolution. In fact, after over 120 years of Darwinism, rapidly growing numbers of scientists have become convinced that the natural laws and processes that we now know absolutely exclude the possibility that the Universe could have created itself. These scientists have become convinced that the concept of creation is a much more credible explanation of the evidence related to origins. What evidence is it that has caused these scientists, and even many nonscientists, to accept the concept of creation and to oppose the theory of evolution?

CREDIBILITY OF THE CREATION MODEL

The Law of Biogenesis

In the field of biology, one of the most commonly accepted and widely used laws of science is the Law of Biogenesis. This law was set forth many years ago to explain what both theory and experimental evidence showed to be true among living organisms—that life comes only from previous life of its own type or kind.

Through the years, thousands of scientists in various fields of study have documented the truthfulness of the Law of Biogenesis. In fact, this law was established firmly in science long before modern evolutionary theories were invented. It is of interest that students consistently are taught in high school and college biology classes the tremendous impact of, for example, Louis Pasteur’s work on the false notion of spontaneous generation (the idea that life arises on its own from nonliving sources). Students are presented, in great detail, the history of how Pasteur triumphed over “mythology,” providing science with “its finest hour” as he disproved the popular concept of spontaneous generation. Then, with almost the next breath, students are informed that the evolutionary process began as result of spontaneous generation.

Certainly, evolution could not have occurred without spontaneous generation. For that reason, many scientists have created experiments to try to form life from nonliving matter. In spite of all the uproar surrounding these “origin of life” experiments, no one yet has “created life,” or even come close. In fact, laboratory experiments have not even remotely approached the creation of life from nonlife, and the extremely limited results produced thus far have depended upon using artificial conditions that were extremely improbable. **In nature or in the laboratory, scientists have not documented a single case of spontaneous generation.** Cows give rise to cows, birds to birds, tulips to tulips, corn to corn, and so on.

In recent years, however, some evolutionists have complained that the Law of Biogenesis is not a “law” at all, but merely a “principle,” “theory,” or “dictum.” This new naming system has been suggested by evolutionists, not because they have performed experiments that disprove biogenesis, but because they have come to realize that evolution cannot be true if the Law of Biogenesis is true. If evolutionists accept biogenesis as a scientific law, then evolution never could have gotten started. But, even though many evolutionists hate to admit it, there can be no doubt that biogenesis reflects a natural law, since there **never has been even a single documented case of spontaneous generation**. Therefore, if life on this Earth did not arise from nonliving matter, how did it get here? The fact is, every shred of scientific evidence still supports the concept that life arises only from preexisting life. All scientific information we possess shows that this is an actual fact of nature. The **Law** of Biogenesis is the complete undoing of evolutionary theory.

Natural Selection

The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection was the title of the book published by Charles Darwin in November 1859. Those last two words, “natural selection,” have been discussed often in the halls of science. Darwin said that “natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinizing every variation, even the slightest; rejecting that which is bad, preserving and adding up all that is good; silently and insensibly working at the improvement of each organic being.” And it certainly is no secret that Darwin’s concept of “natural selection” (“survival of the fittest,” as it has come to be known) has been at the center of evolutionary thought. According to Darwin, an individual creature with a particular advantage—the “fittest of its kind”—naturally would be selected to pass on the advantage to its offspring. A horse with long legs, for example, would be able to gallop faster than the rest, thus escaping from predators in order to produce heirs. A “fit” creature, therefore, was the one that could best carry out the functions which kept it alive—it was the best adapted to its environment and to its way of life. This is what Darwin meant by “survival of the fittest.”

But problems with natural selection soon developed. Somehow, natural selection was supposed to ensure the “survival of the fittest,” but the only realistic way to define the “fittest” was “those that survive.” Basically, then, natural selection says simply that all the winners win, and those who win are the winners. Natural selection does not explain how species adapted or how different life forms were created. The only thing natural selection explains is that the most “fit” creatures survive; it then turns right around and describes all those creatures that survive as the most “fit.” Natural selection, however, does not explain how those creatures came to **be** the most “fit.”

Creationists never have objected to the idea of natural selection as a mechanism for eliminating unfit, non-adapted organisms. As a matter of fact, creationists long before Darwin said that natural selection was a conservation principle. As a screening device for getting rid of the unfit, natural selection represents the Creator's plan for preventing harmful mutations from affecting and destroying the entire species. And that is all it does. No one ever has produced a single species by natural selection. It cannot explain adaptation. The fact that an organism is adapted to its environment tells us absolutely nothing about **how** it came to be adapted. Any organisms not adapted would not have survived, but this does not prove that the adaptations were produced by evolution. The argument from natural selection is little more than an argument that reasons in a circle. As such, it should be rejected. It certainly cannot explain the vast complexity of life around us. Circular arguments are not equipped with the power to "explain" such, much less "create" such.

Genetics

One of the newest, and certainly one of the most exciting, sciences is that of genetics. After all, every living thing—plant, animal, or human—is a storehouse of genetic information, and therefore a potential "laboratory" full of scientific knowledge. Studies have shown that the hereditary information found within the living cell is placed there in a chemical "code," and that this code is universal in nature. Regardless of their respective views on origins, all scientists acknowledge this. British evolutionist Richard Dawkins noted: "The genetic code is universal. The complete word-for-word universality of the genetic dictionary is...too much of a good thing." Creationists agree. Darrel Kautz, for example, wrote: "It is recognized by molecular biologists that the genetic code is universal, irrespective of how different living things are in their external appearances."

One of the most important points in regard to genetics, so far as the creation/evolution controversy is concerned, is that the genetic code's chemical instructions are copied faithfully time after time. Buttercups produce nothing but buttercups; sparrows produce nothing but sparrows; and human beings produce nothing but human beings—because all organisms faithfully reproduce copies of their own genetic code. One evolutionist spoke of the "permanence and indestructibility of the seed." Another remarked that the code is "copied faithfully." It matters little what terms evolutionists use; their point still is clear—all living things reproduce "after their kind."

At the turn of the century, just as Darwin's dogma of "natural selection" was beginning to fall on hard times, the science of genetics was born. Some who began to study genetics felt that they had found the actual mechanism of evolution—genetic mutations. The new idea then became that species

arose by mutations which (somehow) were plugged into the system by natural selection. Today the alleged mechanism of evolution is natural selection **plus** genetic mutations (since natural selection by itself has no power to create anything). The late evolutionist of Harvard, George Gaylord Simpson, once wrote: “Mutations are the ultimate raw materials for evolution.” But why is this the case?

Evolution without a mechanism is like a car with no engine—it’s not going anywhere. Evolutionists soon realized that natural selection **alone** was not an adequate or sufficient mechanism. Organisms would not change from one species to another unless the genetic material was changed. Mutations are changes passed from parent to offspring caused by variations of the original genetic material.

It is no overstatement to suggest that the only possible mechanism of evolution is natural selection plus genetic mutations. We are told that “nature” has “selected” certain beneficial mutations and incorporated them into various organisms, eventually causing those organisms to change from one kind to another. If “mutations are the ultimate raw materials for evolution” and therefore provide the only known mechanism for evolution, there are some very serious problems indeed. For example, even evolutionists admit that mutations are “errors” in DNA replication. And these “errors” almost always are harmful. We know today that there are at least three **possible** kinds of mutations: (1) bad; (2) good; and (3) neutral. In the creation/evolution controversy, neutral mutations are of no value, since they have no “net effect.” What, then, may be said about the bad or good mutations? Of the remainder of all mutations (after neutral ones have been eliminated), 99% are harmful. Consider, for example, the following.

1. **Mutations are random.** There is no way to control mutations, nor to predict with accuracy when they might occur. In other words, nature is not “selecting” at all. Rather, “nature” must simply accept whatever comes along. The obvious question, then, is: What “comes along”?
2. **Mutations are very rare.** How often do random mutations occur? One scientist said: “It is probably fair to estimate the frequency of a majority of mutations in higher organisms between **one in ten thousand and one in a million** per gene per generation.” Evolutionists themselves frankly and candidly admit what every research biologist knows: mutations occur rarely, and when they do, they are entirely random.
3. **Good mutations are very, very rare.** In theory, there are at least three types of mutations: good, bad, and neutral. Obviously, the bad mutations (that cause various diseases and death) are not what the evolutionist needs. Neutral mutations are of little use since they are

dependent on further mutations in order to be “useful” (in an evolutionary sense). So the question really is: How often do **good** mutations occur? Hermann J. Muller, Nobel laureate in genetics, said: “Accordingly, the great majority of mutations, certainly well over 99%, are harmful in some way, as is to be expected of the effects of accidental occurrences.”

What conclusion can be drawn from these facts? Mutations may be compared with accidents. They are more like wrecking a car than building one. An accident is not usually thought of as an improvement, but a disaster. So it is with mutations. They may create a weaker plant or animal or human, but they never create a new “kind.” Evolution by random mutations requires incredible accidents—like flipping heads a million times in a row with a coin, and then flipping tails a million times in a row. Mutations are mostly destructive, and cannot provide a reasonable mechanism for evolution.

The genetic code—with its complexity, orderliness, and function—provides the most powerful kind of evidence for intelligent design, which requires a Designer. In fact, the order and complexity themselves are nothing short of phenomenal. The creation model predicts a built-in variation in the gene pool. If living things were created, variation within types is good design. Mutations, however, allegedly have introduced another type of variation—but this time, one that is quite harmful. Mutations militate **against** evolution. The story told regarding mutations and natural selection is much more in accord with the creation model than with the evolution model.

CONCLUSION

In this lesson, we have looked at the ongoing debate between creation and evolution. We have learned that creation is a legitimate scientific theory that deserves serious consideration. In fact, the available evidence points to design rather than to random chance over billions of years. In the next lesson, we will continue our examination of the creation/evolution issue.



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Questions—Lesson 5

TRUE OR FALSE

Write TRUE or FALSE in the blanks before the following statements.

- _____ 1. The Universe originated in one of two ways: creation or evolution.
- _____ 2. Both evolution and creation may be called scientific models.
- _____ 3. The creation/evolution issue is really insignificant, and does not matter much.
- _____ 4. Creation is recognized today by many scientists as a legitimate scientific concept.
- _____ 5. The Law of Biogenesis says that all life comes from pre-existing life.
- _____ 6. Evolution could have occurred without spontaneous generation.
- _____ 7. In laboratory experiments, scientists have produced life from nonlife.
- _____ 8. Natural selection does not explain the creation of any new species.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Circle the correct answer(s).

- 1. Which of the following answers are **not** a quality of mutations?
 - (a) Rare
 - (b) Random
 - (c) Mostly all good
 - (d) Selective and organized
- 2. Evolution claims that the Universe is. . . .
 - (a) Self-contained
 - (b) Not self-contained
 - (c) Well designed
 - (d) Created
- 3. Creation claims that the Universe is. . . .
 - (a) Self-contained
 - (b) Not self-contained
 - (c) Not well designed
 - (d) Random

4. In a 1981 Associated Press/NBC News poll, how many people wanted creation taught along side evolution?
 (a) 8.6% (b) 39% (c) 86% (d) 44%
5. In a 1991 Gallup poll, how many people believed in a recent creation of man?
 (a) 47% (b) 98% (c) 4.7% (d) 20%

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. There are only _____ possibilities concerning _____.
2. Both evolution and creation may be called _____ models, since both are used to explain and predict _____ facts.
3. In the field of _____, one of the most commonly accepted and widely used laws of science is the Law of _____.
4. _____ could not have occurred without _____ generation.
5. No one ever has produced a single _____ by natural _____.
6. Mutations are _____. Mutations are very _____. Good mutations are very, very _____.

MATCHING

Match terms on the left with ideas on the right.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. ____ Evolution | A. Life comes from nonlife |
| 2. ____ Creation | B. The Universe is not self-contained |
| 3. ____ Natural Selection | C. The Universe is self-contained |
| 4. ____ Spontaneous Generation | D. Genetic changes that are mostly harmful |
| 5. ____ Mutations | E. Life comes from previous life and produces after its own kind |
| 6. ____ Law of Biogenesis | F. "Survival of the fittest" |

NOTES/COMMENTS

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