

Is Creation a Viable Model of Origins?

By Warren Krug

If the title sounds familiar, there is a reason. It was the official theme of the debate in February between Ken Ham of Answers in Genesis and Bill Nye, the “Science Guy.” Ham did a credible job in defending Genesis but was limited in the time he had available to cover all the bases. So, I have become brave enough to try to accomplish the task of answering in more detail the question the debate theme poses.

An affirmative answer to the question would suggest that the Bible, particularly the book of Genesis, is a good description of what we see in nature, and therefore its account of origins must be considered reasonable from a scientific viewpoint. In fact, as I hope to point out, it is the only description of origins that fits well with what we observe and experience in the natural world around us. In considering how well Genesis coincides with our observations of nature, at times it will be helpful to contrast it with the only relevant alternate explanation of origins—the theory of evolution.

Exhibit #1 – INTELLIGENT DESIGN

Bible reference: “**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth**” (Genesis 1:1).

The Bible starts right off by informing us how the world and universe got here. There is a Creator or Divine and Intelligent Designer who did the work. Do we see evidence that the earth and its living creatures have been intelligently designed?

Evidence #1—Irreducible Complexity.

In Charles Darwin's day, the biological cell was considered a rather uncomplicated structure. Ernst Haeckel, Darwin's defender in Germany, said a cell was a “simple lump of albuminous [containing albumen or the white of an egg] combination of carbon.”¹ Today, we know better. In an article titled “Basics of biblical biology,” Shaun Doyle writes, “Cells have libraries, translation services, maintenance systems, waste disposal systems, internal and external communication networks, food location devices, food processing plants, power plants, transportation systems, and all sorts of different production industries. And on top of this, it has an automated self-replication system.”²

If a mere cell is so complex and well-designed, what can we say about far more complex organisms which consist of cells organized into tissues which are organized into organs which are organized into systems, all working together? A biochemist named Michael J. Behe back in 1996 said that when a structure is so complex that all of its parts must be initially present in a suitably functioning manner, it can be said to be “irreducibly complex.”³ In other words, there must have been a Creator or Intelligent Designer who organized and put everything together from the very first moment the structure or creature appeared on earth. It doesn't seem reasonable to believe the structure or creature could have developed slowly step by step as evolutionists claim. This complexity can be seen all around us in nature.

Evidence #2—Biomimicry.

Inventors and scientists often turn to nature for ideas for new inventions or new ways of doing things. This is called biomimicry or biomimetics—the practice of mimicking what we see in biology or nature. There are

many examples. Some well-known instances include Velcro, based on the burrs of a burdock plant; sonar, copied from the natural sonar used by animals such as bats and dolphins; and the Eiffel Tower, inspired by the structure of the femur bone.

One of my favorite examples of biomimicry is the Eastgate Centre in Zimbabwe. This office building was designed with a ventilation system so good it does not need conventional air-conditioning or heating. Where did the architects get their inspiration for this efficient ventilation system? From African termite mounds! These insect-built structures must be kept at exactly 87 degrees F despite outside temperature swings ranging from 35 degrees to 104 degrees F? To maintain this temperature over the course of the day the termites must open and close a series of heating and cooling vents located throughout the mound. The Eastgate Centre has a system similar to this.⁴

When science writers discuss examples of biomimicry, my recollection is they will usually give the inventors or scientists credit for using their intelligence and creativity, but typically they will avoid using the word “design” when referring to the feature or organism in nature which the inventors mimicked. However, if we acknowledge the creativity of these inventors and scientists, then biomimicry similarly calls for the existence of an intelligent designer of nature.

Evidence #3—Relative Perfection in Nature.

Years ago the infinite monkey theorem was invented to try to show how natural selection could produce the complex organisms we see around us, despite the random nature of the evolution process. However, this theorem requires an almost infinite amount of time for evolution to do its work. According to the theorem, by relying on the laws of chance a monkey typing at random on a typewriter could eventually produce words or sentences or even books, if given enough time.⁵

But this theorem has at least one major flaw—it doesn't take into account what would happen every time the monkey makes a mistake. Each time the monkey types gibberish on his typewriter, his handler would have to remove the paper, insert a clean sheet of paper into the typewriter, and dump the monkey's mistake into the waste basket. In no time at all the waste basket would be full of discarded paper, then the room would fill up, then the neighborhood, and so on.

If something similar to this would be happening in nature, we should have no trouble seeing evolution's mistakes, but where are they? Certainly we do from time to time see what could be called mistakes in nature, such as the birth of a two-headed snake or a calf with five legs, but those are exceptions rather than the rule. The overwhelming majority of snakes have but one head, and the overwhelming majority of calves have only four legs. And while it is true the earth and the whole universe appear to be running down due to entropy,⁶ this only means at one time they must have been in a superior state. The failure to see anything like the “monkey's mistakes” in nature points to the Creator who was intelligent enough not to have made mistakes when He created the world.

Exhibit #2 – FIXITY OF KINDS

Bible reference: “**According to their kinds**” (Genesis 1:25).

This reference and similar phrases are used in Genesis to imply that every kind of living creature, plant and animal, will propagate its kind and only its kind. One kind of animal could not produce a

different kind of animal, no matter how much time is available. We can never expect to see any new kind of creature. Is that what we observe in nature?

Evidence #1—Lack of transitional forms.

I doubt any scientist today believes it is possible for one kind of creature, such as an elephant, to directly give birth to an entirely different kind, such as a whale. Therefore, if evolution is a fact, there should be plenty of examples of links or transitional forms in the living world, or at least in the fossil record, as one kind of creature was gradually changing into another kind. What we do see is plenty of variation within kinds. For instance, there are hundreds of varieties of dogs including wolves, coyotes, foxes, etc. But one cannot find a single example of an animal which descended from a dog but which is now on its way to becoming something that is not a dog. The same is true for all other kinds of creatures. What we never see is one kind of creature developing into a different kind, which is just what Genesis appears to teach.

Not being able to find clear examples of links or intermediate forms in the living world, scientists often turn to fossils to try to identify past transitional forms. But those fossils which are called transitional are frequently or usually fragmented and incomplete, thus giving the paleontologists considerable freedom to make judgments that might confirm any preconceptions they would hold. For instance, the famous Lucy, an alleged ancestor of humans, is missing about three-fourths of her skeleton.⁷ Arguments among paleontologists are common when it comes to interpreting the nature of specific transitional fossils.

Some secular scientists have supported the observation that there is a serious lack of intermediate or transitional fossils. Stephen Jay Gould once wrote, "The extreme rarity of transitional forms in the fossil record persists as the trade secret of paleontology. The evolutionary trees that adorn our textbooks have data only at the tips and nodes of their branches."⁸ And the late senior paleontologist at the British Museum of Natural History, Colin Patterson, wrote a book on evolution that lacked illustrations of evolutionary transitions. When a letter writer asked Patterson why he didn't include any such illustrations, he said he would have if he knew of any.⁹ These and other quotations support the observation that the kinds God created must indeed be fixed.

Evidence #2—Living fossils.

Speaking of fossils, a large number of fossils called living fossils offer strong support for the truth that kinds can only reproduce according to their same kinds. Living fossils are fossils said to be millions of years old but which appear the same or very similar to their modern counterparts. Living fossils include fish, insects, reptiles, trees etc. Perhaps the most famous living fossil is the coelacanth fish which supposedly went extinct millions of years ago and which some scientists believed was a link between fish and reptiles. Then in 1938 off the coast of southern Africa a coelacanth was captured alive by fishermen. Since then many others have been found alive.¹⁰

While most living fossils were never considered to have ever gone extinct like the coelacanth, the fact remains that all these examples of creatures that have changed little if any in supposedly millions of years can be considered evidence for fixity of kinds. How do evolutionists explain living fossils? They claim some representatives of a lineage found a niche and had no reason to evolve while other members of the lineage were influenced by natural selection to evolve into something else. However, this seems like too easy of an answer. How could a plant or animal have resisted natural selection for millions of years while the evolution process overall was allegedly changing single-celled organisms into humans? Living fossils thus also support the observation that the Genesis kinds are fixed.

Evidence #3—Genetics and mutations.

An organism's genes or genome is like a blueprint that determines what it will become. For the organism to evolve from a simple creature to a more complex one, the blueprint would have to become more complex too, something like going from the blueprint for a doghouse to the blueprint for the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. But there is no clear-cut example of a genome being capable of taking on the additional genetic information needed for the creature to become more advanced or complex. Genomes can lose information, such as in the cave fish which lost the ability to see or even have eyes, but there doesn't seem to be any example of a plant or animal acquiring a completely new feature such as wings or fins if its ancestors never had them. Its genes seem to prohibit it from acquiring new features or from becoming a new kind of creature.

Mutations are said to be the force that drives evolution onward and upward. However, mutations which are big enough to be noticed are usually harmful to the organism and its species. Dr. Robert Carter writes, "There are no known examples of the types of information-gaining mutations necessary for large-scale evolutionary processes. In fact, it looks like all examples of gain-of-function mutations, put in light of the long-term needs of upward evolutionary progress, are exceptions to what is needed, because every example I have seen involves something breaking."¹¹

There are mutations called beneficial mutations which offer a creature a limited advantage in some way, but beneficial mutations are usually accompanied by a downside. A favorite example of mine is the small group of villagers in Ecuador which experienced a mutation that protects them from diabetes and cancer. However, the mutation also stunts their growth, thus putting them at a disadvantage in a physical confrontation with normal-sized people.¹² Overall, genetics seems to be the Creator's method of maintaining a fixity of kinds. Variation within a kind, yes, but new kinds, no.

Exhibit #3 – A RECENT CREATION

Bible references: **the genealogies in the Bible** (such as those in Genesis 5, 10, and 11)

Various Bible scholars including Bishop Ussher (1581-1656) have examined the genealogies in the Bible to try to determine how much time has passed since the creation. Although these authorities don't agree on the exact age, they all conclude that on the basis of these genealogies, the earth and universe can't be more than a few thousand years old, in most cases around 6,000 years old or somewhat older. When we look at the earth and outer space, do we see this youth the Bible suggests?

Evidence #1—A young-looking earth.

Although secular scientists insist the earth is some 4.5 billion years old, this planet does offer evidence of being a much, much younger globe. Geologically and biologically, it is still very much alive. A spinning top will eventually come to rest. Winds die down after a while. A fire will sooner or later burn out. Yet, when we look at the earth, we can still witness strong earthquakes, tectonic activity, volcanoes, a very hot interior, and powerful storms like hurricanes. We also note a vast array of living things. It seems logical that after 4.5 billion years, movements within and on the Earth might be expected to have slowed considerably, perhaps come to a halt. Also heat, being a form of energy, would have lost its punch due to entropy. In addition, despite the recent increase in extinctions among species, there still are obviously many, many species which have not experienced extinctions. These observations taken together suggest that we live on a young earth, as the Bible text implies

Secular scientists generally use radiometric dating systems¹³ to arrive at such an old planet. However, these systems all rely upon assumptions which obviously cannot be tested because modern science occupies only a minuscule fraction of the time-line of secular Earth history. On the other hand, there are numerous “clocks” which, based on current measurements, suggest the Earth is far younger than 4.5 billion years. Dr. Jonathan Sarfati says about 90% of dating methods are in this group.¹⁴ For instance, he mentions the rapid decay of the earth's magnetic field, which provides a maximum age of the earth of 10,000 years, and the salt pouring into the ocean, indicating an age of the earth of no more than 62 million years; etc. Other young-earth clocks which imply an age of only several thousand years include the amount of meteorite dust which has fallen onto the earth, the pressure in the oil fields, the amount of helium in the atmosphere, the amount of radiocarbon in the atmosphere, and many others.¹⁵

Evidence #2—A young-looking solar system.

The age of the solar system is generally considered the same as the age of the earth—about 4.5 or 4.6 billion years old. However, there are some observations that point to a much younger solar system than that. For instance, the moon is moving away from the earth several centimeters per year. At that rate it would have been so close to earth only one billion years ago, the earth's tidal forces would have broken it into bits. Also, the earth's rotation is slowing gradually and days are getting longer, at a rate of about 2 seconds every thousand days.¹⁶ At that rate our planet would have been spinning like a top a billion years ago and life could not have existed.

Then there is the matter of comets. Comets have short lives because every time they get close to the sun they lose some of their mass, that is if they don't collide with a planet first. Many comets have been observed to be dimmer every time they have been seen. Astronomers agree that comets, without some way of replenishing themselves, shouldn't exist at all in an old solar system of billions of years. Therefore, evolutionist scientists have invented something called the Oort cloud, which supposedly is like a nursery where new comets can be born. However, the Oort cloud has never been seen, and there is zero evidence that it actually exists.¹⁷ The simpler way to explain comets is to measure the age of the solar system in thousands of years, not billions.

Evidence #3—Human history.

Estimates by evolutionists of when humans first appeared on earth vary greatly, from hundreds of thousands of years ago to millions of years. This uncertainty is due in part to the lack of agreement by paleontologists on what was an early human as opposed to a pre-human. Nevertheless, what we observe in the world today, or don't observe, tells a different story of human history than the mainstream account.

Don Batten tackled the question of whether or not a population of only eight people (Noah's family) could have grown into the world's present population in the four to five thousand years since Noah's Flood. Batten calculated that a growth rate in the world's population of only one-half of a percent per year would have been sufficient to have reached today's population figure. This isn't much of a growth rate. The growth rate currently is 1.7% (as of 2001 when his article was published). Batten also estimated how many people would be on earth today if the first human couple had instead appeared one million years ago. Assuming a growth rate of only 0.01% per year, today's population would stand at 10 to the 43rd power, a number that means 10 followed by 43 zeros! Already long ago there would not nearly have been enough room on earth to hold all these people standing shoulder to shoulder and front to back.¹⁸

An examination of written records also points to a recent history for our species. According to an article on Wikipedia, the Kish tablet is often called the oldest known written document. This limestone tablet found in

Iraq has been dated to no earlier than 3500 B.C.¹⁹ If that is the earliest known written document, then it could fit into the biblical account much easier than it could fit into the secular time-line. It seems very unlikely modern humans could have been around for hundreds of thousands of years and only within the past

Exhibit #4 – A GLOBAL FLOOD

Bible references: “on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened” (Genesis 7:11b); “all the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered” (Genesis 7:19b); “Every living thing that moved on land perished—birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind” (Genesis 7:21).

The Bible describes what certainly sounds like a catastrophic flood which covered the whole earth, even the highest mountains, and in so doing destroyed all living land creatures including birds and humans (except for those on board the ark, of course). However, secularists are fond of saying there is no evidence for a global flood. Are they correct or are they closing their eyes to the truth?

Evidence #1—Fossils.

Fossils are rarely being formed today, but estimates as to how many are in the ground number into the billions. Fossils don't form easily. When a plant or animal dies, it normally will decay or be eaten by predators or scavengers. So, to become a fossil it must be covered rapidly, such as by sediment, in order to preserve it. There are various ways to form a fossil, but in every case the process involves a plant or animal being covered rapidly, if not completely, at least partially. A number of fossils show evidence of rapid burial.²⁰ For instance, one fossil is of an extinct marine reptile called an ichthyosaur being buried while actually giving birth to a baby. Another fossil is of a fish in the act of eating another fish, again implying a rapid burial.

Fossils can often be found far from where one would expect to find them when they were living creatures. Many marine fossils are found in mountainous areas far from the ocean. Of particular interest is the recent discovery of dozens of whale fossils in Chile's Atacama desert.²¹ What were so many whales doing in a desert? Taken all together, this evidence of billions of fossils, creatures having been buried quickly, and fossils being found far from where they would have been found as living creatures fits well with the idea of a global flood. A global flood could have moved creatures great distances away from their homes and would have created immense amounts of sediment capable of burying billions of plants and animals in a single event.

Evidence #2—Strata.

Strata are layers of sedimentary rock placed on top of each other. There's no better place to see strata than at the Grand Canyon where they are very visible. Old-earth scientists believe these strata were laid down in separate events with millions of years between each event. However, if there were millions of years between each event, there would be evidence of erosion.²² In reality, this evidence seems to be missing. The strata instead appear to have been laid on top of each other over a short period of time with little time being available for erosion to take place. Remarkably, we have a modern day example to support this observation. The Mount St. Helens volcanic eruption in 1982 created a 150-foot-deep canyon in a single day plus 600 feet of strata due to mudflows and pyroclastic (containing bits of rock and ash) flows.²³ Like those at the Grand Canyon, the layers produced by this volcano not surprisingly show no evidence of

erosion between them. The lack of erosion between strata strongly suggests they were laid down in quick succession in a single event, an event such as a global flood.

Moreover, some strata have been found which are strangely bent or folded. Dr. Andrew Snelling writes, "When solid, hard rock is bent (or folded) it invariably fractures and breaks because it is brittle. Rock will bend only if it is still soft and pliable—'plastic' like modeling clay or children's Playdough. If such modeling clay is allowed to dry out, it is no longer pliable but hard and brittle, so any attempt to bend it will cause it to break and shatter." Dr. Snelling concludes his essay by writing, "The only way to explain how these sandstone and limestone beds could be folded, as though still pliable, is to conclude they were deposited during the Genesis Flood, just months before they were folded."²⁴ They couldn't have been folded after lying around for millions of years and becoming brittle.

Evidence #3—Flood legends.

Dr. John Morris says he has collected more than 200 stories of a worldwide flood from the folklore of cultures all around the world. While these stories can vary in many details from the Genesis account of the Flood, most of them are similar in several important ways. Most tell of a global flood, of only a few people being saved, of a flood sent as punishment for sin, of animals being saved, of a boat used for survival, and of people being forewarned about the approaching flood.²⁵

As far as I know, there is no similar collection of legends of the earth burning up in a fire or of the earth being devastated by rocks falling from the sky or of a dictator or disease wiping out almost all people or of any other type of worldwide calamity. But here we have all these stories of a global flood. Doesn't that suggest the legends were based on a real event? The lack of complete uniformity in the stories can be easily explained by details of the true account often being lost or twisted as the legends were passed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. But, fortunately, we have the true account written down in God's Word so that we today need not lose the details of this awesome event.

Conclusion

While the Bible is not a book of science, it does contain some science, and the science it describes like the rest of the Word of God is absolutely true. We would not expect God's written record to contradict the record He has left us in nature, and it doesn't. Thankfully, He didn't stop with explaining how He made the world and its creatures. He also tells us how He will bring this present world and universe to their conclusions and usher in the new eternal world we call heaven. His Gospel explains how we can be ready for that great event to come. Our Creator God and Savior deserves our praises!

"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20). LSI

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