

# The Bible and Evolution

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## SOME ALTERNATIVES

**I**N THE attempt to reconcile the teachings of evolution with those of the Bible, four alternatives have been suggested to ease the tension and resolve the difficulties that exist between them.

First, there are those who accept the apparent contradictions between evolution and the Bible as real and attempt to believe both viewpoints. Although this would seem to be a logical impossibility, it is essentially the position of theistic evolution which holds that God created all things through the processes of evolution. Actually, this viewpoint is not acceptable either to the Bible-believing Christian or to the evolutionist. The Bible states clearly that man was created out of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7). This could not refer to or include a former animal ancestry, since it is to dust that man returns—and this is not a return to an animal state (Gen. 3:19). Furthermore, the first man of the Bible was made in the image of God and thus bears no resemblance to evolution's first men.

Evolutionists, too, are dissatisfied with the idea of theistic evolution, since to admit supernaturalism at any point is to counter directly their theory. Charles Darwin, himself, wrote: "I would give absolutely nothing for the theory of natural selection if it requires miraculous additions at any one stage of descent."<sup>1</sup> More recently, Julian Huxley affirms that supernaturalism "runs counter to the whole of our scientific knowledge. . . . To postulate a divine interference with these exchanges of matter and energy at a particular moment in the earth's history is both unnecessary and illogical."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R.E.D. Clark, *Darwin: Before and After*, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Julian Huxley, *Evolution in Action*, p. 20.

Second, there is a very popular solution today which accepts evolution but allegorizes the Bible. This approach seemingly allows one to accept the conclusions of evolution and still retain the "thrust" of the Bible. The allegorizing always involves the first eleven chapters of Genesis, but soon it also includes other parts of the Bible, especially the miraculous. The general ideas of Genesis 1-11 are accepted but the factual details are rejected. Admittedly, there are many Bible "scholars" who follow this line of thing; notwithstanding, it is unacceptable for several important reasons.

First, it is purely subjective. Who is to decide what portions are not to be understood plainly and thus to be allegorized? Why stop with Genesis 1-11?

Second, it is dishonoring to God. If evolution is true, then the "allegory" which God allegedly gave in those early chapters of Genesis is an entirely inaccurate one, and one can only conclude that in giving it God was either untrue or unintelligent.

Third, this concept is in direct conflict with the teaching of many other parts of the Bible. Aspects of creation are mentioned in Luke 3:38; Romans 5:14; I Corinthians 11:9; 15:22, 45; II Corinthians 11:3; I Timothy 2:13-14; and Jude 14. Allegorizing Genesis will of necessity affect the interpretation of these other passages.

Fourth, it discredits the authority of Jesus Christ, for he accepted the account of the creation of Adam and Eve (Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6) and the historicity of the Flood (Matt. 24:38; Luke 17:27). If His words cannot be trusted in these particulars, how can anyone be sure they can be trusted in other matters?

A third basic alternative is to accept evolution and reject the Bible. Many actually do this, though few are willing to state it quite so blatantly.

A fourth possibility is to accept the Bible fully and plainly with the necessary consequence of rejecting evolution. This alternative would involve accepting the detailed facts of Genesis and it would require discovering basic fallacies in the tenets of evolution in order to have an intelligent basis for rejecting them.

## SOME DATA FROM EVOLUTION

The word evolution means change, development, movement, or process. It has a completely legitimate use, as in the sentence, "There has been considerable evolution in the field of communications." But when used in connection with the theory of evolution, the word means more than development. It also includes the idea of origin by natural processes, both the origin of the first living substance and the origin of new species. That there has been development in many areas of creation no one denies, but that this development has also included the production of new species of more complex and intricate form from less complicated substances is open to serious question. Ordinary development should not be confused with the origin of species.

*Mutations and natural selection.* This is the basic and most important proof that evolutionists advance for their theory. Mutations are sudden variations which cause the offspring to differ from their parents in well-marked characteristics. Natural selection causes the survival of these new forms and accounts for general biological improvement. Concerning this process Huxley writes that "not only is it *an* effective agency of evolution, but it is the only effective agency of evolution."<sup>3</sup> William S. Beck (Harvard Medical School) stated: "Random mutation produces the variations that Darwin was talking about and mutation is, as far as we know, the only source of genetic variability and hence of evolution."<sup>4</sup> So basic is this proof that one may safely conclude that if it can be questioned evolution itself can be.

There are some important questions that must be asked about the proof from natural selection and mutations.

First, does not the fact that this proof is based on a circular argument weaken it considerably? Notice Huxley's admission: "On the basis of our present knowledge, natural selection is bound to produce genetic adaptations: and genetic adaptations are thus presumptive evidence for the efficacy of natural selection."<sup>5</sup> In other words, natural selection produces mutations, and mutations guarantee natural selection, *but neither can be proved by itself.*

<sup>3</sup> *Evolution in Action*, p. 35.

<sup>4</sup> *Saturday Evening Post*, May 10, 1958, p. 92.

Second, are not mutations harmful? Theodosius Dobzhansky, an authority in the field of genetics, admits that "most mutants which arise in any organism are more or less disadvantageous to their possessors. The classical mutants obtained in *Drosophila* usually show deterioration, breakdown, and disappearance of some organs." He also acknowledges that "the deleterious character of most mutations seems to be a very serious difficulty."<sup>6</sup> Since beneficial mutations are not able to be observed, scientists can only speculate or hope that somewhere and somehow during the supposed long process of man's evolution the necessary beneficial mutations did occur. Given enough time, they say, anything could have happened, including helpful mutations. Whether this is so or not we shall test later.

Third, where do new genes come from? Mutations are alternate forms of existing conditions, but new forms have to be produced if evolution is to occur. Protozoa, for instance, do not have teeth. Where, then, did the genes come from which produced our teeth if we evolved from protozoa? Does the evolutionist have an answer to this basic problem? Hear Laurence H. Snyder, a famous geneticist: "As to the origin of genes, we know very little, although it is tempting to speculate."<sup>7</sup> H. Graham Cannon of Manchester University states: "A fact that has been obvious for many years is that Mendelian mutations deal only with changes in existing characters, never with the appearance of a new functioning character. . . . No experiment has produced progeny that show entirely new functioning organs. And yet it is the appearance of new characters in organisms which marks the boundaries of the major steps in the evolutionary scales."<sup>8</sup>

Fourth, does natural selection really guarantee improvement? Of course, it must do so; otherwise, if a substrain survived, it would soon die out and there could be no evolution at all. J. B. S. Haldane answers: "In fact, natural selection with evolutionary consequences has only been observed where men have created drastically new conditions which impose a heavy selection pressure."<sup>9</sup> *Natural selection is hardly proved when*

<sup>4</sup> *Evolution in Action*, p. 43.

<sup>6</sup> *Evolution, Genetics, and Man*, p. 150.

<sup>7</sup> *Principles of Heredity*, p. 332.

<sup>8</sup> *The Evolution of Living Things*, p. 92.

<sup>9</sup> *Nature*, March 14, 1959, p. 51.



it can only be demonstrated under *imposed* conditions.

Fifth, if neither beneficial mutations, the production of new genes nor natural selection have ever been observed, then does not this basic evidence for evolution rest on faith rather than observed fact?

It should be noted that not all scientists, even if they are evolutionists, accept the argument from mutations and natural selection as being conclusive. Ernest A. Hooton, Harvard's famed anthropologist, said: "Now I am afraid that many anthropologists (including myself) have sinned against genetic science and are leaning upon a broken reed when we depend upon mutations."<sup>10</sup>

*Fossils.* The question of fossil men (rather than fossil animals) is of far greater significance to the Bible believer, since it is the allegation of evolution that man is very old and that he evolved from prior brute forms. In contrast, the Biblical account of creation insists that Adam and Eve were the first human beings, that they were sinless, that they subsequently sinned, and that the resultant effect on the entire race has been one of degeneration. According to the Biblical account, Adam and Eve could not have been the climax of some evolutionary process which included various kinds of subhuman ancestors. Incidentally, the theistic evolution is on the horns of a dilemma with regard to the creation of Adam and Eve. Even if he succeeds in injecting evolution into the Biblical record of the creation of Adam, it is impossible to do so with Eve; and if God created Eve as the Bible declares as a direct act of creation, why not allow Him to have done the same with Adam?

Again some serious questions must be asked with regard to the fossil evidence.

First, does the fact that the fossil argument is a circular one weaken its force considerably? *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* admits: "It cannot be denied that from a strictly philosophical standpoint geologists are here arguing in a circle. The succession of organisms has been determined by a study of their remains buried in the rocks, and the relative ages of the rocks are determined by the remains that they contain."<sup>11</sup> This is more than a philosophic point, for the actual pragmatic

<sup>10</sup> *Apes, Men and Morons*, p. 118.

<sup>11</sup> *Encyclopedia Britannica*, X, 168, 1956 edition.

approach the geology is to date the strata by the fossils found in them and to date the fossils by the strata in which they are found. This procedure can scarcely assure precise results.

Second, are other methods of dating really as reliable as they are purported to be? Concerning the radiometric and fluorine methods of dating: "It must be stressed that the above method and also the fluorine method, mentioned below, do not afford any *absolute* dating for fossils."<sup>12</sup> Of the uranium-lead methods another scientist writes: "Geologists have been somewhat disappointed in the uranium-lead methods because of the many instances where the results are contradictory, inconsistent, or unreasonable."<sup>13</sup> Carbon 14, which the average layman thinks can measure accurately for any length of time, begins to have an important margin of error after 20,000 years. Furthermore, recently at Westinghouse laboratories the rate of decomposition was artificially altered three per cent.

Third, why has the fossil evidence produced no intermediate forms? It would seem reasonable to expect that somewhere among the fossils that have been found there would have been discovered at least one transitional form. Instead, the earliest fossils of each group exhibit all the features that distinguish the group to which they belong. The importance of this matter of evolution has been stated clearly by Sir Wilfrid Le Gros Clark (Oxford University): "That evolution actually *did* occur can only be scientifically established by the discovery of the fossilized remains of representative samples of those intermediate types which have been postulated on the basis of the indirect evidence."<sup>14</sup> On the clarity of this indirect evidence, Alfred S. Romer of Harvard University has written: "'Links' are missing just where we most fervently desire them and it is all too probable that many 'links' will continue to be missing."<sup>15</sup>

Fourth, does not the evidence from fossil men seem a bit scanty for the conclusions that are drawn? Perhaps the most notorious of all fossil men is *Pithecanthropus erectus*, found in Java in 1891-92. It consisted of a part of a skullcap, a frag-

<sup>12</sup> A. H. Brodrick, *Man and His Ancestry*, p. 122.

<sup>13</sup> W. L. Stokes, *Essentials of Earth History*, p. 22.

<sup>14</sup> *Discovery*, January, 1955, p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> *Genetics, Palaeontology and Evolution*, p. 114.

ment of a left thighbone and three molar teeth. These fragments were found within a range of fifty feet and over a year's time. Concerning this particular find the *Britannica* concludes: "Additional evidence must be presented before a reliable hypothesis can be constructed."<sup>16</sup>

The Neanderthal race is also considered to be essentially human (though probably degenerate). At any rate, these remains do not prove any evolutionary sequence in the development of man. "Neanderthal remains provide a substantial reminder that there is not an inexorable sequence in skeletal development leading continuously from primitive to modern."<sup>17</sup> A medical doctor told me once that Neanderthal men could easily have been ordinary men who had been afflicted with rickets.

Fossil men do not provide evidence of transitional forms leading to *Homo sapiens*. Indeed, today all fossil men are being classified by most into the single genus—*Homo*.

*The necessity of faith.* Scorn and ridicule is often heaped on the Christian for having faith, and the image is projected that this is opposed to true science. Seldom is creationism presented as a plausible explanation; rather it is portrayed as an emotional, unscientific, blind faith. Occasionally, one finds scientists who state the matter fairly. For example, Harry J. Fuller and Oswald Tippo of the University of Illinois write in their text: "Some people assume, entirely as a matter of faith, a Divine Creation of living substance. The only alternative seems to be the assumption that at some time in the dim past, the chance association of the requisite chemicals in the presence of favorable temperature, moisture, etc., produced living protoplasm. . . . Actually, biologists are still as far away as they ever were in their attempts to explain how the first protoplasm originated. The evidence of those who would explain life's origin on the basis of the accidental combination of suitable chemical elements is no more tangible than that of those people who place their faith in Divine Creation as the explanation of the development of life. Obviously, the latter have as much justification for their belief as do the former."<sup>18</sup> In other words, the evolutionist does not know how life originated

<sup>16</sup> 1957 edition, II, 52.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 52, 1957 edition.

<sup>18</sup> *College Botany*, p. 25.

so that whatever he accepts about the subject he does on the basis of faith.

Faith is also required to accept other parts of the theory of evolution. Concerning one explanation as to the origin of the Dawn horse, George Gaylord Simpson says: "In the nature of things this hypothesis cannot be ruled out categorically and some respectable scientists support it. Nevertheless it is so improbable as to be unacceptable unless we can find no hypothesis more likely to explain the facts."<sup>19</sup> Huxley recognizes that the odds against producing a horse by chance are tremendous, and yet he concludes, strictly by faith: "No one would bet on anything so improbable happening; and yet it *has* happened. It has happened, thanks to the workings of natural selection and the properties of living substance which makes natural selection inevitable."<sup>20</sup> Concerning the development of the vertebrates from the invertebrates, the famous Hooton declares in a most unscientific manner: "All this is complicated, obscure, and dubious. Anyway there evolved from the invertebrates a tribe of animals which, by hook or by crook, acquired backbones."<sup>21</sup>

Of course, there is nothing wrong about having faith. The important question is, however, In what is the faith placed? Statements like these from evolutionists do not display an intelligent content to their faith.

*Other data.* Other alleged evidences for evolution are often cited more frequently in the popular presentations of evolution rather than in technical journals and textbooks. They are: (1) embryonic recapitulation (the human embryo passes through the various stages of evolution in the womb), (2) serological tests (blood precipitates show the relationship of species), and (3) inheritability of acquired characteristics.

Concerning the first, C. H. Waddington (University of Edinburgh) says: "The type of analogical thinking which leads to theories that development is based on the recapitulation of ancestral stages or the like no longer seems at all convincing or even very interesting to biologists."<sup>22</sup>

The result of the blood tests, conducted by George Nuttall

<sup>19</sup> "The Great Animal Invasion," *Natural History*, April 1942, p. 206.

<sup>20</sup> *Evolution in Action*, p. 42.

<sup>21</sup> *Up From the Ape*, p. 56.

<sup>22</sup> *Principles of Embryology*, p. 10.



of Cambridge in 1904, are so inconclusive that they may be regarded as proving nothing. Indeed, they proved that hyenas are more closely related to cats than cats are to themselves, and pigs are closer to cats than dogs are.

Generally speaking, the inheritability of acquired characteristics, known as Lamarckism, though accepted by Darwin and used by him whenever natural selection failed him, is not considered a good explanation for evolution by most biologists. It appears in popular presentations of evolution such as those one sees with regularity in *The Reader's Digest*, but it has against it the obvious difficulty of suggesting a conceivable means by which, for instance, a man's biceps can become so developed as to modify the genes of the body and transmit the larger muscle to his children.

*The necessity of time.* When evolutionists are faced with these basic lacks in the evidence for their theory, they retreat into the explanation that all of this happened over long periods of time, and although we cannot observe these transmutations today, anything could have happened given enough time. Huxley, for instance, explains: "All living things are equally old—they can all trace their ancestry back some two thousand million years. With that length of time available, little adjustments can easily be made to add up to miraculous adaptations; and the slight shifts of gene frequency between one generation and the next can be multiplied to produce radical improvements and totally new kinds of creatures."<sup>23</sup> The average person will readily accept a statement like this because he suspects that two billion years is a long enough period of time to cover anything happening by chance.

This idea is one that can be put to the test mathematically. Could natural processes, operating according to the laws of chance (and without supernaturalism there is no other alternative), be expected to produce that which evolution requires in two or more billion years? Bolton Davidheiser, whose doctorate in biology is from Johns Hopkins, has worked out a most damaging analogy in regard to this matter of chance operating over long periods of time which shows clearly the incredibility of the evolutionist's claims.<sup>24</sup> He bases it on the well-known statement commonly attributed to Thomas Huxley

<sup>23</sup> Huxley, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

to the effect that if a million monkeys were permitted to strike the keys of a million typewriters for a million years, they might by chance make a copy of a Shakespearian play. He then sets up the experiment with certain controls in order to be able to treat the facts mathematically. For example, the monkeys are given typewriters with only capital letters, sever punctuation marks and a spacing key. They type twenty-four hours a day and the speed of twelve and a half keys per second. Instead of a Shakespearian play, the experiment requires them to type only the first verse of Genesis (in English!). How long would it be expected to take the monkeys to do this according to the laws of chance operating within these few controls? Dr Davidheiser answers as follows:

"The length of time it would take is indeed quite beyond our comprehension, but an illustration may help. Think of a large mountain, wearing away an amount equivalent to the finest grain of sand (about .0025 inch in diameter). At this rate of erosion the mountain would disappear very slowly but when completely gone the monkeys would still be just warming up.

"Think of a rock not the size of a mountain but a rock larger than the whole earth, larger than the whole solar system. Try to think of a rock so large that if the earth were at its center its surface would touch the nearest star. This star is so far away that light coming from it takes more than four years to get here, travelling 186,000 miles every second. If a bird came once every thousand years and removed an amount equivalent to the smallest grain of sand, more than four hundred such rocks would be worn away before our champion super simians would be expected to type Genesis 1:1. If single spaced on one side of a page, the paper used in this typing would make a mass so large that something moving at the speed of light would take as long to penetrate it as all the time the geology books allow since the fossil record began.

"Of course this is quite fantastic, but it is evident that a million monkeys would never type a Shakespearian play in a million years. Similarly we believe the idea that lifeless matter could evolve by chance into the life we know on earth

<sup>24</sup> Used by permission of the author who is professor at Biola College. The basic mathematical formula is found in William Feller, *An Introduction to Probability Theory and Its Implications*, I, 266.

in a billion years or in a couple of billion years is also fantastic."

In summary it seems clear that evolution lacks the mutations, new genes, kind of selection, fossilized transitional forms, and time required to support its theory.

#### DATA FROM THE BIBLE

While it is not the purpose of this discussion to investigate all the possibilities in the interpretation of the creation account in Genesis, it is germane to point out some of its salient features.

*The God of creation.* At least seventeen times in the first chapter of Genesis God is mentioned as creator. Although it should be obvious, it is still necessary to point out that this is not some impersonal force, but the same God whom the writer of this portion knew. In other words, the creator is said to be Moses' God, whom Moses already knew as a personal, living, miracle-working God. Even if one holds to the documentary hypothesis, the God of this section must be understood as the same God who was known to the supposed writer or editor of these chapters, and this too excludes the idea of His being an impersonal something. Moses would have had no trouble believing in special creation, knowing from experience what he did about God.

*The process of creation.* It is popular today to say that the important truth in Genesis is Who created, not how He created. But even a cursory look at the section will reveal quickly how glib such a statement is. God "created," "made," "said," "called," "set," "formed," "caused," "took," "planted," and "blessed." His creative activity is described by these verbs. Furthermore, the section gives the order of creation "day" by "day." Too, it records God's work of creation from start (1:1) to finish (2:1). In other words, the Genesis account tells us the how, the order, and the completeness of the process of creation.

*The time of creation.* There are certain relevant facts in relation to this question of the time of creation. First, Ussher's (1581-1656) scheme of dating is obviously not a part of the inspired text of Scripture.

Second, the demarcation of time sequences in terms of

"days" does not begin until 1:3. This means that verses 1 and 2 may cover an indeterminably long period of time. Whether one considers verse 1 the account of an original creation, or a topic sentence for the chapter or whatever, does not affect this point. It seems, too, that the translation of the first verb in verse 2 does not materially affect the point either. If one translates it *became* and understands some sort of catastrophe between verses 1 and 2, there is obviously an undetermined length of time in the two verses. If one translates the verb *was*, this would simply be stating a condition of the earth at that time whether a changed condition from verse 1 or not, and this would still include a long period of time within both verses. Either of these interpretations may or may not be connected with the casting out of Satan from heaven.

Third, seven days are marked off in the account, all of them by a number, and all but the seventh by the additional phrase, "evening and morning." However long one considers these days to be, it is important to notice that man was created on the sixth day and is therefore of recent origin in comparison to the other aspects of creation, including the animals.

Fourth, the results of the flood and their effect on the world as we see it today must be a part of anyone's total picture of creation.

Fifth, an act of creation would most likely include the appearance of age in the object created. Diamonds made in the laboratory appear to be as old as diamonds found in the earth, but in reality they are of recent origin. The wine that Christ created at Cana (John 2) looked as if it had gone through the long process involved in making wine, when in reality it was only minutes old when it began to be used. The account of the creation of Adam and Eve indicates mature people who only appeared to have passed through the normal time-consuming processes of growth. How much of this God did in other areas of His creation we do not know, but that He did it in several instances is clear.

These are some of the most relevant facts revealed in the Bible concerning creation. Since the truthfulness of the account is attested to in other parts of the Bible and by Christ Himself, since the Bible itself has been shown to be true in

other areas (particularly in the matter of fulfilled prophecy), and since the data of the theory of evolution is built on circular arguments, is full of gaps, and requires something in the nature of blind faith to believe, the choice of what to accept about creation really should not be too difficult to make.

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