

Glimpses of Our God In the Beginning

Lesson #2 for January 14, 2012

Scriptures: Matthew 19:4; Job 38:4-7; Deuteronomy 32:10-11; Psalm 19; John 1:1-13; Romans 5:12; Isaiah 66:22.

1. This lesson will focus on the issues confronting believers over the subject of origins. Were we created along with our entire world in six literal 24-hour days? Or, were we produced at least partially by some evolutionary process?
2. Why do so many Christians today, especially Christian scientists, embrace the idea of some sort of evolution. Do they think that the “hard scientific evidence” is more compelling than the historical biblical evidence? Science says that data or an experiment can be repeated by others. Have they failed to carefully study the biblical evidence or to take into account what it actually says?
3. A study was done a few years ago, and it was found that 40% of scientists still believe in creation as long as they could answer anonymously. They actually believed that it is possible to pray to God and get an answer. Is peer pressure the problem? To many scientists, evolution has become a religion. It is not the scientific facts that are presented but their belief system based on their “interpretation” of the scientific evidence. When the hard data is looked at objectively, it is clear that there are alternative interpretations that may be just as valid. However, many reject those interpretations because of their evolutionary beliefs.
4. The contrast is too great to allow for any kind of melding or cooperation between the two processes of 1) a “fiat” creation which occurred in seven literal days under the careful guidance and direction of a loving, caring God, planning each step meticulously, and 2) atheistic evolution which explains our origins based on statistically impossible steps which occurred over billions of years through a process of chance, violence, death, and the domination of the strong over the weak. God's creation was planned and calculated; nothing was left to chance. By contrast, in the theory of evolution, everything is left to chance. In God's creation, days 4 through 6 carefully built on what God had done in days 1 to 3. In evolution, there is no planning of any kind. In God's plan, we were made in His image. In the theory of evolution, we presumably evolved from whatever apelike form happened to precede *Homo sapiens*.
5. If God does not have the capacity to create out of nothing, then many of our most fundamental beliefs about the plan of redemption and our future home in heaven are put in doubt.
6. There is a long line of biblical authors and heroes of the Bible that spoke about creation as an assumed fact. These include Jesus (Matthew 19:4); the Father and the Son (Exodus 20:8-11); and many biblical authors: Moses, David, Isaiah, and Paul just to mention a few.
7. If we believe that human origins resulted from something other than a seven-day creation week in relatively recent history, then we are questioning all of biblical inspiration. Which would you choose if you had to select between a heritage based on God's love and care for you and a heritage based on violence, death, and survival of the fittest? Are things getting better and better or worse and worse?
8. Believers in creation have long pointed to the human eye as evidence that a step-by-step

gradual evolution cannot possibly explain our origins. In order for the human eye to function, all the parts have to work together. Each of the multiple, complex steps would have no value until the entire visual system worked, so an incomplete visual system would have no evolutionary benefit. Evolutionists have responded by pointing out that simple animals have light-sensitive spots, and slightly more complex animals have little cups that are light-sensitive, and one can show up through the chain of creatures that there are simple and then more complex eyes. This was supposed to eliminate the Christian argument in favor of creation.

9. However, in recent times, scientists have looked at the genetic codes which produce each of these different eyes at different levels in what is thought to be the evolutionary chain and found that the genetic codes involved are completely different! There is no way that those simple eyes could have led by some evolutionary process to a human eye with its retina, globe, lens, cornea, etc. Good science cannot prove that God does not exist.
10. Think about the process of salvation as we understand it. After waiting billions of years for humans to evolve through violence, domination of one creature over another, and death, would God have said in 1 Corinthians 15:26 that He came to abolish death, the last enemy? How can death be the last enemy if it was part of the evolutionary creative process? At what point would God have to decide that enough species had been developed, evolved, and disappeared through death so He could become like one of us and save us?
11. Read Romans 5:12. If we believe as suggested by this passage that death resulted from sin, then it rules out any evolutionary process. Or, was it the first one-celled creature of some sort that committed the first sin? If man was the first sinner in an evolutionary process, then death preceded sin by billions of years. The ideas suggested in Romans 5:12 are completely impossible in an evolutionary model. Would God (who really does not exist according to atheistic evolution) come down to this earth to save us from violence, selfishness, and domination of the strong over the weak if that was the process He used to make us what we are?
12. In an evolutionary model, how does one explain the fall of man? What did we fall from? And if we did not fall, is salvation just a continuation or augmentation of the evolutionary process? That would be absurd. When did man evolve into having a conscience?
13. Read Isaiah 65:17; Isaiah 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; and Revelation 21:4. Do we believe that God will someday make a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness? If we accept the idea that God can and will make a new heaven and a new earth, why couldn't He have done that in the beginning? Or, do we think that the new heaven and the new earth will result from some kind of evolutionary process? If God is going to be able to make the lion and the lamb live peacefully together in the new earth, could He not create them in the beginning of this earth? If the new heaven and the new earth are going to be the result of a brand-new evolutionary process, how could we possibly guarantee that the next world would be any better than this one? Isn't it clear that the ideas of the cross, our redemption, even our hope of the future change in the twinkling of an eye, and the creation of a new heaven and new earth are diametrically opposed to the basic premises of evolution? Ellen White had some very clear things to say about the ideas of evolution. Remember that the theory of evolution developed in her day.
14. It is the worst kind of infidelity; for with many who profess to believe the record of creation, it is infidelity in disguise. — *The Signs of the Times*, March 20, 1879.

...Shall we, for the privilege of tracing our descent from germs and mollusks and apes, consent to cast away that statement of Holy Writ, so grand in its simplicity, "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him"? Genesis 1:27.— *Education*, p. 130.

When the Lord declares that He made the world in six days and rested on the seventh day, He means the day of twenty-four hours, which He has marked off by the rising and setting of the sun. —*Pamphlet 86*, including letters written from Cooranbong, Australia, to the Church at Battle Creek (1898); *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 136.

15. There are two interesting points about the Darwinian theory of evolution of which many are not aware. Darwin said:

16. In a letter to [J. S. Henslow](#) (March 1834); later published in *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin* (1887), Ch. 6 "The Voyage — 1831-1836"

With respect to the theological view of the question: This is always painful to me. I am bewildered. I had no intention to write atheistically, but I own that I cannot see as plainly as others do, and as I should wish to do, evidence of design and beneficence on all sides of us. There seems to me too much misery in the world. I cannot persuade myself that a beneficent and omnipotent God would have designedly created the [Ichneumonidae](#) with the express intention of their feeding within the living bodies of caterpillars or that a cat should play with mice.... http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Charles_Darwin

17. Once again, we notice that Darwin clearly had no notion of the great controversy or of a malevolent Satan. Darwin was limited by the idea that God made everything just as we see it now. There are consequences to sin that are hard to explain in an evolutionary model!

18. A second interesting comment came from Darwin when he suggested that if any single step in his process of evolution could be shown to be impossible, the whole theory would fall apart. I hope I do not need to remind you that many of the steps in his theory have since been proven wrong. That is why evolutionists are now talking about neo-Darwinism.

19. Seventh-day Adventists have been unrelenting advocates for the seventh-day Sabbath. It is a part of our name. What explanation can we give for a seventh-day Sabbath apart from a seven-day creation week? What explanation can we give for a seven-day cycle for the week apart from creation? There is no other explanation.

20. So, why are so many people persuaded that evolution might be at least a partial explanation for our origins?

Most scientists today work with an assumption known as "methodological naturalism." In essence, this is the view that everything that has happened, is happening, or will happen, has a natural cause and, specifically, not what we would call a "supernatural" cause. Critics, however, have also labeled the concept "methodological atheism," because, strictly applied, it rules out God as Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer.

Yet, many people find it to be a persuasive assumption because most of the events that occur in our daily lives or in our observable environment do not appear to have direct supernatural causes. Even events or phenomena in which we, as Christians, can see the hand of God could be explained, however implausibly to us, as resulting from circumstances alone.

Methodological naturalists also assume that if this is the way it is now, this is how it has always been. Their position might be compared to the skeptics who are given voice in 2 Peter 3:4: “everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation” (NIV). *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, page 25.

21. Make no mistake about it. Evolutionists have their own religion. When thinking over the ideas of evolution versus creation or even when discussing with those who firmly believe it's ideas, one needs to remember that the basic facts, the basic data that all scientists have to work with, are the same. The hard evidence is the same. The difference is in the interpretation. Evolutionists interpret the data to fit their paradigm which is their religion. So, never allow them to say that they are comparing their science with your religion. It is their religion versus your religion or their science versus your science.
22. Zoroastrianism, the religion of ancient Persia which still persists in some areas in India, is based on a belief in two god's—one good and one evil. They believe that the good god made the good things, and the bad god made the bad things.
23. Many modern Christian so-called scientists believe that God somehow worked through the evolutionary process; that God started the evolutionary process and then went away for perhaps millions or billions of years and then came back to bestow a “soul” in the humanlike animals that would become *Homo sapiens*. Does this make any sense to you?
24. Do you doubt that God created everything? If so, why? Where does that doubt come from?
25. It should be clear from our discussion that the biblical authors from both the Old Testament and the New Testament firmly believed in the creation story of Genesis 1 and 2. It should be clear to us that a God who could create in that way could also re-create us in the twinkling of an eye and create the new heavens and the new earth in the future.
26. Most of the ancient gods of the pagan nations surrounding Israel were simply “enlarged” images of human beings. Their stories were mythical and dreamlike in many respects. The story of Jesus Christ is the story of a real Person who lived in a real place and had real friends and died a cruel death and really did rise from the dead and go back to heaven. The disciples knew Him personally. And Paul talked with people who knew Him personally.
27. To those of us who believe in a larger view, trust, healing model of the plan of salvation, the Genesis account is completely reliable. It may not be as scientifically stated as some would like, but it is nevertheless true. What if God had decided to miraculously make Moses—the writer of Genesis—able to fully understand all the laws of physics and biochemistry that He put in place in the creation process? And, just suppose, Moses understood everything that God did in that first week of creation. Who would he be able to tell? The account we have in Genesis 1 and 2 was not intended to be a scientific report! It is a simple recounting of a marvelous story that was meaningful to people in the days of the early Israelites and should be still meaningful to those of us who read it for what it was intended to be—an orderly, sensible, logical explanation of the origin of all things.

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Last Modified: November 25, 2011

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